

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Wednesday, May 22, 1974

[The House met at 2:30 o'clock.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 226 The Mental Health Human Rights Act

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, being Bill No. 226, The Mental Health Human Rights Act.

[Leave being granted, Bill No. 226 was introduced and read a first time.]

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislature, some 120 students from my constituency who are with us today in both galleries. They are accompanied by their teachers and their bus drivers. I would ask them now if they would please stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a return to Order No. 180 asked by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

MR. YURKO:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table Order for Return No. 178. I am attaching to it a report on monitoring during the month of November.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Department of Lands and Forests

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to make an important announcement that will be welcomed by all Albertans, particularly farmers and sportsmen. It is that Alberta and the federal government have signed a four-year, \$3.2 million agreement to offset losses from crop depredation caused by migratory birds.

All hon. members will recall that migratory birds, since they do, in fact, cross provincial boundaries are the joint responsibility of the individual provinces and the Government of Canada. In recognition of this, this four-year agreement has been entered into which provides for prevention both in bait stations and lure crops that are operated by the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Department of Lands and Forests - and expanding. It also provides for compensation in crop losses experienced.

The period of the agreement will cover retroactively to April 1, 1973 through to the end of March 1977.

Hon. members will recall, I think, a previous comment in the House that the government, in late 1973, increased the maximum amounts payable to farmers for crop losses from \$15 to \$25 per acre.

In sum: with this agreement being implemented, Mr. Speaker, the initiative of the Alberta sportsmen in the original instance of the wildlife certificates that are purchased by sportsmen of Alberta and put into crop depredation loss funds will be matched by the Government of Alberta and by the Government of Canada. The terms of this will roughly be one-third by the sportsmen, one-third by Alberta and one-third by the Government of Canada.

A helpful provision as well, Mr. Speaker, to take account of certain years when an individual province - Alberta along with Manitoba and Saskatchewan - has a particularly difficult year, is that in the instance of the entire amount of another province not being fully needed in that year it can be transferred to the province that has a bad year and therefore needs it badly.

The agreement will be administered by Alberta, with a 50-50 cost arrangement with the federal government and today the Hon. Jack Davis is making the announcement of this agreement in Ottawa.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Petrochemical Projects - Feedstocks

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the first question to the Premier and ask if the Alberta government has received verification of the complete rejection of Alberta's conditions for a guarantee of feedstocks for the Dow-Dome petrochemical project in Sarnia?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's anything that has been finalized in that particular matter. There are a number of ongoing discussions. Some occurred as late as last evening. I think it's a matter of ongoing discussion between the governments and with the principals.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the course of the ongoing negotiations between Alberta and the federal government, had the federal government suggested to Alberta at any time in the course of those negotiations that they would use export controls as a weapon to force Alberta to guarantee crude for the Petrosar project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the second question really deals with the Petrosar project specifically, I believe. With regard to that, it's our view that before commenting further on public statements which may be made by federal ministers we should examine, as we intend to, in a series of meetings with various companies in the petrochemical field over the next two weeks and in particular with the Petrosar people when they visit Alberta on May 30, the various alternatives that may be involved. They certainly are concerned with an assured source of feedstock supply for projects such as Petrosar which would involve, I think, about a 20-year undertaking. So I think any further observations on our part at this time would be inappropriate until we have had a number of meetings, including the one of May 30.

MR. CLARK:

A supplementary question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Has the federal government, in the course of negotiations with Alberta to date, indicated that it would use export controls of Alberta crude if in fact Alberta does not, if I might use the term, knuckle under as far as the particular project is concerned?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think that the only way I can respond to that is to refer the hon. Leader to the letters that were tabled in the Legislature a week ago, an exchange between the Prime Minister and myself, and tell him that there are ongoing discussions by officials with regard to the matter of Petrosar. I think there is a very important opportunity for us to discuss the needs and requirements of the companies that are participants there to see if there are better ways in the Canadian public interest.

MR. CLARK:

A further supplementary question to the Premier. In light of the present federal election campaign, has the Premier had discussions or does he plan to hold discussions with the leader of the official Opposition, namely the Hon. Robert Stanfield, regarding Alberta's specific concerns concerning both the Petrosar project and the Dow-Dome project?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would add to that, and I hope the hon. Leader would add to that, the important project of the Alberta Gas Trunk Line and Canadian Industries Ltd.

Certainly it would be my intention with regard to those projects to be discussing them with the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition in the federal House, as with the Prime Minister, both during the course of the coming weeks and in the future. We of course would anticipate, as all Albertans would, that candidates of all political parties in the forthcoming election both in Alberta and otherwise, would take a position.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, if I may, to the hon. Premier. In the light of Mr. Macdonald's statement yesterday, can the hon. Premier assure the House that the officials of Petrosar have not closed the door on moving the project to Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, it's pretty hard to anticipate that sort of question. They are coming here to discuss various matters of feedstock supply. It might be helpful, I suppose, if there were a greater degree of support in central Canada for the position we are taking and perhaps the hon. member might do his part.

AHC Chairman - Severance Payment

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my second question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs if the terms of the severance agreement between the former Chairman of the Alberta Housing Corporation, Mr. Lansky, and the Government of Alberta have been finalized and secondly, have the severance payments been made in total to Mr. Lansky?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, the arbitration terms were settled some time ago and as far as I know he has received final payment. But I would have to check on that specific item and report back.

MR. CLARK:

Would the minister then check and report back to the House on the final payment?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

Cattle - Phosphate Shortage

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him if there are any plans under way to ensure that cattlemen will not run into a shortage of minerals again next winter, as they did this winter?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, the question of the supply of minerals is related to supplies from outside of the country, particularly in relation to the phosphates. As much as we possibly can, we intend to try to prevent any shortage in the coming months. Again, that's dependent upon the supply from outside of Canada, and inasmuch as we can help, we certainly intend to.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Landlord and Tenant Act - Evictions

MR. NOTLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to either the Minister of Consumer Affairs or the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the government had an opportunity yet to investigate reports that at least one Edmonton apartment owner has mailed eviction notices to tenants in an effort to circumvent the provisions of The Landlord and Tenant Act, as they apply to increased rents?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I'll answer the question in two parts. First of all, no, because we've only seen the news reports and the city alderman involved, of course, has not yet decided to divulge the specific name of the building or landlord involved, so that would be difficult to investigate.

Secondly, of course, we would be most willing to follow up with respect to the conditions of The Landlord and Tenant Act, insofar as they are being observed.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly whether or not there is any specific regulation or rule which would preclude owners of apartments who violate The Landlord and Tenant Act from receiving the education tax reduction?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is clearly asking for a legal opinion.

MR. NOTLEY:

Perhaps I could rephrase that and ask the government whether any moves are being made at this time by the government to change The Landlord and Tenant Act to provide more authority and also to provide more funds?

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question correctly, I believe the hon. member has two issues mixed. First of all, with respect to the freeing of assessment of all residential property from the levy of the education foundation tax, that is unconditional. Secondly, of course, if The Landlord and Tenant Act is being abused in any way, then the necessary follow-up steps would be taken with respect to anyone who does abuse the provisions of that Act.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Does the government at this time contemplate any major changes in the provisions of The Landlord and Tenant Act, either during this spring session or during the fall session?

MR. RUSSELL:

No, Mr. Speaker, I don't think we do at this time. I can't forecast what might occur between now and fall, but under today's circumstances, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder.

#### Lie Detectors

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. Would the hon. minister like to take this opportunity to advise if he has had any inquiries, complaints or involvement regarding the use of lie detectors?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, no, except the notice in the House and the reading of the press releases relative to lie detectors. There may have been some which didn't come to my attention at the Consumer Affairs branch, but they have not been brought to my attention directly.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Attorney General. Would the hon. minister report on the results of his department's assessment of the use of lie detectors, polygraphs and psychological stress evaluators?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, the "assessment" the hon. member is referring to, I believe, is an inquiry that was being carried out by the department to ascertain where there was existing legislation which had been breached by people conducting lie detector tests. That assessment is not yet completed, but from the work that has been done to date, there has been no indication that there was a breach of law. But the matter is still under consideration.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Attorney General. Is there any indication in the work that has been done to date that the government will be introducing any legislation in this regard?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, not during the spring portion of this session, but certainly the matter will remain under consideration.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Edmonton Calder followed by the hon. Member for Drumheller.

Syncrude - Federal Budget

MR. CHAMPERS:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. I wonder if the minister has any information as to whether or not Mr. Turner's federal budget will perhaps adversely affect the Syncrude project?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I had conversation with the hon. Mr. Turner, the federal Minister of Finance, I believe the day, or the second day after the proposed federal budget was presented. He assured me that the arrangement which had been worked out between Alberta and the federal government with respect to Syncrude was one which would not be affected and was not intended to be affected by the proposed federal budget.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Drumheller.

Gasoline Prices

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Provincial Treasurer but it will be necessary first to make two short statements, with your permission.

The CBC survey of gasoline stations on Monday, May 20, indicated two things; one, the wholesalers of the province indicated an increase of 9.2 cents and 8.8 cents, and one company, Gulf, no increase. The retailers' prices ranged from 49 cents to 67.9 cents, being a difference of 18.9 cents.

My question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer is, in light of these figures and this one-day inquiry, is the Provincial Treasurer or the government prepared to consider a probe or an inquiry to ascertain if some wholesalers and retailers are using the present situation to feather their own nests?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, the 'dramatism' of the hon. member's question I think leaves me ... I have the same figures in front of me and as a person who buys gas for his car, as well as being a minister of the Crown in this province, I thought it was an advantage that, in fact, prices at the pump range down to a low, I think, in this survey of 44 cents in Edmonton. In other words, it indicates certainly that we have a very competitive situation available for the consumer as far as gasoline prices at the pump are concerned. Certainly this is what I have been stressing in answers to earlier questions.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that as far as the description by the hon. member of supposed discrepancies [is concerned] I have indicated, and stated publicly, that it would take some time for prices at the pump to settle off. Because, of course, individual service stations are dealing with their inventories on hand, and the inventories of gasoline on hand at the particular time that the increased crude oil prices took effect will vary from station to station. I would say again that in a free enterprise competitive situation, certainly you are going to have a variance in prices. I think the important thing is that the consumer has access to a competitive situation, which is clearly indicated by the range of prices on the schedule I have in front of me.

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Could I ask one supplementary? The present range of prices appears because of the lifting of the freeze. When two majors increase to the extent of 9.2 [cents] and 8.8 [cents] and another major doesn't increase at all ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Could the hon. member come directly to the question. I wouldn't wish the practice of preceding the question with a recital of statistics to be taken as a precedent to which the Chair might be held on future occasions.

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very sorry. I felt I had to say it to get the tone of the question over.

My question is, does it not indicate that something is wrong, when three majors impose this type of increase while one major imposes no increase?

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect, the hon. member is asking for an expression of opinion by the hon. minister.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. What I am requesting is some action against these majors who appear to be gouging the retailers.

MR. SPEAKER:

Regrettably the rules which the Chair must follow do not permit representations for action during the question period, but only the seeking of information.

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

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question first, if I may, to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. I would ask the minister whether he is in a position today to indicate to the House if he or his department has compiled figures as to what a reasonable markup by the service station operators should be, once the wholesale price settles up, rather than settles down, I am afraid.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member may know, there has been some pressure by the retailers of gasoline for an increase over the last number of months - quite a number of months. They have respected the freeze imposed upon the oil and gas industry by the federal government, and they were suffering some considerable pressures during that period.

It would seem logical then, when the wholesale price was increased, that there should be a proportionate increase in the retail price over and above that. So, it's very difficult for us to assess where, in fact, that level should be. But as the hon. Provincial Treasurer has indicated, in a competitive system it will eventually level off, in view of the fact that the price range at the retail level now has such a wide variance.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question ...

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty understanding the thinking of the members on the other side. In the matter of this whole ...

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the minister might seek a more suitable occasion for ventilating his puzzlement in this regard.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs. I would ask the hon. minister whether he or his department has had an opportunity to assess the wholesale price increases by the three majors, to determine whether or not they reflect an accurate increase as a result of the crude oil price agreement, or whether there is, in fact, gouging?

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect, the last question of the hon. member, like its predecessor, in effect asks the minister whether he has examined certain statistics, and whether, as a result of that, he may have formed an opinion as to whether or not, in this instance,

there might have been gouging. Under the circumstances the question would not qualify for the question period.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The difficulty is that the majors are making the money and the government is getting the blame.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. My question to the hon. minister was not for an opinion but rather as to whether or not his department had had an opportunity to compile the statistics that are necessary for us to make a judgment.

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, the statistics we have on hand are only those that have come from the majors in their notification of price increases at the wholesale level. They have indicated that in all instances they have lived up to the terms as set out by the federal energy minister.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question to the hon. minister, for clarification. There has been, then, no effort on the part of the government to cross-check the figure supplied by the majors?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, I think the industry would be ill-advised to go against the terms of reference for this increase as laid out by the federal energy minister.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the government established any criteria for checking the increases in the retail trade at the pumps or will it be left strictly to the competitive system to work in that area?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, under the Provincial Treasurer's department there is a monitoring system through the Fuel Oil and Tobacco Tax Branch which in fact has the option of checking every retail outlet in Alberta. That is where the statistics the Provincial Treasurer has given us come from.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Is the minister saying then there is no check made by his department in regard to the increase at the retail level at the pumps?

MR. DOWLING:

Mr. Speaker, in answer to that I see no reason for duplicating the work that's now being done by the tax branch of the Provincial Treasury Department.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

#### Government Employees - Labour Relations

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Has the government received any suggestions since last Tuesday regarding the removal of existing discrepancies and inconsistencies of treatment of government employees between the various arms of government?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member could elaborate in terms of the communication.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might I suggest to the hon. member that in harking back to 171 of Beauchesne he might rephrase the question without any innuendo.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Would the minister advise why employees of the Alberta children's provincial general hospital are allowed to strike, when employees of other hospitals are not?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is clearly submitting argument.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Check the law.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Would the minister advise why the Foothills Hospital board negotiates with nurses through the Alberta Hospital Association and not in accordance with The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. member is able to rephrase that question so that it comes directly within the duties of the minister then it might be in order.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Is it the intention of the minister to bring all hospital employees under the same legislation?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member on developing his question so fully before getting to the point ...

MR. WILSON:

It's not easy!

MR. CRAWFORD:

... and refer it to my honourable colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Labour.

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, this matter is not one of judgment of a department of government or of the government itself. Very briefly, the procedure is one of application of a bargaining agent on behalf of employees who are deemed to be a proper bargaining unit. This kind of application goes to the Board of Industrial Relations. This happened at the Foothills Hospital and the unit referred to by the hon. member was given a certificate for bargaining. Subsequently, an amendment to The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act listed all those agencies, boards and corporations which fall within the particular Act. Those named and listed in that particular Act have not the right to strike but have access to third party and binding arbitration.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education. Would the minister advise why not all non-academic staff employees of colleges, universities and technical institutes are covered by the same legislation?

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect and reluctance; the hon. member is introducing a subject for debate rather than asking for information.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education. Would the minister advise if it his intention to take any steps to 'regularize' the employment practices in the areas under his jurisdiction?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it! However, I've been through I don't know how many hours of estimates in this House and the hon. member gets to this question! Perhaps I can suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member might like to read The Colleges Act and The Universities Act. And after he's had an opportunity of doing that and discovering the role of the department relative to internal management and the hiring and firing of staff within universities and public colleges, I'd be happy to discuss this matter with him further.

As far as provincially administered institutions are concerned, these are all employees of the provincial government. I'm sure that my colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Labour, is as well able to express their interests as I.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Telephones and Utilities. Is it the intention of the minister to bring the Crown agency, Alberta Government Telephones, under The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act?

MR. FARRAN:

No, Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of doing anything in that regard.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Solicitor General. Is it the intention of the minister to bring the Crown agency, Alberta Liquor Control Board, under The Alberta Labour Act?

MISS HUNLEY:

Not today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs ...

MR. LOUGHEED:

You're next.

MR. WILSON:

... will the employees of the proposed Alberta Energy Company be placed under The Alberta Labour Act?

MR. GETTY:

I was going to say not today. No, it's not our intention, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. What act will they be placed under?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, since it's a completely hypothetical question, I suggest the hon. member might bring it up when we're discussing the bill which creates the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Education. Would the minister advise why employees of the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation have been

singled out for placement under The Alberta Labour Act instead of The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please. The hon. member is slipping into a previous difficulty.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Would the minister advise why the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation employees are not covered by The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member's difficulty is not being made less by it being repeated.

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question on this if I may, to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. In light of the fact that the Alberta Energy Company is not a Crown corporation, can the minister advise why the employees would not automatically come under the provisions of The Alberta Labour Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

With great respect, it would appear that the difficulty of the hon. Member for Calgary Bow has become contagious.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Is there any consideration at all of bringing the employees of the Alberta Energy Company under the terms of The Alberta Labour Act?

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be wise if we continued the discussion during the committee's study of the Alberta Energy Company act which we presently have before the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Labour. Is it the intention of the minister to amend The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act and The Public Service Act to include a conciliation step as exists in The Alberta Labour Act?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, if I could make two comments. The first answer, which I gave to the hon. member, covered in the main all the multitude of questions that ensued thereafter. Secondly, the formal conciliation step, as such, is not a feature of The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act. However the informal function of conciliation is always there, through mediation services. This kind of thing is something that is part of all collective bargaining regardless of the nature of the act under which it falls. The significant point is that under The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act, the final step that the employees and indeed the employer have access to is that of third party arbitration.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it the intention of the minister to amend The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act and The Public Service Act, to include prohibition from unfair labour practice, as exists in The Alberta Labour Act?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is clearly making a representation, with respect to legislation, which is expressly covered by No. 171 in Beauchesne. If the hon. minister wishes to answer briefly, without objection from the Assembly, perhaps the answer might be given.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. HOHOL:

What I was going to report to you and the House, Mr. Speaker, is that the legislation to which the hon. member has referred this afternoon is going to be and has been constantly under ongoing study and review, through work with the Civil Service Association, the various Crown boards, agencies, the government, and other kinds of arm's-length bodies, changes to various acts will occur. But to be specific about any particular question and say, yes, we'll do this or that, would be untimely and unseemly, and we would not do it.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it the intention of the minister to add trustee protection clauses to The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act and The Public Service Act, similar to Section 166 of The Alberta Labour Act?

DR. HOHOL:

Well, this will certainly be one of several things that would require particular study. This specific item is complex and difficult, so I couldn't say this is one addition we would make in the near future.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. minister also considering amending The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act to allow multi-branch bargaining with one employer, as is permitted under The Alberta Labour Act?

DR. HOHOL:

Well, I could respond by saying this evolves, more than [it] is included, in legislation as part of procedure. It's something that two parties to collective bargaining agree [to] over a period of time. So this is possible under any kind of legislation where two parties bargain collectively.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. minister also ...

MR. SPEAKER:

Might this be the last supplementary on this topic. It would seem the hon. member is pursuing a line of questioning which might be appropriate in the discussion of the estimates of the Department of Manpower and Labour.

MR. WILSON:

Does the hon. minister also intend to amend The Crown Agencies Employee Relations Act and The Public Service Act to permit an independent authority to establish bargaining units rather than a cabinet minister?

DR. HOHOL:

I would have to say, in all honesty, Mr. Speaker, that the point the gentleman makes is nearly without precedent, to the best of my knowledge, in the crown agencies acts of this nation, and my intention would not, for those reasons - but I simply indicate precedent - [be] to perform in that way.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

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Federal Feed Grains Policy

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question today to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I was wondering if the hon. minister had heard from the Hon. Otto Lang or any government official regarding their new, proposed feed grains policy?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we haven't heard from the Hon. Otto Lang in recent weeks with regard to that.

MR. DIXON:

A supplementary question to the minister. I was wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the provincial government has had any input to this plan before they make their announcement?

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, discussions have been going on for the past year and a half with regard to feed grains policy in this country. Our input has been in. It's been tabled in this Legislature. We've had some discussion on the input and I'm sure Mr. Lang is aware of our position with regard to feed grains.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

CSA-ALCB - Salaries

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the hon. Solicitor General. Would the hon. minister advise on the progress of talks between the Civil Service Association and the Alberta Liquor Control Board regarding their salary dispute?

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information, other than that I have been advised they are discussing salaries. I have nothing further to report at this time.

MR. WILSON:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. minister table the latest salary proposals made by the Alberta Liquor Control Board?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no. No way.

MISS HUNLEY:

No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not prepared to do that at this time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair.]

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COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Committee of Supply will come to order.

Department of Lands and Forests

DR. WARRACK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How about the resolution?

MR. TRYNCHY:

Mr. Chairman, Subcommittee B has had under consideration Vote 18, the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Lands and Forests and begs to report the same. I therefore submit the following resolution:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$38,922,970 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1975, for the Department of Lands and Forests.

This is in two parts: \$33,955,330 chargeable to Income, and \$4,967,640 chargeable to Capital.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Very well. Are we ready for the question, Mr. Minister?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Don't make it long.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Don't be long.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Summarize it.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, may I now unleash my boundless enthusiasm? I didn't hear any groans, so I guess I'll proceed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, Mr. Chairman ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

I hope you're not going to be too long.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please.

DR. WARRACK:

Long enough to make a phone call.

Mr. Chairman, it's my real pleasure to offer some summary remarks with respect to some of the wonderful things we are doing in the Department of Lands and Forests. I would like to offer some introductory remarks which I think might deal with some of the questions that might come about and also perhaps initiate some in the minds of members.

All hon. members will recall the items in the Budget Speech of 1974 that referred to some of the responsibilities within the Department of Lands and Forests. I would like, in addition, to call members' attention to that point, to make the point that we have initiated what I regard as a theme for my responsibility in the Department of Lands and Forests, and it's a theme called thinking about tomorrow today. That is and will be featured in all the things that we do throughout the resource management divisions and also the support divisions of the Department of Lands and Forests, as those members who have noticed recent ads by the Department of Lands and Forests [will know].

I might point out for review on the part of all members, Mr. Chairman, that there are four resource management divisions in the Department of Lands and Forests: the Land Service dealing with public lands of Alberta, the Forest Service which is another resource management division, the Fish and Wildlife Division and the Provincial Parks Division - those being the four resource management divisions with four support divisions: the technical division, the registration division, the administration division and the personnel division - making a total of eight.

I welcome this opportunity to review briefly some of the responsibilities and initiatives that we are trying to carry forward and in that regard ask for the support and constructive suggestions of all hon. members.

I might mention at the outset, as an example of the importance of the support divisions, that they support not only the Department of Lands and Forests resource management division work, but also many of the aspects are carried forward across other departments of the government. I would draw your attention to the technical division, for example, which happens to be Vote No. 1804, and notice the variety of responsibilities outlined there having to do with aerial photography, the photo interpretation that is so essential as part of the multiple land use planning work that we're devising and was a very important input, by the way, to the Environment Conservation Authority hearings that were held in the summer of 1973. A very substantial service is provided, not only to the government and the necessary uses that there are, but in addition to that, to the public. I think it's a good example of the support that is necessary if the operations are able to go forward smoothly in the way that all of us wish, so that we might deploy as effectively as possible the services of the provincial government to those members of the public who interface with the responsibilities of the Department of Lands and Forests.

I might say that we are going increasingly toward, in this technical regard, Mr. Chairman, the systems analysis approach. I noticed, as a matter of fact, the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce taking note of the very great need for that to be done in the reality of 1974 life in Alberta.

I might just review briefly each of the four resource management divisions in turn, drawing members' attention to some of the important aspects of the work being contemplated and I say again that in the course of this we certainly welcome the constructive comment of any member.

The Forestry Division very clearly provides employment opportunity. We feel, as a matter of government policy, that it is essential also to provide an investment opportunity for Canadians and for Albertans. In both of these regards I draw your attention to the Whitecourt-Fox Creek disposition that was made very late in 1973, to the rather dramatic future benefit of that region of Alberta where substantial employment opportunity is provided, and in addition to that the investment opportunity was assured at the same time.

Forestry, also in the forest lands and the vegetation of forestry that goes on those lands is the critical bench mark base by which the watershed provision - and I noticed a great deal of reference, I think particularly by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder in his opening remarks about the eastern slopes last week, dealt with the essence of watershed and also the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, how important that is, and that

is interlinked with the forestry responsibilities and a part of what the forests of Alberta provide. Also, certainly, it's a house, if you like, or a cover for wildlife and increasingly the provider of recreational opportunity for Alberta and Alberta's visitors.

I would like to draw members' attention to the basic nature of the budget dealing with forestry that recognizes the considerably increased work that will be necessary as we go towards the future, to have an increasing multiple use brought forward for the public interest of that inventory of resource that we have, and also for the provision of that inventory of resource being renewed throughout the future. In that regard, all hon. members will recall the important and constructive debate that followed on Bill No. 16 as introduced and brought forward by the Member for Whitecourt, Mr. Trynchy.

Certainly in terms of some of the additional developments that are occurring in forestry, all hon. members will be familiar with the Whitecourt and Fox Creek developments, the additional developments at Slave Lake and the major developments that were completed, though not started, by this government at Grande Prairie by Procter and Gamble.

Secondly, I would draw your attention to the matters of reforestation that are covered in two of the votes that are part of the Department of Lands and Forests budget, the Quota Reforestation and also the Silviculture. You will notice that there are very substantial increases for reforestation provided and highlighted in the budget dealing with those two items.

Also, most hon. members will probably have noticed that we contemplate a new forest regeneration centre for Alberta. Whereas in the past it has been the joint use of the Oliver nursery for agriculture, shelter belt purposes and so forth as well as for forestry timber supply for future purposes, this is no longer adequate in Alberta. It is essential that we have the proper kind of forest regeneration unit and we intend to provide that for the province of Alberta.

Another highlight, for those recreationalists among us and those constituents we all have who are highly attuned to recreational matters, is that we have a very considerable expansion in this budget in the forest recreation areas which are provided in Alberta along the forestry trunk roads.

Also, members will notice a fairly substantial reference made to additional bridge work that is being done. That comes as a result of a study which was compiled on the bridges on the forestry trunk road and which found that it was essential to have very quick repairs to a certain number of bridges last year. That was done on a special warrant basis once we received that information. In addition, there is a substantial increment in the budget to replace, in some instances - perhaps in all instances, I don't exactly recall - but if not replace, to greatly improve some of the bridges which had become open to question due to age; that combined with the fact that they receive additional traffic beyond what they once did and what was probably contemplated when these bridges were designed and installed.

With the fire suppression vote, I would simply draw your attention, as members of the Legislature, to two factors. First of all, we do budget for fires now and that's a change from the old government. Secondly, contained in the fire suppression budget of Appropriation 1823, are funds for the firefighter recognition program which was announced a year ago with the clear direction of having recognition of the people who are the forest firefighters of Alberta to whom we owe a great deal, and especially some of those who are among the very best - the Native people of our province. I draw members' attention to those highlights within the resource management division of Forestry.

Secondly, following the order in which they are listed on page 97, I'd offer a few highlight comments by way of summary of the resource management division of Fish and Wildlife where hon. members will notice a very substantial and welcome increase to the budget which is, I think, agreed by all as a very necessary item.

In some sense it was a major year for the Fish and Wildlife Division with the opportunity to better carry forward some of the programs they have had under way and some of the expansions, including additional enforcement officers who have been asked for by almost every member of the Assembly.

I would draw members' attention, by way of clarification, to the appropriation called the Resource Development Program, No. 1837. That particular appropriation is the Buck for Wildlife appropriation. I would ask you - rather than for me to take the time once again in the House during this session to explain the nature of how this is set up and operated - you might recall my remarks on this matter at second reading of Bill No. 30, The Wildlife Amendment Act, where I explained the way this was being handled with reference to improvement of wildlife habitat for the future of Alberta. That I think is perhaps as consistent as anything could possibly be with the theme thinking about tomorrow today.

Just for the fun of it, I would like to point out also that one of the very nice things about being the Minister of Lands and Forests is that I had the happy circumstance, one which I shall remember for some time, perhaps forever, of buying the very first Buck for Wildlife stamp, or certificate if you like. We are contemplating selling a lot of them inasmuch as I bought No. 000001. That was the very first dollar that went to the Buck for Wildlife program for habitat restoration and improvement, to increase the wildlife presence of Alberta. I think there is no doubt at all that every member supports that.

Some of the increased costs that are built into the budget, as it pertains to the Fish and Wildlife Division, have to do with the new fish hatchery operation in Calgary which we contemplate, this year, being close to a full production position for the first time. That should be an important assist as we try to look towards the fisheries side of providing the kind of opportunity that the public wishes with respect to the fisheries of Alberta, and the opportunity for people to go fishing.

Certainly it has been a matter of some controversy, and I stand very firmly dedicated to the balanced position that we have striven to achieve with respect to problem wildlife management. On the one hand it might be easy for those of us - and I say us because I, too, now live in the suburbs - who are far removed from the major problems and cost difficulties that can be imposed on people when you have a wildlife predator situation, to discount it. But it's certainly a major matter to those people whose livelihoods are jeopardized.

At the same time, it is very clear that it is essential to attack the problem on a management basis so that it is possible to achieve a balance rather than either to let it be - which would be sort of the wildlife management approach of laissez faire. To the person who loses livestock during the course of this I suppose it's laissez 'unfaire'. We intend to try to manage that problem in as balanced a way as possible. It's an early part of the program in the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Department of Lands and Forests and we certainly encourage and ask for constructive suggestions with respect to how the job might better be done.

I mentioned that there are additional enforcement officers provided in the budget. An additional six enforcement officers will be provided in this budget.

Related to the announcement that was possible today, by accident of timing, regarding the crop depredation program, I would simply remind members that the wildlife damage maximum has been increased from \$15 to \$25. We have now been able to finalize an agreement with the federal government so that we not only have funds from the sportsmen of Alberta but, in addition to that, we have provincial and federal government funds to support the prevention programs and the compensation programs related to migratory birds and waterfowl which damage crops, particularly in years such as the fall of 1973 and, now, the spring of 1974. These are some highlights that I would draw to all members' attention.

With respect to the resource management division of lands, I think all might agree that land is rather the centre of gravity of the resource system. In Alberta some 54 per cent of the province's land surface is provincial public land and a substantial additional amount, of course, is federal as well - some 10.5 per cent. I would remind you that some 60 per cent of the 54 per cent is the green zone - the permanent forest lands of Alberta.

There is no doubt in my mind that the future holds more emphasis, interest and attention by the public of Alberta to the public land - their land, if you like. It will be increasingly necessary, I think, to do two things. Part of this is reflected in the budget of 1974-75.

The first of these two things is to recognize the need to carry forward, even more, the massive workload that is necessary in the normal regulatory management of public lands to assure they do not have a desecration imposed upon them with use by the public or by individuals on a disposition basis. That's a great deal of additional work beyond what it was not all that long ago. This is the result of public interest in public lands and public resources generally in the province.

The second thing, in addition, is that I would predict for the future that we would need a very much more active - as contrasted with regulatory or passive, the first point - kind of public land management that involves planning for use rather than responding to suggested uses only. I think we're at the transition point in Alberta's history relative to the public lands of the province and we can look forward to that as being an enormous challenge to every member who sits here now and every member who will sit here in the foreseeable future dealing with the public land of the province of Alberta.

Particularly mindful, as an example, are the eastern slopes of Alberta where a great deal of study has been completed and more is under way. At the same time the hearings were held through the five main watersheds in the summer of 1973 by the Environment

Conservation Authority. One report has been brought forward and tabled in the House. They have also conducted a public opinion poll as well as the public hearing exercises themselves, and without exception all 75 members, I'm sure, as well as a very large number of private concerned citizens, are very interested in what the results of the recommendations of those hearings will be.

Again, I would comment on the excellent debate and the excellent contributions that were made on the resolution put forward by Mr. Chambers, the MLA for Edmonton Calder, that was discussed in this House a short time ago.

In the budget of 1974-75 - as was discussed in some detail in committee and as all other members will be able to notice as they look through the budget presented to them - we are expanding the Grazing Reserve Program in a pretty substantial way in the province and providing the opportunity for more mixed farming arrangements so the lack of grazing lands does not necessarily bottleneck the total amount of livestock production that can take place in Alberta, and in that way unlock the bottleneck of not only how much livestock production there is, but how even the flow of that production is. Those are key factors for additional agricultural processing in the province. It is part of that integrated process to develop the future of Alberta we aim for in the Grazing Reserve Program that is being expanded, and also in the range improvement on public lands that's being undertaken.

If I could be permitted one bit of repetition, Mr. Chairman, it would be again to predict that the public lands, in their planning, in their management and in their administration, would be one of the more exciting challenges in Alberta in the foreseeable future.

Fourth and last as resource management divisions, I would make a few comments on parks and I'll be relatively brief because Bill No. 33, The Provincial Parks Act, has had the benefit of considerable discussion in this House and I need not repeat the remarks that I made at that time, on second reading. For example, to point to the parameters of the Parks Policy Paper that is available to all hon. members in position paper No. 13, I believe it is, that was tabled in the House one year ago, in May 1973.

All hon. members will, however, notice there has been a dramatic increase both in the operating budget and in capital budget with respect to parks and I would draw your attention to the fact that the capital item under parks involves a million dollar capital program for this year, but that is within the Department of Lands and Forests. In addition to that, there are two other points to be mentioned. There is some \$2 million that is in the Public Works estimates that is geared to parks, so that is a total of \$3 million. In addition, you notice on the very last appropriation that there are some special projects carried forward on a federal-provincial cost shared basis and a considerable amount of funds is available for the development of Slave Lake Provincial Park on that basis. There is some considerable amount of money totalling \$200,000 there as well. So that's on the order of \$3.25 million. Even that, by the way, is close to the total capital budget of the last five years. So that's a very substantial increase and one that, as the minister responsible for provincial parks in this province, I don't mind saying that I am proud of.

I draw your attention to the fact that in the 1974-75 budget, we shall be doing four things that you would want to pay some considerable heed to and perhaps some others as well. One of these things is that we have now, as we said we would during the Speech from the Throne, gone forward with the second metropolitan provincial park in Alberta, the Capital City Park in Edmonton. So we have the provincial park that is a metropolitan park in Calgary and the comparable park, more so in fact, in Edmonton, the capital of Alberta.

Second, we shall continue what we undertook in 1972 and that is the upgrading of existing provincial parks where they are badly in need, and in some cases desperately in need, of upgrading, at some considerable expenditure of funds.

Third, we are proceeding with the development of provincial parks that, prior to the last election, had been declared but where no development had occurred. We are proceeding with the development of those parks, the physical development in the instances that substantial planning was not necessary before we could proceed with them. But in the instances of two of these, Young's Point and Calling Lake, that can in the future be very substantial provincial parks in Alberta, we are proceeding with the full planning input to develop them as items that will be provincial parks of which Albertans can be duly proud.

Fourth, I draw to your attention that we are decentralizing with respect to parks operations. Up to now, there has been a park workshop in Edmonton that has handled and, if you like, administered and done the technical work on all the provincial parks across the province. We have, on a basis of this budget and contained in this budget, approved the location of provincial parks installations at Vulcan and also at Valleyview. So that decentralization is taking place.

I might just say as a matter of final comment ...

[ Mr. Moore applauded. ]

I knew you would. I was waiting for him to ... . Come on. Do it.

[ Dr. Buck applauded. ]

Gee, I feel better now.

Those are the remarks I would make with respect to parks in view of the fact that I did have an opportunity to offer extensive remarks on second reading of Bill No. 33. I would just, as a matter of final comment, Mr. Chairman, take the opportunity to say that I've very, very much enjoyed having the responsibility in the Department of Lands and Forests and in parks and that I have now been able to visit 39 of Alberta's provincial parks and am dedicated to visiting the remainder.

Thank you.

DR. BOUVIER:

I would like to take this opportunity to make a comment in regard to the Department of Lands and Forests. They will be just in two areas as they apply to my own constituency. Both of them were the subject of questions previously and both were not very satisfactorily answered.

The first one is to inform the minister in regard to the fish situation at Kauffman's Creek, which I raised the other day. Although there has been complete inactivity by the Department of Lands and Forests, today I received a phone call from the Department of Highways and Transport. I must congratulate the Department of Highways and Transport because from my question the other day they have undertaken to look into the situation of the culvert which is too small - not by highway standards, by the way, because it is okay for the highway, but it's too small in that the fish migrating up the creek are unable to get through; it's acting as a dam to the fish. Although this has been going on for years, the people of my area were under the impression that the fish and wildlife officers had informed the Department of Lands and Forests, and they've been continually reassured that something would be done. But up until now, nothing has been done.

The Department of Highways and Transport apparently, from the person I was talking to today, was unaware of it but they have assured me they will look into the situation. I can inform the minister that his department can continue their inactivity and probably the situation will be remedied by the Department of Highways and Transport.

The other area I wanted to talk about was in regard to fire suppression. This is a good term for it. It's to raise again the situation of fire permits for farmers trying to burn some of the brush they cleared last winter. When I raised the question in the House - and I'd like to read the minister's answer because this illustrates how well you can answer a question when you don't really know what you are talking about - the answer was in reply to my question which was, is the minister planning to make fire permits available to farmers so they can burn brush at a time when it will burn? He says:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member was up-to-date on matters in his own constituency he would know that we have made some important changes in the fire permit issuance guidelines and particularly as they pertain to the Lac La Biche area, to better balance the need for fire protection and yet at the same time, the need to burn debris so that better agricultural operations can take place.

Now that's a very nice answer but it doesn't really say anything. It doesn't really answer my question. It could be used to answer any question that was asked.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That's an answer.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You call that an answer?

DR. BOUVIER:

That's a real stock answer. Then when I followed up the question, he said:

Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to elaborate on some of the improvements we have made. In response to requests from local government in the Lac La Biche area, as the hon. member may or may not know ...

Well, obviously the hon. member did not know, because according to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the debate that took place on Bill No. 55 there are no local

authorities in the area. In speaking to the minister outside the House he informed me it was the county which had requested, and of course, the Lac La Biche area is in a local improvement district. How the County of Lac La Biche could request it, I don't know. But after indicating that the member didn't know what he was talking about, the minister, of course, with the protection of the question period where debate is not permitted, makes some glowing statements, usually very arrogant and usually with no substance.

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

DR. BOUVIER:

Of course, the situation of fire permits in the Lac La Biche area is the same as it has been for the last couple of years. Obviously, and it must have been at the request of the Department of Municipal Affairs since it's a local improvement district, the Department of Lands and Forests has taken over fire regulation in ID 18, that portion which is outside - and I'm talking now of the portion that is outside the green area and this must be made clear - in an area where previously farmers did not require any permits to burn. I'd like the minister to have a good look at this and perhaps change some of the regulations because I'm under the impression that probably the same regulations are being applied to this farm area as are being applied to the green area. [Under] some of the regulations, of course, you have to have a permit to burn.

Now, how do you get a permit? Well, I can relate it very clearly because yesterday I had my own son go out and try to get a permit to burn some brush piles on my own farm. He went to the Lac La Biche office which is the regional office of the Department of Lands and Forests. The first thing he was told was that he could not get a permit there, that he had to get it from Wandering River, some 50 miles away. Next, of course, there is usually nobody in the office in Wandering River because it's a house where the forest officer lives and when he's out, of course, there is nobody there.

After phoning long distance and waiting for a long time, somebody, who appeared to be the wife of the forestry officer, answered the phone. I was told he was not there but she would relay the message. Finally, some time in the afternoon, not the one who was in charge of that area, but another fire guardian, as they are now referred to - they run around in big trucks with a big red sign on top that says, Fire Guardian - showed up and went to inspect the burning. Well, there were two areas to burn. One area was broken land with piles of brush that had been re-piles. Well, there was no problem. He issued a permit for that. But where there were windrows he would not issue a permit, advising there had to be land 50 feet wide broken or ploughed all the way around it before he would issue a permit.

Of course, anybody who is even aware of farming practices and how brush burns [knows] it's too soft to break land at this time of year. Therefore, he might as well have said, there is no way you are going to get a fire permit this year to burn this land; to burn these brush piles. Now this applies - and I'm using my own case because I investigated it. This was the best way I knew to see how things worked, because I had been receiving complaints from the farmers in the area for some time - there is no way you can burn that brush. Now by the time it's dry enough to break, and most breaking is done on a custom basis, not every farmer has his own breaking equipment, he is not going to get somebody to move a cat into the area to break 50 feet around a field. Therefore, he's not going to be able to do it until he breaks the whole land and he is going to have to break with the windrows not burnt. It is liable to be July in this area before it's solid enough to do the breaking. By July, of course, windrows will not burn, the sap will have soaked into the trees, they will have started to become mouldy and won't burn. By fall they won't burn either, which means that these windrows will not burn until they have dried up, which could take a couple of years.

Now this is the situation [in] which the farmers in the Lac La Biche area find themselves. There has been a lot of clearing, especially last winter, and it's impossible to burn under the circumstances which they have to meet to get fire permits.

Furthermore, the regulations, when they can get a fire permit, suggest they have to have two shovels, two axes, three gunny sacks and 45 gallons of water all on hand [in order] to burn. I presume the second shovel and the second axe are in case they break the first ones.

Certainly the practice of regulating fires and protection from fires is great. But it's got to be balanced with a method of enforcement that does allow some burning. The only conclusion I can come to is that in the area now, in the whole ID, and this stretches from north of Lac La Biche right down to Bonnyville, in the whole portion of ID 18 that is outside the green area, it's almost - and there may be exceptions - but it's almost impossible to burn under the existing regulations and the way they are being enforced by the fire guardians who go around issuing permits.

I'd like to hear the comments of the minister on this and I'd certainly like him to look at it and see if there can't be some changes in the regulations as they pertain to developed farm areas where they are surrounded by other fields and there is no timber in the area, there is no danger of a forest fire or anything of the kind; the only thing that could burn is some of the grass that maybe needs burning.

Really the only people who need protection that I can see are the other farmers in the area who may not want some areas burned. From that point of view it might be good and I realise that some regulations do have to be enforced.

The other thing, of course, is that although they are enforcing the issuing of permits and enforcing the regulations so rigidly, if a fire does occur, if somebody comes by and sets a fire, then they won't go and fight the fire in that same area because they say, that's outside our jurisdiction. It's not a forest area and it's not green area, therefore they won't help you fight it. You're on your own to fight it, even though some vandalism occurs and somebody else sets the fire. So I'm wondering why the discrepancy?

The only thing they do is make sure there are no fires lit in the area.

DR. WARRACK:

I would be happy, Mr. Chairman, to reply to the comments by the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray.

First of all, I recall at the time he asked the question about the culvert, he mentioned he had been trying to resolve that matter for years. Certainly, of course, that is a Department of Highways and Transport matter, and I know he'll be pleased this government has taken the quick action he described.

With respect to the matter of fire suppression, there is certainly no question it is a difficult matter to contend with. On the one hand there are those who have good reason to want to burn and perhaps for one reason or other, particularly with the kind of a fall there was in 1973, may not have had an opportunity at all to burn material they had cleared. There is just no question that to the extent fall burning can be done, the fall is by far the safer time to do this; safer not only with respect to personal safety and the public and private property that can be involved aside from the timber resource itself, but certainly in terms of the possibility of the spreading, raging and fear-inducing forest fire I have had the opportunity to see in full blush.

As a matter of fact there's just no escaping the reality, but in clearing lands it is essential to take into account the fire control needs as a constraint on how the matter, including the disposal of the waste material, is handled so we do not jeopardize the valuable forests we have.

I really wonder in a way about the point the hon. member makes with respect to his son's effort to try to arrange the fire permit, because as I understand it the man was there and one of the two situations was already resolved. That must have happened very quickly in order for that to have occurred, given the time dimensions that I understand of the initial inquiry having been made on behalf of the farm. Perhaps it is better described as a ranch enterprise, operated by the hon. member, and done by his son for him.

I would like to point out that we should not, as a public, and should not, as a government, and should not, as a Legislature, just because last year and the last half of 1972 as well, were so moist - as I recall, we had a monsoon every weekend in 1973 - we should not be lulled asleep to the dangers that are present through forest fires just because last year was an extremely good year insofar as forest fires were concerned - the best year in a very long time. Although the year before started out with a very serious situation in late May and the early days of June when, in fact, we had to evacuate the entire town of Swan Hills, the rest of the summer was very moist, and therefore turned out, on balance, to be a very good year.

But I would point out that this is no laughing matter. There is a matter of personal safety, there is the matter of private and public property aside from the timber resource, and there is the timber resource itself. Probably the most dangerous period of time is right now, for a number of reasons, including the settlement fires that occur because, not in all instances, but particularly in a late spring like this year, you can have substantial long grass the member laughingly suggests needs to be burned anyway. That's the kind of grass that sweeps the settlement fires into the forest and gives you a very major problem right now.

On top of that you can refer to the land being soft, wet and all of this, but the fact is that when the land is soft and wet it not only creates the problems the member referred to with respect to agricultural operations, but you also can't get on it with substantial heavy equipment of any kind to fight the fires.

No doubt the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake will recall the fire of 1968, which was a very dramatic fire that went in the direction of the town and, I think, caused its evacuation. Am I right? No? Okay, but a very severe situation that certainly created a major potential danger, and that came from a settlement fire, without a doubt a fire nobody intended to have get away. Nobody intended that to happen. But it happens, then it's too late and you're in this situation.

I'll say to the hon. member that we try to take the position of being as quick in response and as reasonable as possible in dealing with the fire permit applications, but the fact is that right now would not be a very good time to be burning unless there were very substantial protections against that fire getting away, because of the way it is now, dry on top, wet underneath with lots of old grass in which the fires can travel very rapidly from a settlement situation that no one intends to let get away. But it's too late after it happens.

I would say also the speed of response the hon. member described really doesn't strike me as being all that bad, with respect to a person being on the job and trying to help in whatever way he could, and with one of the two situations being something that could be agreed as a fire permit application.

I don't think I'll bother with the distortion about the County of Lac Ste. Anne and so on. I described to the member - as I was in a hurry to go somewhere and he was following me down the stairs like a puppy dog - that we had these requests from counties, municipalities, improvement districts, and I knew one of these included his area, and that it was, in part, in response to that. As a matter of fact I received another one in the mail today from another area not all that far from the hon. member's area - but I suspect not including any of his constituency - for this kind of arrangement.

So this is no laughing matter. I'm a little concerned that even I, with the heavy responsibility in this regard - should people lose their property and even lose their lives due to a fire that should not have occurred, that there is a possibility for all of us, which I want as best I can, to guard against, of being lulled asleep to the possibility of an extremely serious fire year in 1974, despite the fact that last year was just an excellent year from that viewpoint. 1972 was a good year as well, particularly in the last three-quarters of the year.

But with respect, in summary, Mr. Chairman, I do think we make every effort we can to be reasonable about how this is handled, recognizing that part of the agricultural development of lands does involve burning of the material that needs to be cleared. But at the same time, I'll put no one under any illusions. I intend to be dedicated to the protection of the forests of this province. If there is substantial doubt about their being protected for fire reasons, particularly at a time of year such as now, which is more dangerous for the reasons I have described, I really intend to be as fully dedicated as possible to the protection of the forests from fire.

DR. BOUVIER:

I'd like to make a few comments. Obviously the minister has missed the point on a few items. First of all, when we're talking about burning in the fall - most of the clearing, of course, is done in the wintertime and the period to burn it is in the spring, not the next fall. If you clear it in the fall, sure the best time to burn it would be right away.

Secondly, his whole speech - he stated he didn't want to get lulled to sleep and I had a hard time keeping awake during the time he was saying it, because he gave us a very good speech on fire prevention. Of course, I stated I agreed with that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Motherhood.

DR. BOUVIER:

Yes, as my colleague has just said, we made some good motherhood statements.

The point about the trouble of getting a fire permit and the point I was trying to make is that Wandering River is 50 miles away from Lac La Biche where there is a lot of the farming, and it's served by long distance. Most of the farmers in the area have to phone long distance to get a fire permit when the Lac La Biche office is in radio contact with the Wandering River office. They have to be there and as far as I'm concerned, it's just absolute negligence on their part. They should radio to inform the ranger in Wandering River, if this is where he is living, and tell him that somebody wants a fire permit. There is no complaint about the length of time it took to get the permit. Of course, I am also aware that everybody doesn't get the rapid action the MLA gets when he wants a fire permit.

As far as the puppy dog approach, the minister was referring to the fact that I was trying to talk to him and he was walking away, which is the usual attention that you get from the minister ...

MR. GHITTER:

Bark! Bark!

DR. BOUVIER:

... fortunately not from all of the ministers, but most of them it would appear. If you are an Opposition member they don't even listen to you. Most of the time you're lucky if you can get to their ministerial assistants. Sometimes when you try to talk to them they absolutely shove you off. I suppose that's how they consider members of the Opposition - you are a puppy dog, you should be kicked back where you belong and you shouldn't even be talking to a minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Quit whining.

DR. BOUVIER:

Obviously this appears to be the attitude of the Minister of Lands and Forests. Whenever you ask him a question or whenever he speaks, it's just absolute arrogance. He doesn't care whether he answers the question and when he listens to you he obviously has very little regard for the wishes of the people you represent. I hope that his attitude won't carry right through and that he won't have another look at the enforcement of fire regulations in the farm area in the Lac La Biche area - in that portion of ID 18 that is farming.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, two points - we've now isolated the member's problem, not a complaint about the time it took as he described, but that someone had to make a long distance phone call. In any case, I think there is a point that is made and I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the member and the House, that the question of communication within the forest region itself, for example the complaint the hon. member poses, is one that I'll indeed look into.

With respect to when he was following me down the stairs ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Barking at you.

DR. WARRACK:

... he might enjoy knowing that I was trying to see a doctor and I didn't dare be late. So he might think that one over.

MR. MANDEVILLE:

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few comments on this vote with regard to the critical situation we face with pheasants. Coming from Brooks, which always used to be the paradise for pheasants, I think I could almost take the name of the pheasant sheik of the province.

As far as the one change in regulations that was made last year, I want to congratulate the minister. I think it was one of the areas that was giving us many problems and that was in harvesting our hen pheasants. I was very pleased when I heard the announcement that we weren't going to have any further hen pheasants harvested, especially last year. However, there are some other areas that I've been trying to put across to the officials and to the people in your department and those are in regard to changes that I feel need to be made to the regulations.

One of the main problems, I think, with our pheasant population decreasing the way it is since you've closed the hen pheasant season, is long seasons. We have long seasons and they split the seasons up. This has been causing our pheasants to winterkill. What happens is that we have the first season and the pheasants come back in after the season has closed. When the hunters attack them again they go back out and don't come back in until the severe weather drives them back in. They are going into the winter and they don't have enough flesh on them to survive. I think what we need to do is close the season for 1974 and possibly 1975, and then after that take a look at having shorter and earlier seasons on our pheasants, so that they are not winterkilled.

I do realize that habitat is one of the major factors as far as the decrease in our pheasant population is concerned. However, I can remember in 1969, when we had the mercury scare, we closed the season for one year and that following season our pheasant population was good. The officials told me that it was the winter and I agree that we did have a mild winter that time, but our pheasant population really increased that year. When I go back to my area where we have a lot of pheasants and a lot of irrigation, we hardly see a pheasant all winter. The population is down to where there are almost no more pheasants.

I took a survey in my constituency and, Mr. Chairman, good interest was shown by the people to whom I sent it. I sent out a random survey and I had an 80 per cent return. The first question was, should we close the 1974 season? Approximately 50 per cent of the results said that we should close it. The second question was, leaving the 1974 season open, and 10 per cent of the return indicated that they wanted to leave it open. Restocking the pheasant population and leaving the 1974 season open - there were 20 per cent who agreed to leaving it open, providing that we restock the pheasant population. Restocking the pheasant population and closing the 1974 season - 60 per cent agreed to this.

The other question was, leaving the pheasant hunting season open as it is. There were 2 per cent, Mr. Chairman, of the returns which indicated that they wanted to leave the pheasant season as it is. The survey went on to ask many questions. For instance, did they want to leave the season open to everyone or did they want it just for Albertans? I might say that a majority felt that the season should be open to everyone. They didn't want to restrict it to Albertans, western Canadians or North Americans. Another one of the questions on the survey, would you support government payments to farmers to feed pheasants on private lands in designated areas? There was strong support for this particular part of the survey.

I think if we have the hatchery set up in Brooks, this will be a major step to hatch our pheasants, but I wouldn't like to see the pheasants released just before they open the season. This has been the method that has been used in the past. They turn the pheasants out and then they turn the hunters loose on them. They slaughter these pheasants and they don't have a chance to survive the winters. I would like to suggest to the minister that we turn these pheasants out after the season has closed, and then after we turn them loose, let's pay the farmers. Let's pick out some farmers in the area and let's pay them to winter the birds so they can survive. I think this would be a big step towards getting our pheasant population back to where it should be.

I think that we shouldn't advertise our pheasant hunting too adversely at the present time. If we do, pheasants are going to be like the whooping cranes. There are going to be very few left and we won't need a pheasant sheik in the province. We'll just need a spotter to find them.

I do hope the minister will give serious consideration to closing the 1974 season.

MR. MOORE:

Mr. Chairman, I didn't want the hon. members to leave the discussion with regard to fire control without being able to express just a couple of opinions to the minister. I'm particularly concerned that he might, in some form or another, take the suggestions given by the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray as being an opinion expressed by a majority of people in this province. I, for one, am a member who represents a constituency where over the last 25 to 30 years there has been a vast amount of land clearing.

Certainly we recognize the necessity of proper fire control and proper fire regulations. When you have seen brush fires in settled areas run over people's homes and buildings, when you have seen brush fires in forested areas destroy literally thousands of acres of timber, you can certainly recognize that those regulations are not put there to hinder farmers or people who are anxious to carry out certain tasks. They are put there for the protection of the very people who live in that area.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the minister that the fire control people within the Department of Lands and Forests, namely the forest officers in the local area, in my view have been doing a very excellent job of getting to the individual's place as quickly as possible to make inspections and issue permits. It is one thing to say that that situation should be improved. I believe where possible we should improve it and we should provide, as the hon. member suggests, perhaps a little closer contact between the fire control officer and the individual.

But I want to say again to the minister - suggestions that people should be allowed to burn at all times of the year, particularly in the spring, without proper fireguards, suggestions that brush will not burn except in the spring - obviously those suggestions don't come from anyone who has very much knowledge of burning brush.

Those things, Mr. Chairman, should be looked at with regard to the sources they come from. The minister and the department should continue with the work they have carried out in fire control for the protection of all people in rural Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I was wondering if ...

MR. CHAIRMAN:

On the same subject?

MR. R. SPEAKER:

No it isn't. I was wondering if we could complete that subject. There is a new subject raised over here with regard to pheasants. We are sort of getting them all mixed together. I think if we could deal with each, one after another, we could ...

MR. CHAIRMAN:

As long as the members agree, I would appreciate that. On the same subject, Mr. Drain.

MR. DRAIN:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I might mention that I would think that the role the forest service plays in the burning of brush could be considerably enlarged.

Now I have watched brush that had two feet of snow on it being burned in the middle of winter, south of Grande Prairie. The reason was they had a very simple thing, a 30 horsepower Briggs and Stratton motor turning an airplane propellor. Once you got the fire started, it would just sweep right down the windrow. Now it would be unrealistic to suggest that every farmer should have one of these. But if one were available, on rental, in the various ranger areas then the time when brush could be burned could conform with the environmental circumstances that would permit it to be burned safely.

I have had personal experience with what happened in the Lesser Slave Lake fire, having been there. It was certainly something for anyone who had seen it to have cause to watch with great concern. In fact, there would be no rationale, in my view, for even taking one iota of a chance to ever have a recurrence of something that cost the amount of money that that cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Any more comments on that subject - Dr. Bouvier.

DR. BOUVIER:

... [Inaudible] ... more comments on that subject. Obviously everybody is confusing forest fires with fires in farmed areas where there are fields all around and a patch of bush that has been cleared in the wintertime, so that the brush and the leaves have all been cleared. That is in itself a fireguard. Everybody, of course, is relating to the situation of forest fires. Of course, we realize there are forest fires and we agree to that.

The point I was trying to make is that it is very difficult for farmers to get any kind of permit to burn. The regulations should be more realistic than they are.

To say that brush will burn at any time of the year and that I haven't had any experience in burning brush - if the member who said it is older than I am, that's the only way he is going to have more experience than I have in burning brush. I know when brush will burn and when it won't. As I have stated, brush that is cleared during the winter - if you don't burn it in the spring, once the snow melts and it sits all summer, by fall it will not burn unless you get an airplane motor and a propeller just to get the fire going. Maybe it will burn under certain circumstances - if you had a very dry year. But it has not happened for several years that we have had a very dry year. There is no danger, in view of the fact that it is raining all the time and the brush won't burn, that's probably why the forest won't burn either. To suggest that if you have cleared in wintertime that this is not a sufficient firebreak, there is no way - furthermore, I should state that the brushing has been done according to the regulations issued by the department. Every brush pile has got to be so far away from other standing trees, and it has got to be broken up in various lengths. All this being done, the farmer still can't get a burning permit unless he goes out and breaks the land. I don't think that this is realistic.

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, the member's remarks remind me of the story of the parents whose son was recruited into the war. They went to see him march and his mother said, look, everybody is out of step but my Johnny.

With respect to the question of where clumps are piled and so on, I think every reasonable person realizes that there needs to be a separation of these. But to have met that regulation does not automatically entitle someone to risk the forests of this province by burning any time and any way they feel like it. That consensus looks to be pretty clear.

With respect to that consensus I certainly appreciate the remarks of the hon. Member for Smoky River and also those of the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

On most of these matters I might add, Mr. Chairman, that I'm always comforted if I find an area of accord with the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest because I know that his vast experience in this area is perhaps unequalled. I thank him, by the way, for the constructive suggestion. That suggestion could very well be operative and on a community basis, on a co-operative arrangement. That, indeed, is the kind of constructive suggestion that I'm very thankful for and I would appreciate as many constructive suggestions as possible.

DR. BOUVIER:

Mr. Chairman, just one quick comment. I would like to apologize to the House for taking so much time. Obviously it won't receive any consideration with the attitude that is being shown on the other side of the House. We are actually wasting our time when we raise situations to which we would like some realistic consideration given.

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to pursue the matter of pheasants. In the question period yesterday I raised the matter. I understand that the assessment of the pheasants - and I would also like to group sharp-tailed grouse with pheasants because in my particular area the pheasant population is actually gone as far as I can understand. I also understand from the people who advise me that our sharp-tailed grouse have also gone.

I certainly concur with the remarks by the hon. Member for Bow Valley. I think he has outlined the problem very well. We want to have a closed season this year. I know the time is coming when the minister must give this matter some consideration.

I would also like to add to the remarks of the hon. Member for Bow Valley. I feel that we are lacking a number of game officers in the province. I know in the area I represent - and the minister is well aware of this because I have raised it before - I think he has agreed that the time will come when possibly we will have a full-time game officer in the area I am referring to, instead of an officer just coming in for the short hunting season in the fall. I really feel that we need somebody in the area who will be able to know the pheasant and also the sharp-tail grouse count, and actually all wildlife, so that somebody is there who can advise the department and the minister at all times as to the conditions.

I realize the minister has talked about a number of wonderful things his department is doing, and I fully believe the minister would like to do some more wonderful things. I am just saying that, as far as our area is concerned, we should have a full-time officer who could advise the minister with respect to game counts, and so on and so forth. Our people seem to feel, as far as our sharp-tail grouse are concerned, that maybe we should have had a closed season even before now. When you get down to where there are very few birds, and when these birds are completely shot out of the area - I mean this is fine to have an improvement in habitat, but if we only have, say, two birds left and something happens that the two birds are shot, I must draw the conclusion that we have no birds left. So it's either a matter of bringing in some birds to start the cycle over again, or what do we do?

I think that we are now at a point where it is very critical. I noticed in the Edmonton paper the other day that the reporter indicated the pheasant population is at the lowest ebb for many years. I would add that I am sure the same situation would apply with respect to sharp-tail grouse. So again, I would certainly like to make my representation for a full-time officer in the area so that the department will be more advised on an ongoing basis as to the population situation, rather than just waiting.

I don't know what method is used to take these counts. But the only way they could be taken, with the lack of officers in the area, is to bring people in to do them. I don't know what other way you could have. I think it is most important that we have somebody on a full-time basis. When it comes to a matter of assessment of the upland game, we should

take a long look before we have any season on either pheasant or sharp-tail grouse in the east-central part of the province.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to make a few comments with regard to the subject, as information to the minister. Then possibly he could reply.

I have also sent a questionnaire to my constituents which I am prepared to table with the results, and the same questionnaire to the fish and game associations of the province. Between the hon. Member for Bow Valley and myself, we sent out over 400 questionnaires, and received a very high percentage in return.

From the questionnaires from my own constituency and from the fish and game organization, I would have to say that in general the statistics given by the hon. Member for Bow Valley were very consistent in each of the three instances, which indicates that there is a consensus in the attitude of these three particular bodies.

Not to go over all of the items that my honourable colleague mentioned, but just to add one or two points with regard to the questionnaires, he noted that we had somewhere between 50 and 60 per cent of the people recommending closing of the 1974 season, period. We had around 62 per cent of the people saying, restock the pheasant population and close the 1974 season. But if we look at the questionnaires and do an assessment of them, the total number of people who agree with closing the 1974 season is over 80 per cent.

So the grass roots attitude is that we should close the 1974 season. This survey was taken in October and November, and I think we got most of them prior to the end of the 1973 year. I feel, Mr. Chairman, that is a very significant figure and certainly an attitude of awareness of the problem.

There were some other indications in the survey that I think are worthy of note in the formation of policy. There was certainly a direction towards shortening the season if it was not closed. There were only 5 to about 8 per cent of the people who wanted us to leave the hunting season as it is at the present time.

We also asked some questions with regard to the causes of the reduction in the pheasant population. The majority of people at that time - somewhere between 60 and 70 per cent - said the hen season caused the reduction. The second item was, certainly, increased hunters. The third one was reduced habitat. Then they had other items such as predators, et cetera.

We asked a question with regard to game officers: do we require more, 53 per cent of the returns indicated that they would like to have more, 32 per cent indicated that protection was adequate. I know I have had a number of personal representations, as an MLA, indicating that they would like to have more officers in the area, particularly in the opening days of a season. They felt that officers from the northern part of the province could be transferred into the area for the first two or three days of the season to supplement the officers who are stationed on a permanent basis in southern Alberta, or in the pheasant-hunting areas.

We asked the question, do you support pheasant hunting preserves: 55 per cent of the returns said yes, and 28 per cent said no. Through the three questionnaires this percentage varied a little, but not that much.

I would like to support the representation of my colleague from Hanna-Oyen where he made a presentation with regard to closing the sharp-tail grouse season. A number of my constituents were not fully conversant with this type of hunting and indicated that on the questionnaire. But those who were - 50 per cent of the questionnaires returned - said yes, they would be in favour of closing the season; 6 per cent said no; 45 per cent had no opinion.

Out of this grass roots questionnaire, I think the most significant thing that was brought to my attention, and it supported my earlier point of view with regard to the number of pheasants, was that over 80 per cent of the grass roots people in my constituency were in favour of closing the 1974 season. Similarly, the fish and game organizations and interested hunting enthusiasts supported the same point of view. I feel that is very good evidence for us to consider closure of the season.

Another article, Mr. Chairman, supporting that point of view was one in The Edmonton Journal last week. A similar article was also in The Lethbridge Herald. There is much concern indicated over the number of pheasants in the province of Alberta, and I think the point in the article is that the "government faces the prospect of having to raise and release pheasants on a massive scale" to bring them in abundance again in the province. I am sure, even with closing the season, that step will have to be taken.

I also note in the article that a program named SHARP is being initiated. I think that is a good idea because certainly that type of positive step to encourage and work with farmers is most necessary. I have found, from my travels and my discussions with many, many rural residents - farmers - that they are not against doing something for the pheasant population. They enjoy having the bird around the farm. They don't mind raising them. Many people have fed them for years and years, but they were very concerned when we opened the hen pheasant season. Now, at this point, they are very concerned that we are not going to do something to try to maintain and rebuild the population. Their attitude, as I indicated, is certainly towards closing the 1974 season. I certainly encourage the minister to make that proposal and [take that] step.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MR. MCCRAE:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to add a couple of very brief comments to the very valid arguments and discussions we have heard from the opposite side. Certainly the hunters and sportsmen I talked to in Calgary congratulate the minister for the initiatives he has taken in the area of redressing the pheasant shortage.

The comment I would like to make is, while we applaud the habitat restoration and recovery program, I simply wonder whether \$375,000 for both fish and pheasant will be sufficient. While we recognize the program is now experimental, I would hope that there would be - and I am sure there will be - some long range planning, if we can look ahead two, three, five and ten years from now and decide where we have to be in terms of the number of probable hunters and the amount of habitat we will require.

I think it is such a valuable hunting, tourist and recreational industry that the funds required should be and would be available. I would doubt that the present dollar per licence wildlife contribution will be sufficient to sustain any required program of sufficient magnitude in both the fish and the pheasant areas. I would suspect the general treasury would have to be resorted to and so I would recommend to the minister that the plans be based on a several year program.

The only comment I'd like to make is that I think there's no doubt at all the sportsmen of Calgary would support a closure of the season once the assessment has been made as to how much breeding stock there is, with the proviso that the closure be made on the understanding that if a closure is required there is probably insufficient breeding stock out there right now to redress the problem and ensure that there could or would be a hunting season next year or the year after that. I think there is no doubt at all it would require the acquisition or the purchase of a lot of breeding stock - get it out into the field as quickly as possible so the present breeding stock would be supported and added to.

With respect to the habitat preservation or extension I think even though the season is closed and although you may have a recovery of birds for one year, unless there is a considerable extension of habitat, they will probably be shot out again within 12 or 15 months anyway. It's got to be a continuing project. Just closing the season now won't help in 1976. It may do for 1975.

With those very few comments, Mr. Minister, I'd like to congratulate you on the work you're doing and wish you good luck in the future, with a considerable extension of what you're experimenting with right now.

MR. SORENSON:

I want to make a few observations on the department and specifically present my annual plea for endangered species.

The Edmonton Journal reported a few weeks ago that we had 68 endangered species in Canada and we are seeing the disappearance of certain birds and animals. It stated that when Mr. Columbus sailed across the ocean and approached the shores of America, the sky suddenly was darkened and he looked up to see hundreds and thousands of birds. These were the passenger pigeons. The last one died in the Cincinnati zoo in 1914.

Jacques Cartier tells in his diary of a voyage to the island of the birds. It's now called Fund Island. He was travelling there to procure some birds called the great auk. They were a clumsy, unresisting bird. There were thousands on the island. They were clubbed to death, with the last one going down the drain in 1852.

Cortes the Conqueror looked up from his task of human slaughter to see thousands of animals. They were the American bison and it was thought that at one time 100 million

roamed the North American continent. Now we have just a few thousand. I could go on and on.

The hon. member to my immediate left has been very concerned about the plight of the wild horses in Alberta. I believe that in 1974 there have been no permits issued for the taking of wild horses.

Another development in this area - I read the other day that this is the first spring in which the major leagues of baseball have not used the horsehide baseball. They've gone to cowhide. No doubt this action was taken from the hon. Member for Calgary Millican. They'll be calling it the Dixon baseball, I imagine.

In subcommittee the hon. minister put it very clearly to me that bear killing, by his department, has been sliced in half. I will accept this. However, it is my understanding that residents of the area are taking more bear and there are also reports that hunters are taking more. Perhaps the minister will touch on that. So I don't know whether the minister should be blessed or blasted. Only time will tell.

Last winter was perhaps the hardest on record in this century. Old-timers who settled the area in 1905 and 1906 state that the snowfall this past winter beats just anything that they have ever seen. I've never known a time when wildlife has been so scarce in east-central Alberta.

I'd like to touch on an area that I've mentioned before and that is space for wildlife. This is a voluntary program where a farmer can set aside a little space, he seeds it, he leaves it, he doesn't harvest it, he keeps his own animals off and the only reward that he receives is a shoulder patch or a field plaque. Everyone could participate in a program such as this.

I noticed another program that has been initiated in the United States. The State of Washington has endorsed a program to benefit the non-game species of wildlife. By a margin of almost two to one the voters approved the voluntary sale of personalized car licence plates, with revenues going to the department of fish and game. The funds, estimated at some \$200,000 the first year, will support the protection of endangered species and the non-hunted species of wildlife. Environmental licence plates have been legal since 1970 in California and more than \$3 million in revenue has been produced since the program began there. The scheme allows an individual to buy a personalized car licence plate for \$25, with the funds earmarked for environmental projects. It sounds like a good program.

The whooping crane is the largest and the rarest bird that we have on the continent. It stands some 5 feet tall and has a wingspread of over 7 feet. It's most spectacular when in flight. There was a report that one had landed just east of Edmonton this spring. I don't know if that's true or not - at Beaver Hill Lake, I think. Their mating dance is something to behold. In 1938, 18 birds were reported. In 1950, 34 were noted and I have no idea how many there are now, in 1974, perhaps approximately 70.

I had this made by a Mr. Epp some years ago and it has been a prized possession of mine. However, I've presented something to the department in other years and I want to present these wooden birds to the department. I'm more interested in the real bird, but may these be a reminder that we want the nesting areas north of Fort McMurray protected. Mr. Minister, if you will do that and if you will keep an eye on the endangered species of our province, you will have orchids and not dandelions.

I should take it over but I don't want to cross the floor.

[Applause]

MR. BENOIT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is kind of changing the subject ...

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Oh well. Before we change the subject, are there any other comments on this subject?

MR. ZANDER:

It takes a half hour to see me, Mr. Chairman. I'm so large I don't know how he could miss me.

Mr. Chairman, certainly the people in my constituency are concerned with the protection of wildlife. I think I've brought this concern to the Legislature many times, and that is the prolonged and early season that we normally go through in our area. The season opens mid-September and continues until the end of November.

We are truly concerned about policing and the availability of wildlife officers. In my area and also the Edson area, which covers considerable territory to the mountains, I understand there are only two wildlife officers available.

I know that the budget shows an increase of some 27.8 per cent and I'm just wondering if the minister, in speaking to this part of the appropriation, can tell us how many new men will be made available in the areas adjacent, at least, to the forested areas of the province?

Can he also tell us the date or the regulations he has in mind pertaining to the opening of the season of big game and what the length is going to be? Could it be possible that the regulations would be out early in June, because there is concern in my area. Also, the management of the wildlife, especially in the spring of the year - and I think you well know that in that area this spring there was considerable slaughter of moose. I was told it was by Natives. Maybe [he could] approach the federal Department of Indian Affairs to see if he can get cooperation in the management of our wildlife.

Also, we are concerned about the trafficking of moose carcasses. In my area last year I think I had every cooperation from the men available in the field, but it seems to me that one or two men cannot cover an area as large as that. If we're going to manage our game at all and get proper management in, I believe we should have more men available on the force. If not, I wonder if the minister is considering using some of the county police in policing, at least during the hunting season, because right now I think they are not permitted and yet they are available. I was wondering if the minister would consider at least authorizing the use of county or municipal police during the season the hunting is going on. I would also ask the minister if any consideration was given or will be given to restocking some of the areas, the dugouts, with trout and perhaps other species of fish for recreational purposes?

I do believe that in some cases we could perhaps establish, at least during the hunting season, a permanent ranger or two within the area so that people are aware. I don't blame the department. I think I can only say that where you have a willing buyer and a willing seller you will always have transactions of wild and game meat. The only way you can possibly police this area is by putting more police in and allowing other enforcement agencies, not only the RCMP, to try to stop this trafficking in wild game.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Adding to game preservation, because of my questionnaire on pheasant, I've had a representation by letter from the Castor Fish and Game Association. Their concern is with regard to deer population in that area and the depletion in the number of deer. Their request to me was to indicate that they supported a position of closing the 1974 deer season. I was wondering two things. One, has the minister done - I'm sure he's done - a survey of that particular problem? And two, what will be the action in 1974 with regard to that matter?

DR. WARRACK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to deal with the points separately relative to upland bird game and then the questions and points made with respect to big game.

But first of all [I would like] to express appreciation for the remarks made by various speakers, particularly the Member for Sedgewick-Coronation to whom I wish to express a great deal of gratitude with respect to the really fantastic item here which I think is really a reflection of his deep concern for the wildlife of the province, particularly those wildlife whose numbers might be so low as, in fact, to be either rare or, if they're lower still, endangered species. He made reference to the whooping cranes. This is a memento I think no one could forget relative to the whooping crane and also to any other species of wildlife whose existence might be endangered.

I'd also like to reflect back and thank him for, last year, the welded Canada goose that has really drawn a lot of questions and comments from people I know who have seen it. Also, before that, the picture of the ruffed grouse that hangs in my office. I thank him for that. I would also comment that I'm sure, as we discussed during the course of Bill No. 30, The Wildlife Amendment Act, 1974, he noticed the several amendments proposed there relative to the protection of endangered species. That includes, obviously, wildlife species which are not hunted. I'd like to give him some assurance in that regard.

Further, I think maybe a limited additional amount needs to be said relative to the bear question other than to draw to the members' attention that the black bear is a big game animal on the list that can be hunted, and has been that way for quite some time.

Also, I would like to remark a bit later on, as I respond to some of the considerations of upland game, on the suggestion that I think was made as early as the 1972 spring sitting on the acres for wildlife, as I think the program is called in other

places, but in any case, space for wildlife for the opportunity to reproduce in its life cycle. I appreciate those comments very much from the hon. member.

I really wanted, first of all with respect specifically to pheasant, to ask the Member for Bow Valley - I don't think I heard him. He made a comment with respect to suggested changes, a comment with respect to long seasons. And then did he say, split seasons? Split? I take it there was a time when there was a split season with pheasant, before my time, which is not the case now. And if I understand correctly, he's recommending against consideration of split seasons as had been the case in the past? I don't know quite where to begin without a fullfledged kind of speech which I suspect no one really wants relative to the whole question of ...

SOME HCN. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. WARRACK:

If you want it, I've got it. Okay, here we go.

With respect to the question of pheasant, before launching into more detail I would ask the hon. member from Brooks if I might possibly borrow the results of his survey. Some of my friends in the fish and game associations alerted me to the survey itself but, of course, did not at the time know the results and, aside from the comments made by the hon. member today, I don't have the benefit of that information. I'd be very grateful if I might have it. It would be very timely because, as I indicated to the Member for Hanna-Oyen, we will be contemplating the game regulations quite soon, assuming that the session reaches completion in the relatively near future.

To the extent that the Member for Little Bow's survey and results are different - if I understood correctly, a part of it is the same but there is an additional survey as well. But in any case, to the extent that it might be additional information, I would very much appreciate having it. It would be very timely insofar as my own use is concerned in the responsibility for the Fish and Wildlife Division.

I'd mention, and [am] very pleased to have the opportunity to do so, the habitat program mentioned by the Member for Little Bow and the Member for Calgary Foothills, in a 20 to 25 mile circle surrounding the Lethbridge area, which is sponsored under the Buck for Wildlife program. I noticed the Member for Calgary Foothills making the suggestion during the course of his remarks that it may be necessary to seek general revenue funds to go with the, perhaps we would say, seed money that is provided, the \$375,000 provided under the Buck for Wildlife program.

I would at the same time though, like very much to point out that is really the first step in the reversal of habitat for wildlife that really has come about in the province. It appears it has broad support among the public, among sportsmen's groups and in the House. Therefore, that is a pretty good qualification for expanding any program judged by those who have the responsibility to make these judgments to be in the public interest.

I would like to mention also - and this was the point I was going to follow up on the space for wildlife suggestion of the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation. Perhaps his seat mate might be kind enough to relay this to him: we are beginning a pilot project in that regard with respect to the rearing of pheasant beyond the chick stage which could come from the hatcheries. This is something that is being undertaken with the cooperation of sportsmen and also of farmers on whose land this would occur. On another occasion I would be very pleased to describe that in some additional detail.

The Member for Hanna-Oyen, I particularly noted his comments, both with respect to seasons as he would project how they might well be this year and in coming years as well, and in addition to that, the need for game enforcement officers. I'm sure the member appreciates that now, just as has been the case for some years, the feeling that a game officer, a wildlife officer is needed, perhaps even as a fairly integral part of the community, is a very helpful kind of suggestion to that community. It's partly, frankly, a question of just what size of budget and just how large a government we should have.

Certainly I, along with the Provincial Treasurer - although I suspect, he more so than I - we are concerned about the overall size of the government. I know there have been some remarks of criticism levied with respect to the size of the government as it stands now, let alone further expansion. So that is really a concern. As I have said to the member before, and he has mentioned, the day will certainly come when we would need to look in terms of the Hanna area, as well as Oyen and Drumheller, having a wildlife enforcement officer. I'd be very pleased that the day might come when this could be done.

I think I've described before in the House the matter of the dancing grounds and the mating behaviour of sharp-tailed grouse to the extent of how important that is. I would point out frankly that those areas are being broken for agricultural cultivation and

production. They have also been much more heavily grazed in latter years because of the more attractive livestock prices of latter years. Especially in the last 12 months, the real essential need to get as much livestock production as possible because of the cost of feed grains has tended to have areas grazed that were not grazed before. That habitat, once destroyed, is not the sort of thing that can be brought back quickly, particularly for sharp-tailed grouse. You could close the seasons forever and not change the population substantially, if they don't have the habitat, particularly for the critical part of their reproduction cycle. Therein lies the problem.

I might mention some of the variables that are not as yet nailed down and can't be nailed down quite yet. With respect particularly to pheasants, some of the considerations, along with many of those mentioned here this afternoon, [relate] to what those seasons might be. As everyone knows, I think, from earlier discussions on the matter about the 1973 hatch, a very illtimed and unusually large rainfall in mid-June of last year came right at the critical time of the June hatch and had a very detrimental impact on the pheasant population.

In addition to that, in parts of Alberta, the majority of Alberta, but not the majority of the prime pheasant habitat area of Alberta, we did indeed have a long, cold and heavy snowfall. Snowfall is very damaging to pheasants as I think all people familiar with the pheasant will know. We had that kind of winter. But in the area of southern Alberta, perhaps Vulcan south, it was a drier than usual, a less severe than usual winter. So in that area there is a very excellent possibility that the winter mortality might have been, in fact, considerably less than normal rather than in the rest of the province which was considerably more than normal. That would cover about two-thirds of the prime pheasant habitat area. As I think everyone recognizes, it's winter mortality that's the key factor.

We won't really know that until we're in a position of having the crowing counts that are related to the breeding stock population that is there, and perhaps some indication also of the effectiveness of the hatch to guard against the possibility of another illtimed, very large rainstorm next year. These are some of the variables that are out there and are not yet nailed down. It's a very complex matter, as I think every speaker pointed out, necessitating a good deal of assessment and very close examination, which I'm very eager to get to as soon as time permits.

So those matters are before us. I'm very much aware of the concerns that have been expressed and welcome them, and especially, I would be very appreciative of the additional information that might be provided if I might share, even on a temporary basis, the survey information that was referred to by two of the speakers.

With respect to the ungulates or big game, I notice the points made by the Member for Drayton Valley and how valid they are. We are in a similar situation with respect to the game seasons, for example, moose and elk. Much of this is an assessment of the winter mortality which took place in that part of Alberta, that is the northern part of Alberta, that did have a longer and more severe winter than usual. That assessment is an input as to whether indeed it might be necessary that there be more limited, perhaps shorter and differing arrangements with respect to the big game seasons that would be essential because of the considerations of the winter mortality problem and the problem of the fawns surviving the late winter birth. We're not fully availed of all that information yet, but it does indeed appear from the preliminary assessments we have that the points the hon. Member for Drayton Valley makes are indeed ones that are likely to be confirmed.

I also make assurance of the fact that I notice the concerns expressed regarding meat trafficking. There is undoubtedly some. It's very difficult to catch and prosecute, I might say, no matter who is doing it. I would, by no stretch of the imagination, suggest that it's largely a Native matter at all, but a general problem in terms of whoever might be doing it.

I think back to the motion put by the hon. Member for Lacombe, Mr. Cookson, on the question of standardizing wildlife rules in Alberta and asking the federal government to take the action that might be necessary in order for that standardization to occur. That question is still up for debate in this House and I very much look forward to the additional remarks which I know will be forthcoming on that matter.

With respect to the question of the possibility of utilizing county police, people who are there already, as the hon. member puts it, that certainly is a possibility. It's a matter where there seems to be a clear consensus supporting the three-part firearms protection package that was presented to the Legislature. That being the case, if it is finally agreed, it is one of the possibilities. To be specific, the possibility of appointing game guardians is a possibility that extends beyond existing county police forces into other possibilities as well. The suggestion the hon. member makes is indeed one that can certainly be a possibility in the enforcement that's necessary.

I mentioned very, very briefly in my opening remarks about the fish hatchery that this would be the first year we would approach a full production level. We will be somewhat

short of it for a couple of technical reasons that I'll not pursue now unless asked to do so. In addition to that, it will be somewhat less than would be the full-time intention of production because we will be short of yearlings, in contrast to fingerlings, with the fingerlings having been raised a year to become yearlings. Last year's production being the first, there was such a heavy demand for fish of any sort for stocking that they were largely used in that way. But I look forward to the day when we can have a very much more complete and effective fish stocking program from the new fish hatchery in Calgary.

I have taken note, indeed, in terms of the big game seasons of the concern in the Castor area, and I know from some of the letters I have received that there are others with the same concern relative to deer. I understand it's somewhat more serious with white-tail than with mule deer because of their nature of habitat and nature of behaviour, related to the winter we have just had.

I think I would conclude, Mr. Chairman, by assuring the member that I have indeed taken note of that position posed as to a reduced hunting situation for deer in the Castor area. I know that is really more of a regional matter than strictly a Castor matter and the member might feel free to report that to anyone he might feel it's necessary.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, just a question on the Fish and Wildlife Division. Is it the intention of the department to publish any more of the pamphlets like the one here, The Cloven-hoofed Animals of Alberta? I'm thinking specifically of one dealing with such things as beaver, muskrat and so on. Are there any plans for that in this year's budget or the immediate future?

DR. WARRACK:

I guess I'm not really entirely positive on that. First of all I'm not positive we have a supply problem. We have a number of these pamphlets on hand, or at least did, if they haven't now all been sent out. I would have to check on our supply situation. I would take it the hon. member is suggesting it's a helpful kind of piece of information and if that's indeed the case, we would certainly like to make it available to the public. But I'll check on that for you.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, on the matter of provincial parks, I'd just like to ask the minister a question first.

What does he consider newly-developed provincial parks?

DR. WARRACK:

In my opening remarks when I mentioned that, I was referring to parks that were in fact provincial parks in the sense that an order in council had been passed to establish them as provincial parks but no work had been done to develop them. I think I did mention Young's Point and Calling Lake as two of the major ones that will indeed be major provincial parks in the future. Work is going on to plan those properly for the future, but a couple of others that I think of are Dry Island Buffalo Jump on the Red Deer River, and Osi Lake, just southwest of Edmonton, which are provincial parks in the sense of having been declared provincial parks, but on which no development as a park has occurred.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for that information.

I have been listening with interest to his comments, and certainly when I listen to his vocabulary and his expressions I can't help but think about the subsidized education that I suppose he has enjoyed. In listening to his dictionary terms and so on, I suppose you might have said it might have gone to his head.

I submit, Mr. Chairman, that the Department of Lands and Forests is a wonderful department. I submit that with windfall income and more money, it can become more wonderful. And I submit, Mr. Chairman, that if it hadn't been for the base that was there, that had been built up over many years, he wouldn't have anything to work with.

And in his reply to me, on the newly-developed provincial parks - I asked him that question specifically, because here I see a big ad in the daily paper, and it quotes as follows: "Going to Long Lake, Aspen Beach or Rochon Sands" and it goes on to say that this holiday we can avoid a crowding at the ones mentioned, Long Lake, Rochon Sands and Aspen Beach, by planning to visit one of Alberta's newly-developed provincial parks. Alberta Lands and Forests suggest you consider one of the following alternatives: Pigeon Lake Park, Wabamun Lake Park, Miquelon Lake Park, Pembina River Park and then refers to forest recreation areas.

I submit, Mr. Chairman, that an ad of this type is really misleading to the public. The minister's very definition of newly-developed provincial parks didn't fit this. He didn't mention one of these at all. And yet this ad suggests you visit these. Certainly Miguellon Lake and Wabamun Lake are ones that have been in operation for many years.

So I submit that the learned minister choose his words more carefully when he goes to advertise these things in this House ...

[Interjections]

It's rather interesting - oh, they can quibble all they like. The Minister of Agriculture, the Deputy Premier, accused me of quibbling with figures not long ago. That's all right. When I went to school I learned that figures added up and there were no ifs, buts or maybes.

But I would just like to point out to the minister that certainly he has a wonderful department. I think of any department that deals with the renewable natural resources of this province, there's nothing better. I think Alberta has an enviable record, and Alberta is in an enviable position to control those. The public has a right to see that they are looked after. And I would hope that the minister, as he stated, is dedicated to the protection of the forests. I think he could include the whole renewable natural resources field in that dedication.

Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of questions I would like to ask the minister and they deal with the information tabled by the minister on March 11. I would like to ask the following question. Does the information in the copy of the manifest for the Lands and Forests aircraft, tabled March 11, cover all the flights of those aircraft to the members of Executive Council and government agencies? Now he will probably recall he tabled it on March 11. Would he answer that one first?

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Just prior to answering the question, could I just ask one question on pheasant, and then we can go on to this new subject.

With regard to pheasants, when the minister receives the information from the biologists, that is, the crow count, is that item the priority-need at this time to make the final decision? Is that the information that will determine whether you go one way or another? Is that correct? I was trying to understand that.

DR. WARRACK:

Well, no, I sure hope I wouldn't make a decision on one consideration alone and I don't intend to, but that's one of the number of considerations in this very complex matter that would be taken into account. But that is not the only matter, if that's the question.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

The question, Mr. Chairman, to the minister is, what other information would the members of this Assembly, or people right within that grass roots area of the pheasant population, have to produce for you to indicate what the decision should be? Is there anything else we can do to help you in that area?

DR. WARRACK:

Well, I'd say that certainly the information I'm hoping I'll have an opportunity to look at, as I requested of the two hon. members who conducted the survey, would be very helpful indeed. I'm not entirely confident that everybody in Alberta who expresses a view on any subject is totally informed about that subject. It's entirely possible, for example, that there could be some keep those city guys off my land motivation to the suggestion of closing the pheasant season.

I get some different representations from some of the sportsmen of Alberta, including members of the Fish and Game Association. As a matter of fact, I also get somewhat different views expressed by those who are concerned about the tourism attractions and importance as a sector of the economy of Alberta, the motel owners and the people who have an additional increment of business that can often be their life blood in a given year, between economic survival, a profitable year or, in fact, an economically disastrous year. There are some other views expressed by people of the province, individually, through associations, through MLAs who are elected and who have the responsibility of reflecting their views. All of these are considerations to be taken into account.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, further to the minister. What other avenues of representation would the grass roots population have to the minister, assuming that he decides that the policy should be to maintain an open season in 1974? Because as I read the signs at the grass roots and from some of the comments written on questionnaires, the people are prepared, in some of the areas, to put up no hunting signs and take those kinds of steps. That could also have a detrimental effect on the whole hunting pattern. I think the minister has to leave that avenue open and maybe give some indication to the public before he finalizes his decision, if the decision is a negative one.

DR. WARRACK:

Well, indeed, I welcome representations, though I urge no one to work with people's emotions on any of these areas. I would certainly welcome information and viewpoints relative to what people feel should be the case. Certainly I think that when the previous government established the hen pheasant season they did not do what the member is suggesting now, or they would never have done that. In any case, certainly I'm open to suggestions and information from all concerned. Then these have to be put together on a complex and fully-assessed basis so that a decision might be made.

Shall I proceed?

First of all, let me say that I'm sure the hon. member - I think I know him well enough to know that it wasn't any kind of personal below-the-belt suggestion relative to subsidized education. Everyone who has had any education has had subsidized education, and those of us who have had more formal education obviously have had more subsidized education. Let me say this to you, I appreciate it and not everybody does.

I appreciate the support of the former Minister of Lands and Forests who, I think, was trying to suggest that he had handled the department so skilfully that it was really an easy job for me. That's a debatable point. In any case, I certainly appreciate his remarks and I hope all members on all sides were listening as he made what I thought was an effective plea for the importance of the work of the department and that the future budget considerations might be forthcoming so that we might proceed with that work.

In terms of the hair-splitting about what park is newly developed and so on - newly developed in the sense of not having been developed at all - which is exactly how I framed my opening, summary remarks. I mentioned the parks which applied in that instance. As Minister of Lands and Forests, I am purposefully not trying to take credit for the establishment and development of, for example, one of the parks that was listed by the member, Pigeon Lake Provincial Park.

I think if you talk to the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc who was present when we had the official opening of that park in July of last year, he may recall that I made a specific point of remarking that in opening a park at that time you were really having the official capacity to complete something that someone had previously started. I believe he's indicating that I did, indeed, make that point. As a matter of fact, he had made that point to me and I made some reference to, I believe, Mr. Strohschein, who was the hon. member's predecessor. I avoided trying to take the kind of credit that I think you may be in danger of unfairly trying to put to me, Mr. Member.

Question one: I get the impression we're trying to be tricky again with respect to it. But in any case, the aircraft manifest was indeed tabled, as we have regularly done as soon as possible after the opening of the Legislature. So that information is available and it fulfils a commitment the government has made. His question is really in two parts; one with respect to Executive Council where the answer is clearly, yes; and the other is with respect to government agencies, in which instance I would have to check.

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Chairman, in reply to what the minister has indicated about splitting hairs and so on, I was just referring to the ad which was paid for by the government - Lands and Forests, and he's the minister. It plainly says, "visit one of Alberta's newly-developed provincial parks." Certainly the average individual looking at this must have thought there was something going on here that hasn't been before. When you look at such parks as Wabamun Lake, Miquelon Lake and so on, I think they're old established parks.

On the matter of being tricky, if an hon. member in this Assembly has to word his questions and tell the minister I'm not being tricky in asking this, I think there's something wrong. I just asked a straightforward question and I got part of it answered straightforwardly and the minister has promised the other part.

The other question I want to ask at this time is, were any of these flights used to attend political conventions?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the answer to that question is no.

MR. D. MILLER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister a question. If the minister has mentioned it I apologize, but I didn't hear him mention any plans to extend the boundaries of Writing-on-Stone Park.

DR. WARRACK:

No, I did not deal with that particular item, Mr. Chairman. I'm trying to recall the circumstance. I'm sure the hon. member is familiar with the fact that we are doing some work at Writing-on-Stone Park in relation to the RCMP Centennial. Part of that is that there are some of the important RCMP stone writings that are outside the park - no doubt the hon. member has seen them as I have. We have given some thought to the question of additional land acquisition.

I do recall, when I was in Lethbridge at a meeting of the Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs, some folks from your area near Writing-on-Stone Park came to see me and asked a specific question about a land acquisition they had heard rumoured which would affect their farm - or perhaps it was a ranch. I checked into it and the answer was no. That may be the thing the hon. member is concerned about, that specific case.

In any case, to be direct about it, we would like to garner some of the coulees, where some of the additional important history of Writing-on-Stone is located, for the park. But we do not visualize a land acquisition that would create any real difficulties at all for those who are farming and ranching adjacent to the park.

MR. STROM:

I have just a couple of questions, one in regard to Writing-on-Stone Park. Is it government policy to try to get some of the organizations out of the parks that have been in there for some time? I'm thinking of the - there is a stampede association, I believe. It's within Writing-on-Stone Park. They're very concerned as to whether or not they're going to have to move. My information from your department is that they will be given considerable time to make the transfer if necessary. I'm wondering more specifically, Mr. Minister, is there a firm policy established in that area as to whether or not they can remain?

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, that is an excellent question and an excellent case in point because there are other instances across the province as well as Writing-on-Stone. I had been very careful in the wording of the parks position paper with respect to such more intensive recreation activities to deal with new parks for the future rather than a position that would be a policy of removing them from the parks. I don't think there is too much question that ultimately the additional use of parks and so forth in the very long term might mean that they, in fact, would prefer to be located elsewhere.

In the instances that they might contemplate some major investments to expand the facilities or upgrade them in a very substantial way, that would be opportune for everyone to look at the possibility of trying to reach a mutual situation that would be better as far as the park is concerned and as far as the Writing-on-Stone Rodeo Association is concerned. At the moment, the information the member has is indeed correct and there is no contemplation at all in the existing parks of pushing them out or giving them deadlines to be out.

MR. STROM:

Mr. Chairman, can I just pursue it a little further and ask this, is it open for negotiation? The minister, by policy, would like, wherever it is convenient or wherever it does not create any great hardships, to remove them from the park. I can appreciate that, but as long as the minister is prepared to say to me that it is open to negotiation, I'm satisfied because I think it is a reasonable approach.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman there is one other question which I failed to ask while we were in committee. What is your policy in regard to taking over some of the municipal parks? Is any further consideration being given to that this year? Have you made a decision in regard to certain municipal parks that will be taken into the provincial parks system?

DR. WARRACK:

First of all, Mr. Chairman, the way the hon. member expressed his understanding with respect to existing facilities in provincial parks is indeed exactly what we have in mind and what fits my vision of it as we look towards the future.

Really in terms of the possibility of existing municipal parks becoming fullfledged provincial parks, we really try to look at them on a provincial basis which kind of boils the answer down to a case by case situation where some would be obviously a no answer as to taking them over, others, if they haven't already been taken over - and this has occurred in the past - the answer might obviously be yes. Then there are those where the situation is quite uncertain. But we have no outstanding commitments at this time to take over existing municipal parks for provincial parks.

MR. STROM:

None?

DR. WARRACK:

We have no commitments outstanding as of right now.

MR. STROM:

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if I could just leave this question with the minister. He doesn't have to give me an answer now. Golden Sheaf Park is one I'm interested in having a definite answer on as to whether or not it is being considered within the next year or two. It is one in which the local people have been very, very interested in trying to get the ...

AN HON. MEMBER:

... [Inaudible] ...

MR. STROM:

Golden Sheaf, it is in the Seven Persons area. But you can give me the answer later on.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to add to the list and the minister can report later - Park Lake and the other one is Lake McGregor.

DR. WARRACK:

We have a provincial park at Park Lake.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

I'm sorry, I meant the Keho Lake. I'm sorry, Keho Lake Municipal Park.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

It was moved by Mr. Trynchy, Chairman of Subcommittee B, that under consideration Vote 18, the estimates of expenditure for the Department of Lands and Forests and begs to report same, resolves that a sum not exceeding \$38,922,970 be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1975 for the Department of Lands and Forests.

[The motion was carried.]

DR. WARRACK:

Mr. Chairman, I move the matter be reported.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress and beg leave to sit again.

[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 certain estimates, reports progress, and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow evening we would commence with continuation of Executive Council estimates which were started previously. Then at 9:45 tomorrow evening, as has been circulated, [we will move] to a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

I move we call it 5:30.

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 5:30 o'clock.]