

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Monday, October 31, 1977 2:30 p.m.

[The House met at 2:30 p.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: Question of Privilege

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of personal privilege to ask this Assembly to deal with the attempt to impugn my character, my integrity, and my reputation by the Leader of the Official Opposition on Friday, October 28, 1977, during the question period.

In placing this matter of privilege before you and the Assembly, I wish to advise that I have followed Section 14 of the *Standing Orders* of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. The rules under Section 14(4) and (5) state that after appropriate debate, Mr. Speaker would then rule whether there appears to be a prima facie case of privilege. In making that decision, I would ask you to consider seriously your own remarks from [unofficial] Hansard during the questioning by the Leader of the Opposition on Friday last, wherein you stated:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition isn't asking a question. He's making ... [interjections] But there has to be some limit to the list of topics with regard to which a minister can be asked, is he aware? In very many instances — and it would appear to me in the present one — such a question is really not a question but rather a representation. In fact in this instance it might even be called an accusation.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition attempted, through his line of questioning, to leave the impression in this House, with the media, and through the media with the public, that I as Minister of Housing and Public Works was guilty of impropriety in the conduct of my duties. Mr. Speaker, the facts available to me indicate that the hon. leader's insinuations, innuendoes, and accusations are totally without foundation in fact. Indeed it appears that the hon. leader could readily have obtained factual information on the matter if he had attempted to do so.

The land referred to in the hon. leader's question Friday last was included in an annexation order of the Local Authorities Board on September 9, 1976, which order the cabinet approved by order in council on November 2, 1976, and which order was effective January 1, 1977. The order in council was made public by the Minister of Municipal Affairs shortly after its approval in cabinet. Prior to this action by the minister, the Local Authorities Board sent out letters on November 3, 1976, to all landowners whose land was being annexed and to all other people who had expressed an interest in the annexation. Mr. Speaker, anyone expressing such an interest, including the Leader of the Opposition or any member of this Assembly or any Vegreville citizen,

could have received such notification if he or she had expressed an interest.

Mr. Speaker, prior to and after the annexation order, I have not had any private discussions with any of the landowners within the annexation order nor with any persons who may have been interested in purchasing land privately within the annexation order. Also, as stated by me in the Legislature in answer to a question by the Leader of the Opposition, I wish again to advise that I have had absolutely no discussions with Mr. Mazankowski and/or Mr. William Yurko of Vegreville, nor was I in any way aware whether or not these two gentlemen own land or were contemplating purchasing land within the area designated by the Local Authorities Board for annexation to the town of Vegreville.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I have checked with department officials as to whether or not any member of the Department of Housing and Public Works or the Alberta Housing Corporation had any discussions or negotiations with respect to the land referred to by the Leader of the Opposition as having been purchased by a Don Mazankowski and a William Yurko in December 1976. I have been advised by the respective deputy ministers and president of the Alberta Housing Corporation that no discussions or negotiations had taken place with respect to the land purchased by Mr. Mazankowski or Mr. Yurko. Furthermore, I am told that these two individuals have not sold the land in question, so no gain has been made.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday, January 18, 1974, as Minister of the Environment, I officially announced on behalf of the government the Vegreville Environmental Laboratory and Research Centre. May I quote a paragraph from that official government release which enunciated official government policy.

The location 50 miles east of Edmonton was selected in keeping with provincial government policy of locating wherever and whenever possible government offices and services in smaller [towns].

Mr. Speaker, it was and is government policy to locate the Vegreville Environmental Laboratory and Research Centre in the town of Vegreville. I have on several occasions publicly restated this official government policy, as have other MLAs and ministers.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition also asked me during the question period if I cared to indicate to the Assembly whether I publicly stated over the Camrose radio station that the land adjacent to the Vegreville research station would be annexed to the town of Vegreville, despite the recommendations of the Local Authorities Board. The answer is no.

Mr. Speaker, on June 24, 1977, my secretary phoned CFCW and obtained from a Candice Claridge the transcript of a story carried by CFCW. That story was as follows, and was the result of a comment by the reeve of the County of Minburn:

The Reeve of the County of Minburn, Art Roland, indicates there is a possibility the County will go to court to attempt to recover its costs in a current annexation dispute with the Town of Vegreville.

The Town wants to annex 4 quarters from the county, including the site of the Alberta Environmental Laboratory and Research Centre, a suggestion which has drawn stiff opposition from the County. The Local Authorities Board this

week opened a public hearing into the application, but the hearing was adjourned until later this year at a request of the town.

A couple of provincial cabinet ministers had been quoted as indicating earlier this year the government would like to see the environmental centre located in the town rather than the county.

Now, in the words of Minburn Reeve Roland, "we have considered taking the government to court to see if we can recover what we have spent on the annexation hearing."

Roland adds "no final decision regarding possible court action will be made until after the results of the hearing later this year has become known. We feel the Local Authorities Board is being dictated to by certain government ministers." The ministers are Bill Yurko of Public Works and Dick Johnston of Municipal Affairs.

I made no public reply to the story, but sent a transcript to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for his consideration.

Mr. Speaker, an instance in which I was directly quoted by CFCW was in March 1977 after a visit to my office by the mayor of Vegreville, who expressed a real concern in regard to a possible delay in the construction of the Vegreville laboratory. To a direct question in regard to delay, I answered as follows:

More of a clarification of procedures in terms of moving ahead with construction. I assured him . . .

— that is, the mayor of Vegreville —

. . . there is going to be no delay in terms of construction of second phase, that [it] is proceeding on schedule, and that in fact it may be necessary to discuss with the county re obtaining of a building permit in the initial stage up until when the whole area is annexed to Vegreville.

What was in question, Mr. Speaker, was from whom and what jurisdiction a building permit should be obtained. The whole area related directly to the entire Vegreville Environmental Laboratory and Research Centre.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, unless the hon. leader wishes to explain his intentions behind his line of questioning last Friday and offer appropriate apologies, it would be my intention, based upon your ruling, to have a motion moved to refer this matter of privilege for appropriate action to the legislative Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Speaker, the nature of the insinuations of the Leader of the Opposition last Friday should be of real concern to every member of this Assembly. The character assassination potential of such insinuations, without factual knowledge to back the insinuations as undertaken by the Leader of the Opposition, is unlimited. All of us have relatives. I happen to have very many, because of my Alberta pioneer ancestors. I believe there are at least three other relatives with my name, but of course different middle initials, or in some cases no initials. So we are distinguishable. In addition, I know I have at least 150 first cousins, several hundred second cousins, and a matrix of interrelations numbering in the thousands. Surely this Legislature cannot expect me to be accountable for the actions of so many relations.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is very easy to act without responsibility, but with the immunity of this House,

and question possible links or knowledge transfer between any member of one's family tree and a member of this Assembly. A member of this House could readily impute motives to another member because of any stand taken on The Planning Act, environmental legislation, energy legislation, and all other legislation, because of the hypothetical possibility or probability that a corresponding relative may materially gain from such action. I can only conjecture that the massive amounts of money allocated by government to housing, to agriculture, to research, to promote industry, to energy resource development, surely must benefit relatives of all us sitting in this House.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult enough as a member of this Assembly and as a minister of government to enunciate and articulate officially adopted government policy, without being accused of sinister motives. However, it is even more difficult for us in the Assembly to function as the community leaders we are, if we are to be unduly restrained by the thought of being accused of impropriety by a fellow member of this Assembly because of the immunity he or she enjoys here. If I should speak publicly about the need and method for curbing land speculation, and another MLA who happens to have relatives in the land investment and development business disagrees, is she or he then to be accused of improper conduct in this Assembly?

Mr. Speaker, I have always considered the profession of politics to be the highest of all professions. For the years during which I have been a member of this profession, I have endeavored to conform to the highest possible ethical standards, with honesty and a clear conscience in all that I have done. My ethical standards have not wavered, for they are part of my very make-up and my religious beliefs. I have not joined the profession of politics to gain wealth, but to serve. It has always been my practice — and one which I have attempted to relate to the departments which I have headed — to deal and treat all Alberta citizens with courtesy, respect, fairness, and equality, irrespective of their relationship to any member of this Assembly.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is not only for my sake that I ask this Assembly to deal appropriately with the attempted insinuations and accusations of the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition on Friday last during the question period, but also for the sake of maintaining the integrity of the profession of politics itself. Recent events in democratic countries have overly blemished our profession, such that it is suspect in the minds of many of the public. It would be inappropriate to have this Legislative Assembly inadvertently add to that blemish. I ask this Assembly to deal effectively and appropriately with this matter of privilege.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in rising to respond to the comments made by the Minister of Housing and Public Works, simply let me say that it's my intention to ask, under Section 14(4), that after I've made a very brief comment it's my intention to move to adjourn the debate.

I simply want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the course of my raising these questions in the House on Friday, I did it from the standpoint of asking the

minister to respond to those particular matters. I simply want to say, Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention on Friday last, nor on any other occasion, to become involved in what the minister has chosen to call "character assassination". For if that is the way I wanted to go, Mr. Speaker, it would have been very simple for me or any other person to release the information, never to raise it in this Assembly, and never have afforded the hon. minister the opportunity he's had this afternoon, or would have had in the course of question period Friday or in future question periods.

So, Mr. Speaker, in light of Section 14(4) that says, "Mr. Speaker may [after] such debate as he thinks appropriate ...", I would ask that — additional checking is going on by my own office today, in light of comments the minister made over the weekend, also some documents — it may very well be, Mr. Speaker, that I'll want to table some documents with the Assembly or with you, sir, before you make your ruling. It's on that basis, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. YURKO: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, the hon. member has suggested that I made comments over the weekend. Mr. Speaker, I want to advise the Assembly that the news media have repeatedly contacted my office and me at home. I have repeatedly stated that this is a matter of privilege, and I would respond to the matter in the House at the first opportunity, which is today.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I hardly see where the hon. leader's motion to adjourn a debate which in fact has not been moved can be in order. It is quite correct that you, sir, may close that debate after you've had sufficient information to try to determine whether in fact there is a *prima facie* case of privilege. But the hon. leader does not have the authority to adjourn a debate which has not yet been moved. I would simply suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has outlined very clearly in what in my view is a very proper case of privilege, and that you should take it under advisement and so advise.

MR. SPEAKER: It would seem to me that the debate on a question of privilege is not the type of ordinary or formal debate which would lend itself to a motion to adjourn the debate. The well-established parliamentary rule is that a question of privilege takes precedence over any other business of the Assembly. Consequently if any hon. members wish to make some observations with regard to this matter, I would respectfully invite them to make those observations now, so that I may have the benefit of them in considering whether there is in fact a *prima facie* case of privilege, which of course is the total extent of my responsibility. Likewise, I would respectfully invite the hon. Leader of the Opposition, if he wishes to say anything further, to say it now, having regard, quite properly, to the situation having arisen out of what was said in this Assembly last Friday. That is what is before us.

There is really not any obligation on the Speaker to inquire into the truth of the allegations. I'm not here to judge truthfulness. As I understand it, the duty which every Assembly such as this imposes on its Speaker is simply to make a decision, a finding, as to

whether what was said in the House constitutes on the face of it, or *prima facie*, a case of privilege. That is the point which I am now concerned with, and I would suggest that hon. members should be concerned with. If they have any observations to make with regard to that point, I would invite them to make them now.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I want to participate just for a moment, because I'm puzzled by the position the hon. Leader of the Opposition has expressed today. It seems to me that having raised the issues in the manner he did on Friday, and having been responded to so fully and in detail by the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works, surely to want now to delay — or as he said, adjourn the debate — merely casts additional question upon the minister. Because he's now saying, I've heard you clear up the matter completely, but I want to check you again. I don't quite understand the position of the Leader of the Opposition.

I would think the proper way is that the matter, having been expressed as it was — and perhaps unfortunately, in the zeal of carrying out duties and responsibilities in the House — should now be cleared up by accepting the information and request of the Minister of Housing and Public Works, and either withdrawing the insinuations or apologizing. That way, it seems to me the House can be restored to its previous state. Otherwise we have this hanging over the House, that there is something wrong with the conduct of one of the ministers, which has quite rightly, I think, been challenged by the minister involved.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that while we have some considerable honor to be members of this House, we have some very heavy responsibilities to each other as well. And when, in carrying out those responsibilities enthusiastically, we do tend perhaps to cause damage to one another, and particularly when it is reported publicly, we should move as quickly as possible to try to undo that damage, knowing that in many cases it is impossible to undo. I would urge the hon. Leader of the Opposition to undo as quickly as possible what he has started.

MR. SPEAKER: It would appear that no other hon. members wish to take part in the discussion of this question of privilege at this point.

I would say that the hon. Minister of Housing and Public Works has raised the question at the first opportunity; so as far as that is concerned, there is no further decision to be made by the Chair. Presumably he received *Hansard* some time today before the House sat, and of course it is a matter of sufficient seriousness that *Hansard* rather than even the 'blues' should be checked before the point is pursued. The give and take of the question period is not an ideal time to decide, even *prima facie*, on most questions of privilege.

I shall therefore examine Friday's *Hansard* and carefully consider the remarks which have been made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition as well as the two government ministers, and bring back word to the Assembly as soon as possible, in discharge of my duty, to decide whether there's a *prima facie* case. Hopefully I'll be able to do that tomorrow or not later than Wednesday.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give oral notice of the designated motion for Thursday next. It is, Mr. Speaker:

Be it resolved that an all-party select committee of members of the Assembly be struck to examine the deteriorating relationship between farm incomes and farm input costs in the province of Alberta with a view of making recommendations aimed at establishing better markets, more secure prices, and controlling necessary input costs, with specific attention to be paid to the feasibility, with reference to other Canadian provinces, of provincial income assurance programs, systems of orderly marketing, and land-use and tenure policies.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 92

**The Consumer and Corporate Affairs
Statutes Amendment Act, 1977**

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 92, The Consumer and Corporate Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 1977.

Mr. Speaker, the purposes of the bill are: first, to amend The Agricultural and Recreational Land Ownership Act as it affects the provisions of The Companies Act and The Societies Act. Secondly, to amend The Companies Act to permit better service to the public by those who use the services of the companies branch. Thirdly, to amend The Co-operative Associations Act to make co-operatives subject to the same requirements as any other business firm in regard to the sale of securities to the public. Fourthly, to amend The Credit Union Act in order to assist credit unions in the province. Fifthly, to amend The Licensing of Trades and Businesses Act as to the establishment of fees, the sale of bedding or upholstered or stuffed articles by extraprovincial manufacturers, to give the director authority to refuse, suspend, or cancel licences, and to set up an appeal procedure. Sixthly, to amend The Mortgage Brokers Regulation Act to transfer the jurisdiction from the Securities Commission to the Superintendent of Real Estate. It also provides for a new appeal procedure. Seventhly, to amend The Societies Act so that it is more similar to the present Companies Act in respect of the setting of fees and addresses, and to require the filing of an audited financial statement rather than an audited balance sheet, which could be signed by two directors.

[Leave granted; Bill 92 read a first time]

Bill 254

**An Act to Amend
The Alberta Bill of Rights**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 254, An Act to Amend The Alberta Bill of Rights. The basic principle behind the bill, Mr. Speaker, is to set out that no statute or law in the province of Alberta shall be construed as having retroactive effects unless it is expressly declared by an act of the

Legislature to operate notwithstanding The Alberta Bill of Rights. In other words, before retroactive legislation can be introduced there must be a provision that expressly relates this to the "notwithstanding" clause of The Bill of Rights, which is our primary legislation in the province.

[Leave granted; Bill 254 read a first time]

Bill 93

**The Pension Statutes
Amendment Act, 1977**

MR. LEITCH: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 93, The Pension Statutes Amendment Act, 1977. This being a money bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of this bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, there are two principal purposes of the proposed legislation. The first is to introduce in two pension acts provision for the payment of benefits to common-law spouses, similar to the provisions in the Alberta Workers' Compensation Act, which provides for benefits to be paid to common-law spouses.

The second purpose is to provide for the calculation, on a somewhat different basis, of the cost of purchasing prior service. This provision, Mr. Speaker, would only be applicable to employees who join the provincial government service after January 1, 1978 or, alternatively, present employees who did not make arrangements to purchase prior service before January 1, 1979. In addition, Mr. Speaker, certain amendments are proposed which will improve the administration of the pension legislation.

[Leave granted; Bill 93 read a first time]

Bill 95

**The Glenbow-Alberta Institute
Amendment Act, 1977**

MR. McCRAE: Mr. Speaker, I move to introduce Bill 95, The Glenbow-Alberta Institute Amendment Act, 1977. The purpose of the bill, Mr. Speaker, is to assure that government-appointed representation on the board of governors of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute will reflect the increased fiscal responsibility for the institute assumed by the province of Alberta during the past few years, and will also establish a firm base for ongoing governmental financial support. Such support currently approaches 70 per cent of the annual expenditure of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

[Leave granted; Bill 95 read a first time]

Bill 87

**The Metric Conversion
Statutes Amendment Act, 1977**

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 87, The Metric Conversion Statutes Amendment Act, 1977. This bill provides for conversion of imperial measurement to metric within several acts of this Legislature.

[Leave granted; Bill 87 read a first time]

Bill 94
The Alberta Union
of Provincial Employees Act

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 94, being The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees Act. The purpose of this act is to enable the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees to organize as an association, as do other unions, rather than as a society under The Societies Act, as at present.

[Leave granted; Bill 94 read a first time]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following two bills be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders: Bill No. 87, The Metric Conversion Statutes Amendment Act, 1977, and Bill No. 94, The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees Act.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual reports of Alberta Culture, the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, and the Alberta Art Foundation.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, may I present to you and to the members of this Assembly 40 of Alberta's brightest students along with their teachers Mrs. Beebe and Mr. Emann. Naturally, these students come from my constituency, from the town and community of Daysland. Mr. Speaker, they are presently sitting in the members' gallery. I will ask them to rise and be recognized by this Assembly.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Attorneys General Conference

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Attorney General. It really flows from the attorneys general meeting that Alberta's Attorney General was at last week. My question is: were there discussions of the proposed federal amendment to the Criminal Code which would guarantee the right of any accused to be tried in either official language?

MR. FOSTER: No, Mr. Speaker, we did not discuss that specific subject. But while I'm on my feet, perhaps I could say that Alberta today does have the capacity to conduct such a trial in French. I recognize that it would not be easily achieved in certain parts of the province, but we do have available bilingual members of the judiciary, prosecutorial staff, court reporters, and the like. It may be difficult to impanel a

bilingual jury in some parts of the province, but Alberta does have that capacity, if we were in fact called upon to do so.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. Has the Alberta Attorney General's department in fact been called on within the last year to provide court facilities in Alberta in the second of Canada's two official languages, French?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that we have been called upon to do so. Indeed I was aware only shortly before the matter was introduced that it was going to be a proposal to amend the Criminal Code. I have not spoken to Mr. Basford, the federal Minister of Justice, about the matter since I received the notice, but hope to have the opportunity of doing so before too long.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. At the same conference, was it the position of the Attorney General that Alberta was not yet prepared to move ahead with the implementation of the federal gun control legislation?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, one of the provinces at the meeting of attorneys general felt that the time line for implementation was simply too rigid. They didn't feel they could be in a position to have appropriate staff in the field and all the necessary machinery in place in order to implement the federal legislation, and therefore requested the concurrence of other provinces in approaching the federal government requesting a six-month delay in the implementation period. Alberta agreed to the request of that province, and my memory is that almost all, if not all, provinces concurred in that.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. Is it the intention that the federally passed gun control legislation will in fact not be implemented in Alberta or, as far as that goes, in Canada for an extended six-month period?

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I should say again that one of the provinces requested, to use the vernacular of the opposition, a six-month hoist. The other provinces, with one possible exception I think, agreed that that would be a useful suggestion to the federal government. As I recall, the Attorney General for Prince Edward Island and the Premier, Alex Campbell, were going to write the federal Minister of Justice and make that recommendation. Whether or not it will be accepted and acted upon by the federal government, I'm really not in a position to say.

RCMP Activities

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Solicitor General. My question concerns the recent statements by the Prime Minister and the federal Solicitor General regarding illegal RCMP raids on offices of the Parti Quebecois. Will the Solicitor General instruct the RCMP that the tolerant attitude of the federal government toward such illegality is not the attitude of the government of Alberta, and that illegal police raids on offices within

Alberta will result in criminal prosecution of the officers responsible?

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to take part in any problem that exists in the province of Quebec, but certainly my instructions to the RCMP are to carry out their duty to uphold the rule of law in the province of Alberta.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Solicitor General. Has the Solicitor General had discussions with the commanding officer of the RCMP in Alberta since the Prime Minister's comments and the revelations that have taken place in this area? I am referring again to the Alberta government's attitude toward that kind of thing in Alberta.

MR. FARRAN: Mr. Speaker, I have said before, and I say it again, that I have complete confidence in the RCMP. I am not a party to the present trend toward denigrating the police. I am confident that in Alberta they are performing their duty in a completely proper and honorable way.

ECA Publications

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. I wonder if the minister could advise the Assembly why the papers of Dr. W.R. Trost have been removed from the Environment Conservation Authority library list of publications for 1977.

MR. RUSSELL: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the import of that question.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, to advise the hon. minister, the question is: have the papers of Dr. Trost, which were listed in the 1976 survey of papers, in fact been removed from the library? The reason for asking the question is just to inquire whether or not papers that have been written by that particular gentleman, published by the ECA, are there for the public to obtain.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to inquire from the ECA office with respect to those matters, because I know that when Dr. Trost left, he did take personal effects, including items from the library, and left others. I'll find out and report whether or not the items the hon. member is referring to were included in that category.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Can the minister advise the Assembly whether he has had any discussion with officials of the Environment Conservation Authority with respect to the disposition of papers published by Dr. Trost and other members of the Authority?

MR. RUSSELL: No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

Coal Royalties

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to either the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources or the Minister of Business Development and Tourism.

Have there been any discussions with ministers of the government of British Columbia regarding a uniform royalty for coal?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary. Have there been any official complaints from the government of Japan or industrialists of Japan regarding the royalty charged on coal in Alberta as against that in British Columbia?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether I would categorize them as complaints. I do believe that in some meetings with representatives of companies from Japan, they have tried to be more fully aware of the resource ownership positions of the various provinces and the royalties that provinces levy. But I haven't felt that I've received complaints from them.

MR. TAYLOR: One further supplementary, which I hope is in order. Are the people of British Columbia receiving less from their coal resource than are the people of Alberta?

MR. GETTY: That's difficult to assess, Mr. Speaker. I could try. But royalties are based on the quality, the profitability, the different kinds of coal. I don't know whether I can answer that. But I could try to give the hon. member some judgment, perhaps privately or publicly, whichever he would prefer.

Abandoned Rail Lines

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, due to concern expressed to me by landowners adjacent to the abandoned Camrose/Kingman/Tofield railway, I would ask the Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation if the province is going ahead in implementing what use the abandoned railroads in Alberta will be put to, regardless of the federal czar of transport's rather dubious claim to ownership.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the present situation with regard to abandoned lines in Alberta is that we have proceeded to caveat them under The Public Works Act as a public works caveat. We have agreement from Canadian National that they are certainly willing to negotiate the transfer of those particular lines, or any abandoned line that belongs to them, to the Crown in the name of the province. We do not as yet have that kind of agreement from Canadian Pacific.

It should also be noted that since the last discussion we had in the Legislature relative to this matter, the Hall commission has now reported. The recommendation of Mr. Justice Hall was that these abandoned lines should be returned to the Crown in the name of the province. The federal Minister of Transport has not agreed with that proposition, and suggests that they belong to the Crown in the name of the federal government. We think he is totally wrong and have told him so. So we have gone ahead and 'caveated' the mentioned lands. It would be our intention to have a joint-use committee, with the adjacent landowners and the provincial department under my colleague the associate minister in charge of public lands, to come to a definitive land use for those particular areas, taking into consideration the

people who abut the right of way, but also taking into consideration the future needs for utility and transportation corridors in the province of Alberta.

MR. STROMBERG: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife. If the committee of public servants and adjacent landowners described by the Deputy Premier decides that the best use of these abandoned railroads, especially the Camrose/Kingman one, would be for wildlife, habitat, or for hiking trails, will your department be responsible for the control of thistles and other noxious weeds on this abandoned right of way?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member's question is hypothetical, but perhaps it could be answered briefly.

MR. ADAIR: If you remove the hypothetical portion of it, I would say yes.

Lamb Processing Plant

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Could the minister indicate whether the government has received any bids on the lamb processing plant at Innisfail?

MR. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, by way of negotiation we have received some indication that there are companies prepared to enter an agreement that would seem them either purchasing or leasing the lamb processors' plant. At this point in time, however, no decision has been made with regard to any disposal of the plant.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister report to the Assembly whether the plant is running at full capacity?

MR. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, the plant is running at a capacity that is related to the number of lambs presently available to the plant for slaughter. During the course of the summer that was fairly substantial, but in recent weeks it is much less than the amount required to keep the plant working five days a week.

MR. MANDEVILLE: One last supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Are lambs from outside of Alberta being processed or being shipped to the plant at the present time?

MR. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister give the Assembly some indication when he expects the government will either enter into an agreement and sell the plant to one of the groups that the minister is dealing with, or is the government considering a longer term arrangement, of the government itself operating the plant?

MR. NOTLEY: The Alberta Energy Company could buy it.

MR. MOORE: At the present time, Mr. Speaker, all of the matters referred to by the Leader of the Opposition are under consideration.

MR. CLARK: Then to the minister: the government has changed its position from some time earlier this year, when it indicated that it was going to attempt to sell the plant to one of the processing groups in Alberta?

MR. MOORE: No, Mr. Speaker, that is incorrect. It is still our intention, provided we can enter into a reasonable arrangement, to move the plant by way of lease or sale to some private sector group in Alberta who would undertake to make a commitment to continue the slaughter of lambs.

Big Game Hunting

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife and has to do with big game hunting in the areas immediately surrounding Elk Island National Park. Mr. Speaker, have concerns about big game hunting been expressed to the minister by the residents in the heavily populated areas around this park?

MR. ADAIR: No, Mr. Speaker, not as yet. I am not aware of any concerns, taking into consideration, too, that this year's season just opened this morning.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. minister. Can the minister indicate to the House if hunting in this area is being carried out by big game rifles, or is it other methods of hunting?

MR. ADAIR: I have some difficulty in responding, Mr. Speaker, in that I don't know just what they have with them. But I assume if they're deer hunting they would have a big game rifle, a 30-30 or whatever it may be.

Alberta Vocational Centre

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, and is with regard to AVC students. I've noted that AVC has experienced a 20 per cent increase in student enrolment, but there hasn't been an increase in staff at the AVC. I was wondering what plans the minister has with regard to that, particularly since there is an increasing demand on this resource staff.

DR. HOHOL: Mr. Speaker, very clearly the great increase in the number of students at AVCs has a direct bearing on the total number of dollars, and that has to be a careful consideration. At the same time, we appreciate that the allowance — and it's important to remember that this isn't a wage or a full cover of what it costs to attend AVC; it is an allowance. We're looking at the possibility of some increase, keeping in mind that books and other costs of living are going up, and that the allowances have not been moved in the last couple of years.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Because of the upgrading facilities of AVC — and a large number of students who enter AVC have learning disabilities, particularly reading disabilities — what additional funds could possibly be earmarked for hiring staff qualified to tutor such disabled adults?

DR. HOHOL: Alberta Education has probably an outstanding capability in working with people with learning disabilities, including men and women out of school and in adult classes. While the formal program at AVC here in Edmonton has been discontinued, we have always maintained at the AVCs throughout the province a high capacity to assist people who have difficulty with learning. This component won't change.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. As part of a pre-enrolment type of activity, are all AVC students assessed to identify their individual learning disabilities?

DR. HOHOL: Learning disabilities are pretty tricky sorts of things. Very often they show up in the process of trying to do a certain program of studies. So there isn't a regimen of establishing that a person has a particular kind of disability. In most cases the people at AVC are simply there to catch up or close the gap or get into a situation where they can get a job or get a higher level of training or education than they presently have.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Could the minister then assure me that if certain students are not receiving adequate assistance with regard to these learning disabilities, he would consider additional funds to the program?

DR. HOHOL: I'll certainly make the commitment all of us have: to make certain that people who go to AVC, or any kind of institution where there is a fundamentally basic kind of preparation, don't lose out on quality or opportunity because of lack of funds.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the minister. Would the minister care to commit as to the time span before giving further information? Would he be prepared to review the present AVC situation with regard to learning disabilities and report to the Assembly, say, within a week?

DR. HOHOL: I certainly take on the commitment. We are doing it; we're looking at it. As a matter of fact I was reading some materials on learning disabilities and how we are dealing with them at the Alberta vocational centres. It's interesting reading. I might send the hon. member a copy, and I mean that in a positive way. Certainly we're doing it. But I wouldn't want to make the commitment that a week from today, at 27 minutes after 3, I would be able to give a comprehensive kind of state of the union with respect to this particular subject. It's an important one, we're working at it and, from time to time, either by question or by report, I will keep the Assembly informed.

AEC Acquisition

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, and ask if he had discussions with the Alberta Energy Company or any of its officials prior to the purchase by the Energy Company of Willowglen electronics?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary question to the minister. Since the Alberta Energy Company has acquired Willowglen electronics, has the minister had discussions on this matter with the president of the Energy Company?

MR. GETTY: Briefly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in the course of those brief discussions with the president, is the minister in a position to make available to the House the financial statement with regard to Willowglen, and their production record over the past two years? Could the minister make that information available to the House?

MR. GETTY: I don't have that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, would the minister be prepared, then, to go back to the president of the Energy Company, acquire the information, and make it available to the House?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's a public company. I imagine the hon. Leader of the Opposition could get that public information.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Perhaps I should just say this: we've attempted to get the financial statement from Willowglen, having been turned down by Mr. Mitchell and also by Willowglen.

DR. BUCK: It's another million. What's a million, Getty?

Attorneys General Conference

(continued)

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Attorney General. I wonder if the Attorney General would indicate whether law and pornography was discussed at the recent attorneys general conference? [interjections]

MR. FOSTER: Topical issue, Mr. Speaker. Some of the provinces, Mr. Speaker, wanted to discuss the matter of child pornography, and there were some recommendations concerning changes to the Criminal Code as it relates to the display or the publication of violence and crime in that context. A particular publication entitled *High Times* was also specifically discussed as an example of a publication which seems to be encouraging criminal conduct. My memory is — and I left the meeting a little early — that I think Ontario or Quebec was going to draft a proposal to present to the federal government. As yet I have not received it, and would not expect to receive it for the next two or three weeks.

DR. PAPROSKI: Just one supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would amplify on that remark, or in a broader area, whether a clearer definition was made regarding pornography, and that this clearer definition would be helpful in the prosecution of issues concerning pornography.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, I think the general thrust of the meeting was to define "objectionable publication" more clearly under the Criminal Code, to incorporate in it reference to violence and portraying criminal activity. I'd have to await the specific wording of the proposal from the province involved — and as I say, I can't recall whether it's Ontario or Quebec — before commenting further.

Trucking Industry

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Deputy Premier and Minister of Transportation. I wonder if he could tell the House how far along we are with the reciprocal agreement for trucking across Saskatchewan relative to cattle and other forms of livestock?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, so far as I'm aware, that agreement is essentially in place. But I'll check on the matter and report to the hon. member.

Hallowe'en Precautions

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Solicitor General. Have the police forces of the province been alerted to put forth extra special effort tonight in order, if possible, to prevent tragedy resulting from Hallowe'en fun?

MR. FARRAN: All the police forces are on the alert, Mr. Speaker.

Alcan Pipeline — Labor Supply

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, and ask whether, in light of the Alcan pipeline proposal, the minister has met with Grande Prairie College, Fairview College, and Grouard to see what changes in programming might be merited in order to facilitate maximum participation by northerners in the pipeline project.

DR. HOHOL: I haven't personally, Mr. Speaker. But I'm certain that people from the department have been in touch with the colleges, the industry, and trade union people in a collective way to meet the aspirations of the work force close to the activity of the pipeline.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the department considering any expanded funding to the institutions I enumerated, in light of meeting that objective of ensuring that as many northerners as possible have an opportunity to participate in the project?

DR. HOHOL: I would be anticipating the budget just a bit too precisely to respond one way or another. But certainly, as the colleges look to their work in the months ahead, they have to consider their capability to respond to the total circumstance. This is one ingredient that's certainly going to be there for them, at least for two or three years.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour. Have there been any

discussions between the government of Alberta and the principals of the pipeline company concerning the question of the labor force for the project? Mr. Speaker, I raise the question in view of the fact that apparently a large number of Alaskans are interested and ready to go to work. And to what extent will that preclude Albertans and Canadians from participating in the project?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what answer I can give that would encompass a different territory in regard to manpower supply from what the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower could give. But I certainly don't think there's any chance that the use of American tradesmen, based on being available in Alaska, for other than the Alaskan portion of the pipeline is a serious consideration. I really believe that the tradesmen who will be at work will be Canadians. As with other major projects in the province, the only time workers are sought outside the country is when they're simply not available here.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour. Have there been any meetings between federal and provincial officials and company officials with respect to ensuring that on the Canadian portion of the line, work permits would not in fact be granted to Alaskans if there were Canadians available for the jobs.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any such meetings.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In light of the overall unemployment picture in the country, is it the government's intention to discuss this matter with the appropriate federal officials?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member is dealing with an area that overlaps between discussions that might be held by officials of my hon. colleague's Department of Advanced Education and Manpower and those which might be held with officials of the Department of Labour. My understanding is that the matter isn't sufficiently far advanced for the type of discussion the hon. member is asking about now.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. In light of the need to gear up training programs to maximize the job opportunities for Canadians, has this matter been discussed by education ministers across the country? Is any study presently taking place to ensure that there is a maximum Canadian labor input to the pipeline?

DR. HOHOL: Not quite in that context, Mr. Speaker. In education, we're always looking at this kind of matter in a global way. In the meeting of ministers responsible for manpower across the nation we try to assess the national circumstance and its implications to regions and provinces, in particular at the regional and institutional level — the colleges, trade schools, trade unions, management. It's in that type of atmosphere and form that a great deal of impetus is

provided the institutions to respond in particular ways to make sure we have apprenticeship programs in place, and on-the-job training in place, that we have effective training and supervisory people, and so on.

So it's an ongoing thing. Every time a new venture becomes part of the Canadian scene or the provincial circumstance, we certainly attend to it as effectively as we can. There is some initial gap between a public announcement and the capacity to reap and make certain kinds of predictions about the nature of the work force in both kind and number.

MR. NOTLEY: One final supplementary question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. In view of the disparities in the country and the ability of different provinces to cope with expanded manpower training programs, what discussion has there been between the government of Alberta and other provinces to make it possible for people from fairly high unemployment areas of the country, such as the Atlantic region for example, to have the proper training so they may in fact take advantage of some of these projects as they arise?

DR. HOHOL: We have had discussions like that, not so much as an agenda item, but as a procedural kind of thing that we use [to keep] in touch by telephone with our colleagues across the nation. In particular, Mr. Speaker, this question is most effectively addressed and worked out in bilateral, informal understandings with the federal government and other provinces. Because here we're speaking of costs — costs of travelling — and this is handled mostly between a provincial government and the Department of Employment and Immigration in Ottawa.

Enoch Reserve

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question was to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I can hold it until tomorrow without any problem. It's a follow-up question on the Enoch Reserve.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to hold my question until tomorrow.

Trade Negotiations — Petrochemicals

MR. DOWLING: Mr. Speaker, last week I gave a response which I'd now like to clarify. The question was from the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview and involved studies that might have been undertaken by our department relative to the competitive position of Alberta petrochemicals in the United States.

Our department, in working closely with an inter-departmental task force on trades and tariffs to identify petrochemical products now produced or potentially produced in Alberta which are most affected by international trade obstacles, has undertaken studies of various kinds, part of which deal with the matter raised by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. We hope the results of those studies will help us in developing an Alberta position with regard to an overall Canadian trade strategy with regard to petrochemicals. Since most of the material gathered in these studies came from private, confidential sources, it's our position to keep that material confidential

until such time as the Canadian negotiations are complete, to give us maximum flexibility.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

4. Moved by Mr. Leitch:

Be it resolved that the Assembly do resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the 1978-79 Estimates of Proposed Investments of the Alberta heritage savings trust fund (capital projects division); and that the message of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, the said estimates, and all matters connected therewith be referred to the said committee.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: Committee of Supply

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will now come to order.

head: ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND
CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION
1978-79 ESTIMATES OF
PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

Irrigation Rehabilitation and Expansion

Agriculture

1. Irrigation Rehabilitation and Expansion

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, just a very few brief comments. A number of hon. members were in the Assembly when the select committee, which you chaired, Mr. Chairman, studied and reviewed the irrigation rehabilitation and expansion program for the current fiscal year. Really, all I want to say with respect to funds you are being asked to approve for the '78-79 budget year is that the \$9 million in question will be expended in much the same manner as it has been during the past two years, with perhaps one exception.

Before I mention that exception, I should indicate to members that the manner in which we expended the funds in the last two years has been by way of distribution of the major amount of the funds to 13 irrigation districts. They are then expended on an irrigation district basis, by way of an 86:14 formula, of which many members are well aware, with the irrigation districts themselves, through their acreage revenue, providing 14 per cent of a project cost while 86 per cent is supplied from these dollars. In addition to that, the distribution of funds between irrigation districts will continue to be based, as it has in the past, on a formula incorporating 50 per cent on acreage and 50 per cent on revenue factors.

The only exception that may occur is that I will again be asking the Irrigation Council — which, by the way, has been a very great help indeed in terms

of arranging for meetings with the irrigation districts to consider their proposals for the future year — to undertake some review of this 86:14 formula. I think I expressed a year ago, and I want to again, that it is still my view that we need to look at that formula in light of today's conditions, and consider whether or not it will continue to serve us well. It may be that the allocation of responsibilities between irrigation districts — by districts I mean irrigation farmers themselves — and the government should be different than 86:14.

Aside from that, Mr. Chairman, we don't expect any changes with respect to the manner in which funds are allocated. Indeed the priority will continue to be on the rehabilitation of existing works within the irrigation districts, with the development of new land area, at least in most irrigation districts, coming as a second priority.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, just a few comments and a question on this — it relates to the distribution of the funds and the formula they have. I agree it's got to be based on acreage, and there's got to be some method of basing the formula. However, as far as the formula is concerned, I think some consideration should be given to the age and the need in irrigation districts. I know that some of our smaller projects have been getting a large amount of funds, and they've got their irrigation works in pretty fair condition. However, in some of the older districts — and I'm thinking of the western irrigation district and possibly the eastern irrigation district — some of their structures are more in need of repair than some of our newer areas, also some of the smaller areas.

I see that they're indicating the province is to extend irrigation services to new areas. The experience I had with many of the irrigation districts in southern Alberta in the last year is that in most districts they weren't able to provide enough water for the land they have under irrigation at the present time. So I don't think we should promote putting new areas under irrigation until we're able to get more water storage on our river basins.

Could the minister explain the difference between \$14 million estimate for 18 months for 1976-78 and the \$9 million for 1978-79? There's a reduction there. Is that as a result of the six months and having that \$5 million by special warrant?

MR. MOORE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member's interpretation of the \$14 million as compared to the \$9 million is correct. As members would know, when a commitment was made to enter an irrigation rehabilitation and expansion program, the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act and relevant legislation was not in effect. So for the first year the projects took the form of funds being guaranteed by the Provincial Treasurer and the irrigation districts borrowing the necessary amount to undertake \$5 million worth of work on the assumption that the Legislature would approve, in the following fiscal year, \$5 million plus a further \$9 million for 12 months. So yes, the \$14 million is comprised of ... Actually, in fairness I think it should be considered a 24-month period. Because \$5 million was utilized in one construction year, \$9 million in the next construction year, and we're now asking for approval for a further \$9 million for a third construction year.

The commitment of \$90 million over 10 years would indicate there is a \$4 million shortfall that would be made up some time during that 10-year period. I think it's a fair assessment that that is correct. I would expect that the level of engineering, surveying, and preparatory work the irrigation districts have to do, coupled with escalating construction costs, will lead us into a situation where either next year or the year after we will begin to increase the \$9 million slightly during the middle part of the 10-year program to in fact take up the \$4 million that wasn't authorized during the first year of the program.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to say a few words on this particular appropriation. I'd like to indicate that I support the appropriation.

I was rather surprised, Mr. Chairman, as I listened to the minister in heritage committee describe the costs and point out to us that he felt there was no problem there. I'm pleased to hear that. I wasn't surprised in a negative sense, I was surprised in a positive sense; that is, if I recall correctly his discussions in the heritage committee, the minister indicated the costs seem to be under control, and that we were more or less going on schedule. I hope that remains the situation, Mr. Chairman. But if it doesn't, I still think we have to recognize the importance of making the investment, particularly when it comes to rehabilitation and expansion.

Now I certainly would not want to see a situation such as we now notice in the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care, where a \$25 million facility has become a \$75 million facility in a matter of a year and half. We don't have that situation here. We don't have to cross that bridge because it appears that at this stage anyway the costs are under control. But then I would say to the minister that it's going to be pretty tricky to stay on top of these costs. Major projects are all going to tend to push things up at once. If we get the Alcan pipeline, we're talking about at least \$1 billion worth of that in Alberta, perhaps \$2 billion — the third oil sands plant. It seems to me that one of the real problems this government is going to have to face in all our capital works projects is that if we find our projects are going ahead simultaneously with major private projects, it's going to put on tremendous inflationary pressure which will be extremely difficult for any government to control.

Now in my judgment the answer is not to back off irrigation rehabilitation. Far from it. But it seems to me that two or three years down the road we may have to make the rather unenviable choice of agreeing to rather substantial increases in the investment here from the \$200 million set out in 1975 or, alternatively, deliberately saying to some of the promoters of major private projects that they're going to have to wait two, three, or four years. There can only be so much demand in the Alberta economy at a given time, and if we get overheating of the economy we're going to find that both private and public dollars will be eaten up by uncontrollable inflation.

So while I rise to support the appropriation in a very definite way, particularly as it applies to rehabilitation of the irrigation system, I would just issue the concern I think all of us will have to indicate, that in the years ahead if we get too many of these projects going at the same time, we could very well find that

the cost increases will be enormous.

The only point I would make: I'd like the minister to be a little more specific in his reasons for changing the 86:14 formula. One of the reasons I kind of liked the 86:14 formula, to be quite blunt about it, is that it seemed to me that that was the basis of a reasonable formula that might be applied to water resource projects in northern Alberta. I know that the ECA had come up with a 75:25 split. At the present time we have a 50:50 split in costs.

When the minister indicated they were reviewing this 86:14 formula I may have misunderstood him, but I sensed he was approaching the proposition — gingerly, but approaching it notwithstanding — of cutting down the provincial share. In other words, instead of 86:14 it might be 80:20, or 75:25. So I wonder if the minister would perhaps be a little more specific about how the government sees this particular formula. I realize these formulas are not written in stone and have to be adapted from time to time. I think the Member for Bow Valley made a good point, that there are some differences too in the irrigation systems that are obviously going to have to be taken into consideration. But I would be interested in the government's thinking on this matter.

MR. MOORE: Just to expand briefly on that, Mr. Chairman, it's my view, having made some study within the Department of Agriculture of the 86:14 formula, which I believe was developed as far back as 1949, that a number of conditions have changed since that time. I believe the value of water on farmland, taking into consideration the kind of crops that can be produced on much of that farmland today as opposed perhaps to 30 years ago, indicates to me that an individual farmer who wishes to have water on his land should feel there is more value to placing that water on his land than the 14 per cent indicated in the existing formula.

My personal view is that a formula of 75:25 for irrigation rehabilitation and expansion would be more appropriate than the 86:14 formula. I say that for two or three different reasons: the one I have just outlined, plus the fact that our commitment in government is not to undertake a certain amount of work; rather it's to undertake work in irrigation rehabilitation and expansion at a cost of \$90 million over a period of 10 years. Now whether or not, in relation to the hon. member's earlier comments, we increase that down the road, is something we can't tell now. But certainly we have a commitment to provide up to \$9 million a year over a 10-year period.

Indications are that some irrigation districts are in fact not following the 86:14 formula, in that with the allocation of heritage savings trust fund dollars they apply those funds on an 86:14 basis and then turn around and do additional work with their own dollars. Some review I have had indicates that in fact the irrigation districts are voluntarily coming up more in the neighborhood of a 75:25 split in terms of what is paid for out of this budget and what they are collecting from their farmers to do themselves.

So I think that sort of formula — which is not a great adjustment, but some — would be more appropriate today. However, there are 13 irrigation districts that all have certain views with respect to the benefits to society in total and to themselves as individual farmers, and a number of people on the Irriga-

tion Council, whose responsibility it is to advise me on these matters. I hesitate to suggest we're going to move in that direction without having further discussions with the irrigation districts and the Irrigation Council.

On the other matter, with respect to the comments of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview basically about erosion control and water management programs in other parts of the province, I take the view there as well — and I would have to say, Mr. Chairman, that it's a personal view as a Member of the Legislative Assembly — that there is an opportunity to reconsider existing 50:50 cost-sharing arrangements and hopefully move closer to the kind of arrangements we have with respect to irrigation rehabilitation.

MR. THOMPSON: I wonder if the minister is considering a program where, in any project in which heritage savings trust funds are concerned, they would put up signs stating exactly how much of the fund is involved, so that 10, 15, 20 years down the road people could look and say, this is where the money is put. I can see in this capital division, especially with irrigation, where it gets blurred, and who knows who puts what in. I would like to see the department consider putting up a sign on these projects, stating how much actual heritage funds are put in each one of these projects.

DR. BUCK: [Inaudible] put the Premier's picture on too?

MR. THOMPSON: If necessary.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I have not considered that matter, but I'd be extremely pleased to take the hon. member's representations under consideration and invite any other hon. member who may wish to pursue the matter to talk to me about it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make two comments to the minister, one for the record and secondly with regard to policy direction of the moneys that are being made available.

As I understand from your comments, the split is \$90 million for the agricultural section and \$110 million for the environmental section in regard to irrigation rehabilitation and expansion. What concerns me, and I'm sure many others, Mr. Minister, is that the \$90 million is the limit or the lid we've placed on irrigation rehabilitation as such, which will mean that as we develop it over this 10-year period our effective dollars may be, say, only \$65 million, because the dollar just isn't doing as much and it seems that trend is continuing. So I would have the minister have a look at that and possibly reconsider it. Because with fewer dollars less work is to be done and, as we well recognize, in the irrigation districts there is ample pressure just to do the rehabilitation within the districts at the present time. I'm sure it will take a lot more than \$65 million at the present time. So that is a concern of mine.

Now I also understand, and maybe the minister could clarify this for me, that out of that \$65 million there is an expectation of the government — and this is a sort of informal, or maybe formal, policy directive — that a greater emphasis should be placed on

expansion rather than internal rehabilitation of the existing districts. If that assumption I have made is correct, I think the amount of dollars available to do not only internal work but expansion work — maybe we're going to spread ourselves so thin that we won't get the necessary work done within the districts. Possibly the minister could comment on that and clarify my thinking with regard to it.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, on the first point with respect to the \$90 million perhaps being \$65 million over the course of years, probably to some extent the reverse is true, in that in addition to \$90 million over the 10-year period at the present rate at which irrigation districts, through their members, are contributing to rehabilitation and expansion, it would appear they will be putting in about \$30 million, leaving us with \$120 million.

In addition to that, a commitment we made some time ago, providing \$2 million a year from the regular budget of the Department of Agriculture to irrigation rehabilitation, is being maintained. That's a further \$20 million. So we actually get up to about \$140 million at a minimum over the 10-year period. Incidentally, that's aside from the \$30 million the irrigation districts themselves will be putting in. That \$110 million is something like \$110 million more than any contribution that was made before by the government of Alberta. It's a good start.

The matter of which comes first, rehabilitation or expansion? Early in 1975 we outlined that from \$90 million, \$50 million would be provided for expansion of existing irrigation districts. That figure was based on our bringing under water about 50,000 new acres a year over the 10-year period. In addition to that, we indicated \$40 million would be expended on rehabilitation of existing works in irrigation districts.

Now there is no question that spending \$40 million over that period of time will serve to substantially improve the existing works. But rehabilitation of our irrigation districts is going to go on forever. It isn't going to stop at the end of 10 years. Quite naturally, there are now projects in reasonably good repair that 10 years from now will be scheduled for repair. So in terms of rehabilitation, it's difficult to determine where we will be for sure in 10 years. But hopefully our system will then be better than it's been for some time.

But I stated a few weeks ago in committee study of past expenditures, as well as stating to the irrigation districts and the council, that the priority is on rehabilitation, not expansion, and that the figures of \$40 million for rehabilitation and \$50 million for expansion are not written in stone. As the years go by in this program, we have the ability to divert our attention more to rehabilitation, if that is necessary, rather than expansion. I think it's important that we do that. Because certainly in terms of things like canal lining, where you're curing a lot of seepage problems and saving a lot of water, it's more important to get that done than to bring new land under irrigation if in fact you're wasting water because of rehabilitation not being carried out.

So in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the priority definitely is rehabilitation. The figures can and may be changed to reflect that priority.

DR. BACKUS: Mr. Chairman, in Israel their very extensive irrigation program is based on pipeline supply of water. In view of our capability in pipelines and the added expense of it being offset by loss of water from seepage and from evaporation, I wonder if the government had considered, under the rehabilitation, at least in part installing plastic pipelines instead of relining ditches and doing all these other things, because that would enable hundreds of acres of land presently just taken up in ditches to be actually brought under cultivation.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, yes, the irrigation districts through their engineering services and the irrigation division of the department in Lethbridge have made rather extensive studies of underground pipe systems for the transportation of irrigation water. Without presuming to be an expert on the matter, I could say that with the larger canals thus far, the economics of providing the movement of water in that way are simply not there. Up to a certain size, however, my understanding is that some experimental work is being carried out, and some practical application of piping irrigation water is in place, when it comes to moving it throughout a district.

That is a matter that may change as the years go by. We simply have to be up-to-date in terms of our engineering and cost studies vis-a-vis the loss of water that might transpire by way of leakage or evaporation when you transport water in a canal.

I would have to say in conclusion, though, that at this time it doesn't appear there will be a major use of pipe for the larger canal systems.

MR. R. SPEAKER: In the rehabilitation work going on, has there been any difficulty in the districts in obtaining contractors and people to do the work. Are you getting any feedback to that effect?

MR. MOORE: I have not personally been made aware of any great difficulties by any of the irrigation districts in securing either contractors or engineering services or the like. Undoubtedly, as with any project, they've all had some minor difficulties and problems. But I think part of the reason the difficulty has been minimized is that the projects are generally being carried out by the irrigation districts themselves.

A district, say, like St. Mary's — which is rather large — and some of the others as well, have a fair capability in terms of engineering, knowing who and where the contractors are, and knowing how to issue tenders. They also have a fair amount of capability themselves to actually perform work. So it's a little different situation than if my department were to go into the irrigation areas and say, we're going to undertake all this work, and have to provide ourselves with the engineering ability to do that and contract it.

That, Mr. Chairman, is the very reason we chose the route of going to the irrigation districts and the Irrigation Council and saying, show us your priorities and, within the parameters we have established for use of these funds in rehabilitation and bringing on new land, we want you to do the work. We want you to handle the funds, handle the contracts for construction work.

Incidentally, Mr. Chairman, those irrigation districts are all very properly audited, most of them by the Provincial Auditor's office. They provide to me an

annual report on work they're undertaking. Our department in Lethbridge is always on top of what's being done by the irrigation districts, and I feel more than confident that that's the appropriate way to carry out the work.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to support what the minister is doing in that area. That technique is number one, and the feedback from the other irrigation districts is good too, to the effect that they appreciate that type of general guideline and then follow through with the capability of doing the base work in the districts. It's working out well.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I was glad to hear him say the main thing in the trust fund money is to upgrade the existing systems. I think we have to upgrade our existing systems to a great degree before we get too far into too great an expansion, so it's not, as in the proverbial story, putting the cart before the horse. At that time we'll be fully aware of the mistakes we have made previously, and hopefully we won't make them again.

Mr. Chairman, my question to the minister is: in light of the existing situation of water availability, is it not true that through upgrading of the existing systems almost the total water that is available now — remembering that we're not counting the studies that are presently progressing, but the total water availability now — would be used in upgrading the systems and making better water usage of them, thus allowing more water through the ditches and more pumping on the high side of the ditches and such?

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, when we're involved in rehabilitation we're really involved in making better use of water. If we can line canals and do certain works that prevent seepage, we can improve the use of water and thereby either put more water on certain acres of land or bring new lands under water. I'd find it difficult to make a blanket statement saying there's no more water available. We've just come through a very difficult year, which hopefully won't be repeated and our water storage will get back up. In addition to that, the situation varies and differs from one district to another. While some have been extremely short of water, others have managed to make good use of the water they did have and continue to be in a position where they can add some lands. So there's no question that the co-operation which is going on presently between my department and the Department of the Environment is extremely important in that the Department of the Environment is charged with the responsibility of delivering water to the headworks.

So to conclude, Mr. Chairman, we will not be rushing headlong into bringing new lands under water without the full knowledge that water is available. The only other thing I can say on that matter is that it seems the irrigation districts themselves are making very sure, by way of their authority over new water rights, that we don't get into a situation where we have canals that are empty.

Agreed to:
Irrigation Rehabilitation and Expansion \$9,000,000

Environment

2. Irrigation Headworks Improvement

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I think the major points were probably covered adequately by the Minister of Agriculture when he introduced the first vote under this budget. I think hon. members understand that the responsibility of Environment lies from the headworks back, and as a result of the previous commitment we've been undertaking a series of works and want to continue with them this year insofar as headworks rehabilitation is concerned, improved operation and maintenance of main works. Water storage or flow regulation of the Oldman River of course will be an important part of our expenditure, as well as some miscellaneous items.

I think I can report to the members fairly good progress since the takeover of the headworks was arranged with the federal government by my predecessor. The transfers are proceeding in an orderly way, along with the agreements for repair, and I think our own work is going forward at an acceptable level of progress. The funds we're asking for this year, \$6.6 million, I think are reasonable for a full fiscal year. Unless there are any questions from particular members, I'd like to recommend acceptance of that amount, Mr. Chairman, so we can continue with those major projects.

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, I also appreciate this amount of money in irrigation headworks improvement. However, I do think it's a drop in the bucket as far as developing our water resources is concerned, storing or getting water management. I'd like to ask the minister if he has met with the federal government, because I certainly think the federal government has a responsibility as far as the development of our water resources is concerned. In 1973 they went into an agreement with the provincial government where they were going to put in some funds to rehabilitate some of the major projects and to take over one particular project in Alberta. So I think this is an area that should be explored as far as getting federal government money involved to develop our river basins.

One project in the 1973 agreement the provincial government drew up with the PFRA hasn't been completed, and that's rehabilitation of the Bassano Dam. As I said before in the House, I would like the minister to take a really good look before they let the federal government spend \$12 million rehabilitating the Bassano Dam. What I'd like to see the minister do, possibly with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, is see if the federal government would put up some more funds toward putting in storage on the Bow River basin. I think if they were approached and the situation explained as far as the \$12 million is concerned — that it's no water storage at all; the only thing it will do is divert water the same as the dam is doing at the present time. However, if the federal and provincial governments were to put some money into building the Eyremore dam, we wouldn't need the diversion at Bassano. The Eyremore dam would divert the water into the eastern irrigation district, not

only for irrigation but for industry. So I'd certainly like to see the minister take a real good look at holding a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture and possibly the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs to see if we can get some participation in this project from the federal government.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I did want to respond to the hon. member because I know of his specific interest in that particular project. I think he's probably aware we're waiting for the response from the eastern irrigation district board concerning the report which they asked be undertaken with respect to the Eyremore dam as opposed to the rehabilitation of Bassano. The report was mainly done by PFRA and there appears, insofar as we're concerned anyway, to be agreement between the two governments at this time. The repair of Bassano is the one that looks to be the best expenditure of funds. We haven't yet had a response from the eastern irrigation district board to that report. I know of their particular interest in it. But I should say at this time that it would be our intention to conclude that agreement and get that work done, because I believe it is essential. Whatever scheme eventually goes ahead for further storage or management of the stream I think we will need the Bassano headworks.

That's where the matter stands at the moment. We've completed the review we undertook with PFRA for the EID, and we're awaiting their response.

MR. NOTLEY: I'd like to move for a moment from the Bassano Dam to the flow regulation on the Oldman River. Mr. Chairman, I understand that Mr. Ron Buchanan has resigned as a member of the Oldman River water management committee. My question to the minister is: has an appointment been made to replace Mr. Buchanan?

MR. RUSSELL: No it hasn't, Mr. Chairman. I asked the committee to review this. They've reviewed it twice and, at their meeting last week, passed a motion recommending that the vacancy not be filled at this late date. We haven't made a final decision on that, but we did search for somebody who could represent the broad interests of the river basin to try to make up some of the criticism made by the original committee appointments. But it's the opinion of the committee members, who are working very hard, looking at how far into the studies they are and the work to be done in a very short time, that the vacancy be left.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, a further question to the minister. The minister indicated that the committee had recommended no replacement be made. My question to the minister really flows from my understanding of Mr. Buchanan's status on the committee. I believe Mr. Buchanan represented the Cowley/Pincher Creek area on the committee but was also a member of the committee for the preservation of the three rivers. Was any consideration given, Mr. Minister, to accepting the proposal — I believe the three rivers committee had made a proposal for a person to replace Mr. Buchanan.

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, careful consideration was given, Mr. Chairman. At the time of Mr. Buchanan's resig-

nation the committee came up with a number of replacements. One of the names was Mike Cooper, who was a member of the three rivers preservation site, and his name, along with others, was considered.

I have to be quite frank and say we were looking for somebody with a broader range of interest rather than a specific interest group, because I think there already is more than adequate representation on the committee from the west end of the river basin. We've been criticized for not having any representation from the extreme east end, and also perhaps that the conservation and environmental aspects of the project weren't adequately represented. So our first emphasis was to try to find someone either from the east end or from the conservation and environmental sectors who could give a broader range, rather than a group which represented a possible specific dam site. It was in that connection that Mr. Cooper's name was given consideration.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question to the minister. Who is in fact looking at this question of recruiting a replacement for Mr. Buchanan? Is that something the committee has taken upon itself as one of its responsibilities — ultimately the minister will make the decision — or is the government canvassing for possible replacements apart from the recommendations of the committee?

Really what I'd like to get at, Mr. Chairman, is the context of whether a replacement will or will not be made. Will it be on the advice of the present committee, or is the government looking for a replacement independently?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, the answer to that is: both. I asked the committee to try to find a replacement at the time Mr. Buchanan resigned. I also asked the MLAs from the regions involved to suggest names. Quite a few weeks have gone by and the vacancy has been there. A person was approached whom we thought would be very suitable, and he was unable to take it on. The three rivers preservation committee made representations to two groups of cabinet ministers at the time of the southern Alberta cabinet tour, so I honestly believe that appointment has been given a very fair share of attention. Last week I asked the committee to look at it again, because we were anxious to get a decision made one way or the other. Their recommendation was that the committee vacancy should be left.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, to follow that up, when will the minister be making a decision? The minister indicated the committee had given him that recommendation.

MR. RUSSELL: It's made, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: So as far as we're concerned, then, there will not be a replacement. Fair enough. Okay.

Mr. Chairman, is the minister now in a position to outline to the Committee of Supply the target date for the completion of the management committee's work and when the information will be made public?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. As a result of a large meeting of farmers in southern Alberta, which

my colleague the Minister of Agriculture and I attended, we tried to put forward that work as much as we could. We now expect all the technical studies by the consultants to be done by the end of March 1978. A final report — that is, a correlation of the studies and any additional work — could be submitted to the advisory committee by the end of May. We're looking for recommendations to be submitted to me by the end of August. At that time everything would be made public. We're looking to hold public meetings following the harvest season, and a decision on the matter by the end of the year. That's very tight scheduling, but we're doing that in response to concerns voiced by the residents of the region.

MR. NOTLEY: The minister said the committee will be making its recommendations by the end of this summer. However, there is no question at this stage about holding public hearings. I gather the ECA will be holding public hearings quite apart from any recommendations the management committee will be making.

Is it the minister's view that we have sufficient time from November 1 until the end of the year to have adequate public hearings on something as vast as this, and have a decision made by government? I realize we have already gone through some of the steps that took place on the Red Deer, so in a sense much of the work will be synthesized and information will be out. But are you satisfied that in fact we aren't trying to compress the hearings and the final decision into too short a period? I realize you're under some pressure — we all know that — but, in my judgment, there is an important process here.

MR. RUSSELL: This is an instance when I agree with the hon. member. The process is important and I'm on record in several places in southern Alberta in saying that we'll carry that process out properly. I think the bulk of public opinion down there seems to be pressing the government for an early decision, and we're trying to get as early a decision as possible without harming the integrity of the public hearing process.

MR. R. SPEAKER: At the present time does the minister see all studies on track; are we a little bit ahead in some of the studies taking place in the phase two process, and is there any doubt in your mind at this point that we can meet the commitment date you indicated at the meeting at Picture Butte?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Chairman, I don't have any concerns as of today. We've told all the consultants involved of the importance of meeting the deadline, and that if it looks like they're going to be short of time they'd better start overtime now and not wait till the end of the project.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that from the minister, and I think he knows my feeling about the whole thing. At the meeting that evening in Picture Butte there was discussion with regard to the Keho Lake reservoir. At that time there was some question as to whether work was going to be performed on the lake, whether it was going to be deepened. Has the minister any update on that information at the present time? That evening there

was a little doubt as to whether or not it could be used for a larger storage facility.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, the Keho Lake reservoir would not be included in these funds we're talking about. So the answer to the next fiscal year, contained in this budget, is no.

Agreed to:

Irrigation Headworks Improvement \$6,650,000

Renewable Resources Improvement

Energy and Natural Resources

1. Alberta Reforestation Nursery

MR. GETTY: Mr. Chairman, just to comment on the dollars being requested for the 12-month, '78-79 estimates, this will complete the Alberta Reforestation Nursery and bring us up to the full potential of 20 million seedlings a year. The nursery is in fact starting to produce seedlings now, and construction is running on schedule. Other than that, Mr. Chairman, I have nothing to add to the nursery project.

DR. BUCK: I'd just like to ask a question of the minister. The minister stated that they've started production and the maximum will be 20 million per year. What size will they be going out to start the reforestation programs? Secondly, will the seedlings be available to people in the commercial pulp and paper business and will they be paying for them, or is this part of the government program? Also, because we're a little bit behind, will the seedlings be available to acreage owners as well as farmers?

MR. GETTY: The last question first, Mr. Chairman. Farmers can obtain seedlings for their purposes through the Department of Agriculture at the Oliver nursery. Those are not supplied through the reforestation nursery.

The hon. member asked whether people in the pulp and paper business would be using these seedlings. As a matter of fact large companies have, as a rule, entered agreements with the government to provide their own seedlings. Reforestation is required of anybody cutting timber in our province. However, there is an option. You can either opt to purchase them from the government or, with a large company, we normally negotiate with it to build its own nursery, as Simpson Timber have.

The real value of this nursery is for the smaller operator — not a pulp and paper operator, but a smaller operator — who obviously can't build a nursery but pays the government a fee for providing the seedlings. Under any of our contemplated operations I would say, therefore, no pulp and paper operations are going to use seedlings from this nursery.

The other valuable result of this nursery is that we will be able to start reforesting areas that were cut before the laws were changed to insist on reforestation. We will be able to reforest areas that have been burned out and are really our responsibility to reforest — they haven't reforested naturally. We will also be able to plant in certain areas that appear to be productive for reforestation. They haven't been burnt

or cut previously, but they have just never supported timber operations. We will be able to try to make some of them productive.

An inventory has been carried out throughout the province, and we are able to identify those three different kinds of reforestation projects. This nursery will allow us to start making progress on them.

DR. BUCK: Just one short question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate how the reforestation program is working in the Hinton area for North Western Pulp & Power? Several years ago I believe they were having problems with erosion in some of the areas where they've attempted reforestation. I'd like to know if the minister is in a position to indicate if the program is successful, fairly successful, or just what has happened?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Chairman, the last assessment I had was that the problems had been pretty well ironed out, and that the operation in Hinton is now able to conduct their reforestation fairly successfully. There are always problems in terrain and certain weather conditions, but generally it's now successful.

Agreed to:
Alberta Reforestation Nursery \$3,740,000

2. Grazing Reserves Development

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, the funds allocated for the '77-78 budget, which set up the grazing reserve program for the \$1 million toward the basic planning — the amount shown in the capital projects budget of just under \$4 million allows the department to initiate and carry on the grazing reserve program as planned under the \$1 million portion of the '77-78 budget. Of course the moneys expended will go basically toward the clearing, breaking, and seeding of the new grazing reserve programs, including also that area of fencing and the dugouts necessary to provide the actual water.

The amounts established cover those grazing reserves which we hope to announce before the fall sittings close, and take in that initial submission on those that will be ongoing for the coming year. So basically we're looking at the budget allocation of '78-79. Because the major portion of the grazing reserve program and expenditures are in winter, in land clearing itself, it extends really over a period and a half.

So, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. members: the amount of \$3,958,450 will cover the improvement on approximately 20,000 acres, will cover about 95 miles of fence, and takes into consideration a small portion set aside for manpower to continue the ongoing reserve program, and approximately \$750,000 set aside for land assembly to bring each of the grazing reserves on stream.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I understand — and I think we discussed this in the spring session — the allocation is for grazing reserves in the central and northern

parts of the province. Has any representation been made to the minister from southern grazing area groups with regard to this program?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, in reply to the hon. member's question, yes we have had discussions on the amount of money that could be expended on pasture improvement in the south. Of course in many cases it is brush control by means other than land clearing. We hope, through the normal course of the department's budgets, to meet some of those requirements in southern Alberta. We feel we could meet the number of acres we could add and increase toward their carrying capacity through pasture improvement perhaps from our own basic budget. But for those that exceed that amount, consideration would be given to some consideration out of this fund.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I haven't the actual figures on this, but I understand that because of the dry weather in southern Alberta a number of the more productive grasses — that put more weight on the cattle, and so on — have been destroyed because they can't compete with some grasses that just grow but don't put good meat on the cattle. I wonder if there has been any discussion or consideration with regard to regrassing some of the present Crown leases in southern Alberta.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, it has been and is being considered. I might add that with the amounts of money that have been allocated through agricultural research, hopefully we can come up with a type of grass which may meet some of the conditions we have been faced with this spring. But there is ongoing study. It's not just the grass we've had some problems with, but also areas of water supply, whether they be dugouts or other means. That has to be taken into consideration for next year.

Agreed to:
Grazing Reserves Development \$3,958,000

Environment

3. Land Reclamation

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, this is a program we got into on an experimental basis last year. It's been extremely successful, and we're recommending a doubling of the expenditures for the next fiscal year. We canvassed the MLAs for a variety of sites throughout the province. We're working with other departments by way of direct grants. We're really pleased with the number of damaged or despoiled land sites which have been reclaimed and brought under public ownership. If anyone has specific questions, I'd certainly be more than glad to respond to them.

Some of the kinds of things we've dealt with are: abandoned coal-mined lands, abandoned landfill sites — that's a polite term for dumps — abandoned sewage lagoons, and old borrow pits from former

industrial sites. Through the Department of Energy and Natural Resources a grant of a quarter of a million dollars reclaimed a number of old mineral exploration and gravel pit sites and trails. The Department of Transportation got a grant of \$200,000 to deal with some of their abandoned gravel pits. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife is reclaiming 13 sites around the province. Our own department bought about \$800 worth of land in co-operation with municipal governments. We've also been able to improve some old hazardous coal shafts.

The projects and sites where this work has been carried out literally cover the province. I'm very enthusiastic about this program. I think we're very lucky to have funds from this source to invest in those kinds of things, because I know other governments aren't so lucky. I think it's a very successful program, and I hope the members will vote us the funds to continue with it next year.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to sincerely compliment the government on this program. It just proves what you can do when you have money.

The question I would like to ask the minister is: in some areas old gravel pits that have been lying around in a sorry state for many, many years have, I notice, just been levelled off. Can the minister indicate if there has been any attempt to do anything productive with those? Even getting the things levelled off is certainly taking them out of the area of being an eyesore. But I wonder if there's any attempt to restore these, or if they can be restored to any functional use?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, in some cases there's potential for a local recreation site, whether it's land or water based. We've been working with the Alberta Roadbuilders Association, trying where we can to use the actual reclamation work as training for equipment-operator students. Those are about the most productive uses you can get out of them, because the reason they are abandoned is that the mining potential of the gravel has pretty well been exhausted.

DR. BUCK: One other question, Mr. Minister. This is in the area of the use of abandoned gravel pits. In the Clover Bar area we're using some of those, I believe, as landfill sites for garbage disposal. I'd like to know if the minister has had any discussions with Calgary Power on using some of the mined-out areas in the Wabamun area as sanitary landfill disposal sites for the city of Edmonton.

The reason I bring this up, Mr. Chairman, is that at one time the city of Edmonton had taken out an option on an area where they were going to put a sanitary landfill. It's an excellent agricultural area, just southwest of Fort Saskatchewan. Knowing the mysterious ways governments sometimes move, be they provincial, federal, or municipal, the city had taken out a considerable cash option on this land and was going to put a sanitary landfill site in this area. When the discussion took place, in confronting one of the commissioners from the city of Edmonton — and the commissioner had indicated they could economically truck garbage within about a 40-mile radius — I asked: had the commissioner's department looked into some kind of cost-sharing program with the city

of Edmonton and the Calgary Power people to truck some of the garbage into the area, thereby solving the problem of the garbage disposal and refilling and reclaiming some of these areas?

I'd like to know if the minister has had any discussions with the city of Edmonton and Calgary Power on using some of these sites for sanitary landfill.

MR. RUSSELL: No we haven't, Mr. Chairman. We've had considerable discussions with Calgary Power with respect to those sites. I think Calgary Power feels fairly good about the progress they've been able to make, particularly on some of the sites that are under crop for the first time. They're getting alfalfa off those old abandoned sites. I can't recall the matter of sanitary landfill potential being raised. We haven't discussed it with the city of Edmonton.

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, one question if I may. I wonder if the minister could indicate to the House how many acres have been involved in land reclamation to date? It may be an unfair question, but if he has that I'd appreciate it.

MR. RUSSELL: That might be a useful statistic to get. I don't know. Most of the sites are very small, one acre or less, and they're all over the province. But if the member's interested, I'll make a point of getting that information for him.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to compliment the minister for this particular program under the capital projects division. Certainly my constituency has benefited from it, and will continue to, in terms of reclamation of old abandoned coal mine spoil piles and in the filling in of some coal mine shafts which have caved in adjacent to some towns. I'm pleased to see that the allocation for this project of land reclamation has been increased from last year. I think it's a very good place for us to be spending money. We're certainly benefiting from it.

Agreed to:

Land Reclamation

\$5,000,000

Development of Oil Sands Technology

Energy and Natural Resources

1. Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Chairman, most of the members are familiar with the major challenge for which AOSTRA is responsible and the importance of the success of AOSTRA to this province and to Canada. We all have a sense of security in knowing we have the tremendous resources of the Alberta oil sands. But as I believe members are familiar, only some 10 per cent can be extracted economically through known technology. The majority of the oil sands, 90 per cent, will need to be extracted by some as yet unknown proven economic technology. That is the challenge for AOSTRA. To use as a rule of thumb some type of

estimate as to the success we might be able to reach as a result of a breakthrough through AOSTRA: using a conservative recovery estimate, if we could come up with an *in situ* recovery breakthrough, we would be able to produce at our province's current rate of production roughly 1.2 million barrels a day for approximately 400 years. Obviously with this type of breakthrough we would not only be self-sufficient in Canada but probably would pretty quickly become once again an exporter of oil to other parts of the world.

The present AOSTRA accomplishments have been in getting five *in situ* field projects under way. The estimates, as presented here, provide for some \$21 million to fund ongoing projects in the field. These are the AMOCO project, some \$4.5 million for the period April 1, 1978, to March 31, 1979; a British Petroleum project, some \$700,000; a major start on the Shell project of \$15 million; a Numac project of \$1 million; and a project with a smaller company called In-Situ Research, for some \$1.5 million. In addition roughly \$3.6 million has been requested for university research, professorships, Alberta Research Council information centre, scholarships and fellowships, and Alberta Research Council work in tunneling. As I said, this totals some \$3.6 million.

AOSTRA is presently reviewing proposals in the heavy oil field. They called for proposals. The proposals deadline was May 15 of this year. It's too early to tell which ones will be approved. However, there is provision in these estimates for some \$5 million for heavy oil proposals. In addition AOSTRA is reviewing other projects in the *in situ* area, and \$6.5 million is provided in these estimates there.

Mr. Chairman, I think I could say that I'm very pleased with the start AOSTRA has made. I'm very pleased with the dedication, the work they have done, and the amount of time they spend in meeting the challenge they face. I'm extremely pleased that we have been able to obtain a chairman of the calibre of Dr. Bowman. While nobody can predict whether we are going to be successful with the AOSTRA breakthrough, as I referred to it, I think we have the people with the capabilities and the resource with the potential, and that in the coming years we will in fact make the breakthrough that is so important to Alberta and Canada.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. Maybe I missed something. Can the minister indicate what funding the Gulf project in Cold Lake has received? Or does he have that information available? Another question I'd like to ask the minister is: how deep are the *in situ* experimental plants going and what per cent recovery are they getting, using for example the Imperial Oil site at Cold Lake? Also, at what point is the Shell plant in the Peace River country; how much work have they been doing, how far have they progressed?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Chairman, the Imperial plant at Cold Lake is not funded by AOSTRA. That's an experiment Imperial is conducting on their own. At some stage they will have to determine whether the experiment has been successful enough that they will make an application to the Energy Resources Conservation Board to go ahead with a major project. AOSTRA considered the Imperial experiment but felt it was

really too far along to justify their funding, and I believe Imperial were perfectly prepared to continue with their project.

I'm not familiar with any Gulf operation at Cold Lake that the hon. member referred to. However, the Shell project has just been announced, and a major start will be made on the project in the coming months. Other than evaluation work and Shell's own work, to the best of my knowledge there has been no construction on the project. We're fortunate in having the hon. Member for Banff, Mr. Kidd, who is a member of AOSTRA, who perhaps could now add additional details to the deliberations of the committee.

I think that has answered the questions the hon. member posed to me.

MR. KIDD: Mr. Chairman, I think I might be able to add something on the Gulf one. We considered an application from Gulf but did not feel that it met our guidelines sufficiently to fund it, so we're not funding any Gulf application. That one was in the Wabasca sands. I don't think I can add anything more that's pertinent.

Agreed to:

Alberta Oil Sands Technology and
Research Authority

\$40,600,000

Establishing and Improving Recreational Facilities

Environment

1. Capital City Park

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, these are the funds required to finish the park. We're aiming for a July '78 opening so that the park will be essentially complete for people to enjoy just prior to the Commonwealth Games opening. It looks like we'll make that target. I'm excluding from those comments all the work in the Strathcona science park, which is that area outside the actual Capital City Park but which adjoins it.

I think in her comments to the House in an earlier debate the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood gave a very good recapitulation of the status of the Capital work. To sum up, it's on schedule and on budget target, so we really can't ask for anything much better than that.

With respect to the Strathcona science park, we've asked the MLA who has Sherwood Park in his riding of Edmonton Ottewell to assist us in getting citizen participation in the design of the science pavilions. That's been very helpful and very successful.

I don't know if I can add much more, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps many of the hon. members have seen the work that's under way. The four bridges across the river are shaping up nicely. The paths, planting, soil drainage systems, river berms, the construction of a pedestrian and cyclists' overpass, changing rooms, structures, benches, and lighting are all well under way, and it looks like it's going to be a pretty good project.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to ask a question of the hon. minister. With respect to that portion of the funds allocated toward the purchase of lands from private individuals who were then in the position of selling their properties within the boundary lines of the park, my understanding is that the amount was perhaps in excess of what was actually required. The question that has been put to me by the interested public is whether the portion of funding that has been left over and not utilized for land purchases could be allocated to some other aspect, or some other area of development within the park confines.

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, it's possible that that could happen. I can't say it would be that specific with respect to the land purchase vote. Some of the acquisitions, insofar as those lying inside the city of Edmonton are concerned, are really acquired by the city, which gets reimbursed by the province. Those are well within budget. I believe those are the ones the hon. member is referring to. We have a couple of very difficult ones in order to consolidate the Strathcona science park, and expropriation will be involved there in an industrial site. We don't know yet what the final price on that will be. It looks at the moment that we may have some flexibility with respect to the total budget, and we're looking to spend it all.

MRS. CHICHAK: Just for further clarification or information. It's my understanding that some groups have been making application for consideration for a development of a cultural activity centre. I'm not sure of the title; I think it's something to do with a heritage village concept development within the park. My understanding is that the group which is interested in promoting this as part of the cultural development under the cultural development program, to be consistent with the provincial policies, has been requesting whether funds could be directed for this new development out of the portion that was in excess of requirement for land purchases. They appear to be indicating that they were not meeting with favorable consideration with regard to this. Has this been brought to the attention of the minister, and what has his position been? Is there any flexibility in any decision as to whether the funds might be made available?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, of course we've had a shopping list of ideas presented to us, particularly with respect to possible capital improvements. By that I mean buildings. The principle we're trying to follow is to develop the land and water resources in there so we do have the basis of a good park. It's that kind of flexibility I'm talking about when we talk about the expenditure of the budget.

It's too soon to say if there will be the kinds of funds the hon. member referred to, but in the event there were, we would probably — and I underline the word "probably" — encourage the kind of facility that would be a natural recreational feature, rather than a building which could go up under one of the cost-sharing or major facilities programs that we already have in place. There's a very nice building for the handicapped, as you probably know, in one of the city park components of the Capital City Park. It was

carried out that way, and we'd like to see those others proceed in that manner.

DR. BUCK: I have one short question to the minister. It's an area that of course concerns all of us. It would be very unfortunate if we couldn't use the park we have provided for the citizens of Edmonton — and the province, for that matter — if life and limb would be endangered when you were using some of these areas of the park. It's unfortunate that we have to worry about whether there will be adequate police protection or whether we will require extensive police protection in patrolling Capital City Park and Fish Creek Park. I'd like to know if this is a concern to the minister. If it's a concern, will we have adequate protection or will we need it?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, we'll certainly need it. It's a responsibility of the city — just as Fish Creek Park is in the city of Calgary — because it's property lying within the corporate limits, and the municipal police force is responsible for that. I have had discussions with the Solicitor General — I was hoping he would be in his place, because he's spoken on this before. In the case of the city of Calgary and for some parts of the Capital City Park, we've asked them to consider horse-mounted patrols for the very difficult portions to get into in both those parks. The two municipalities haven't responded favorably yet to that idea. But certainly it will be their responsibility, and our law enforcement grants are supposed to be used for these kinds of purposes.

MR. R. SPEAKER: To the minister. At the present time is the minister considering other projects under this particular vote? For example, I believe Lethbridge has made a submission. I've heard the mayor and other councilmen indicate publicly that they would like to see some type of provincial park located on the Oldman River just out of Lethbridge.

MR. RUSSELL: There are two aspects to this. The first would be protection by way of city zoning and/or a restricted development area notice against the titles in order to preserve them. We've been asked by two municipalities to consider that — both in river valleys, one in Medicine Hat and the other in Lethbridge. We haven't made a final decision on either. There have been a number of ongoing discussions with the city of Lethbridge, and they in turn have been handling some of the detailed discussions with private land-owners in the valley.

In the case of Medicine Hat we have provided some funds to the city for the planning of a river valley recreation park concept. I think both municipalities understand that the first step we would take would be using the RDA legislation and possible commitment later to financial support.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister whether he has some specific plans under way for the coming year to introduce the public to the official opening of the completed park on any kind of scale that would in fact convey recognition of the kind of benefit the park has, with respect to the length of the park along the river route.

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, we've got a public relations fellow at the park office trying to plan a good opening. I've seen a variety of weird and wonderful ideas for that, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. CHICHAK: Would it be a worth-while request of the minister to suggest that there be an introduction to the MLAs of his public relations individual to have some exchange of views?

Agreed to:

Capital City Park

\$6,943,000

2. Fish Creek Park

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. RUSSELL: I hope that this vote we're requesting from the Legislature for this next coming fiscal year will finish the acquisition. It's been ongoing at what I think is an acceptable pace, and I believe there are only three more parcels to acquire, Mr. Chairman. Then we'll have it all acquired, and we'll be able to turn it over to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife for development. We're up at about the 2,100 acre mark so far, I think, so we've got about 600 more acres to acquire. We're working diligently on that.

Agreed to:

Fish Creek Park

\$2,000,000

Recreation, Parks and Wildlife

3. Fish Creek Park

MR. ADAIR: Initially the appropriation for Fish Creek Park is to continue the work of providing the facilities east of the Macleod Trail in the present Fish Creek Park and covers the continuing work on day-use facilities, the trail systems within the park; the creation of the lake at the east end close to the Bow River which will facilitate a beach area and a water area for approximately 4,000 to 5,000 for swimming or sunning; the visitors centre and the restoration program on the Burns' house, as well as the parking areas. I might add, Mr. Chairman, that it's progressing extremely well and this should basically complete that portion of the park, east of the Macleod Trail.

Agreed to:

Fish Creek Park

\$1,789,000

Development and Improvement of Alberta's Transportation Facilities

Transportation

1. Airport Terminal Buildings

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, this vote will provide funds for the construction of seven new terminals at Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Whitecourt, Edson, Grande Cache, and Pincher Creek. It might be

worth while to point out that of course the Grande Prairie and Lethbridge airports are classified as federal airports and to get that classification depends on the amount of activity — the landings and so on — that goes on at a particular airport.

Because in the scheme of things, relative to federal budgeting and anticipation, it has become very clear that these badly-needed facilities both at Lethbridge and Grande Prairie would not be forthcoming at a very early date, we've arranged an agreement with the federal government relative to these two airports by which we would be leasing the land from the federal Ministry of Transport and putting up the terminal and the ground-side facilities. The air-side facilities, the tarmac requirements, would be the responsibility of the federal Ministry of Transport. In addition to that we would then be leasing space back to the federal government, relative to the various facilities that they provide at these airports in regard to traffic control, aero-radio, and aero-weather facilities at both airports. The provincial government would be responsible for the leasing at a commercial rate to users other than MoT.

It would be our intention in both Grande Prairie and Lethbridge to set up a joint committee with both cities' present committees, which are a combination of the city and the chambers of commerce in the two areas. These two, along with the federal MoT, ourselves, and the airline users, would form an advisory committee on design and implementation, relative to these two terminal buildings. It's anticipated that the Grande Prairie and Lethbridge facilities will cost in the area of \$2 million each and that they could be completed in the fiscal year that we're talking about.

I might just add, Mr. Chairman, that as soon as we have finalized the agreements with the federal government, those agreements will be tabled in the Legislature and are quite straightforward.

In regard to the question of Red Deer, Red Deer has not reached the status of a federal airport and therefore is in limbo at the moment. It's owned by the federal Department of National Defence. We are in the process of finalizing an agreement with the federal government in which they will turn over the airport to the provincial government for a nominal sum, provided we do the usual things — that it continue to operate as an airport, et cetera. We would intend to do that, and it's anticipated that \$1 million would be required in Red Deer to provide an effective terminal in that area. Again there will be rental space there for other things such as the Weather Modification Board, aero-radio, aero-weather, and control tower facilities, which will be worked out with federal MoT.

It would be our intention in the case of Red Deer to put this matter under a project manager, to develop an airport commission which would be composed of ourselves, the city of Red Deer, and the county of Red Deer, and again have an advisory committee relative to the users and the chamber of commerce in the area, to have some input into design and implementation.

We estimate the last \$1 million will cover the cost of effective terminals at the other four in Whitecourt, Edson, Grande Cache, and Pincher Creek. These have been chosen because there is a capacity for scheduled services in the near future. There's an application pending for Pincher Creek by Time Air.

Grande Cache is presently serviced by Wapiti Aviation of Grande Prairie. In the past Whitecourt has had a scheduled service, and Edson has that capacity, particularly with the opening of the mines there.

These would be very modest terminals. Pincher Creek and other ones would have a small air line counter, would have the usual facilities. In Whitecourt the MoT again would be a lessee in a fairly major way. They would be moving their air-radio station in Whitecourt into the new terminal there. There would also be additionally some MoT involvement in the other three terminals.

We would expect that if this program can proceed as we expect it to, to be completed in the fiscal year, other smaller cities in Alberta that have some capacity and possibility for scheduled service or other commercial uses — this terminal program could in the future be extended to a number of smaller but more effective airports, most of which are owned by the province or municipality involved. The only other federal one that might become involved is that in the city of Medicine Hat.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, first of all I'd like to commend the Minister of Transportation for the fruitful results he's had in discussions with the federal people. As most members know I think, regarding Grande Prairie and Lethbridge, those responsibilities which are MoT, the only way terminal facilities can be improved is when there's an application by a carrier to serve an area, and until that application is made, as I understand it, neither runway facilities nor terminal facilities can be constructed. So I would certainly commend the minister, who to my knowledge has spent a lot of time and effort in convincing his federal counterpart that Alberta airports, particularly those that serve under MoT such as Lethbridge and Grande Prairie, have certainly been needing an airport terminal.

The other point I'd like to make in commending the minister is that perhaps somewhat different from Calgary, he has had and is having ongoing discussions regarding the construction of the terminal facility with the people who will be using that facility, namely the citizens of Lethbridge and the air lines concerned. As most people know, Time Air — which is certainly the strongest third-line carrier in Canada, employing 65 people in the city of Lethbridge alone — needs an improved terminal facility. I'm pleased to see the minister indicate he would be talking to those people and avoiding a confrontation similar to what happened with the Calgary International Airport.

I have a question for the minister: as the facility will be leased back to the federal authorities, we get into the question of user fees. Will MoT have that say, Mr. Minister, or will Alberta Transportation have some say regarding user fees?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, on that point, we'll be leasing back to the federal MoT that portion of the building they require to provide their function. The question of the users — one of the objectives of this particular program is to ensure that that kind of application doesn't deter air line operation, and we'll be in control of that part of the operation.

Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as it is 5:30, perhaps this would be a good point to adjourn. Before I move to rise and report, I might just advise the House that

we'll be going into Committee of the Whole this evening at 8 o'clock to continue our discussions on Bill 74 and Bill 15.

Mr. Chairman, I move that we rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have heard the motion by the hon. Deputy Premier. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, can we adjourn as a committee even though the committee is going to meet at 8 as Committee of the Whole to study bills?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Deputy Premier, we can adjourn and reconvene at 8 o'clock in Committee of the Whole.

DR. HORNER: Then I move, Mr. Chairman, that the committee adjourn till 8 o'clock to meet as Committee of the Whole to study certain bills on the Order Paper.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have heard the motion by the hon. Deputy Premier. Are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The Committee of Supply recessed at 5:30 p.m.]

[The Committee met at 8 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will come to order.

We left off and are still in Committee of Supply. Could we have unanimous consent of the committee to go into Committee of the Whole Assembly?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (Committee of the Whole)

[Dr. McCrimmon in the Chair]

Bill 74

The Environment Conservation Amendment Act, 1977

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to any sections of this bill?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to rise and make a few comments; then I have several specific amendments to place before the Committee of the Whole.

May I begin by underlining the fact that throughout the province there is very substantial opposition to the changes proposed in the act before the committee today. This opposition is not just a few members on the opposition side in the Legislature, but includes the Public Advisory Committee of the Environment Conservation Authority itself. It includes the organi-

zations working with the Alberta Fish & Game Association which feel very strongly that the structural changes suggested in Bill 74 would seriously hamper the ability of the Environment Conservation Authority to undertake the important assignment given to it by this Legislature in 1970.

As I see it, Mr. Chairman, what is really occurring is a pretty widespread indication of public feeling, not only in the organizations I've cited but I notice some of the editorials in leading newspapers have also taken the same line. Quite frankly, the government is out on a limb as far as this particular piece of legislation is concerned. While that's not going to hurt the opposition politically, in the interests of environmental management I would advise the government to crawl back to the trunk of the tree before this legislation is rammed through, because the limb is a rather dangerous place to be. I'm not entirely sure it can hold the government's weight on this particular issue.

Mr. Chairman, during the course of second reading and, I notice in looking over the debate, again on Friday the question of the internal management problems within the Environment Conservation Authority was raised. I think we have to be very clear that the internal problems that existed among the personnel of the Environment Conservation Authority had nothing to do with its basic structure. I understand there was no major difference of opinion among Authority members over the structure. There were personality differences. In dealing with what was essentially a personnel problem, to come in and radically alter the structure is the sort of approach which has to be justified.

With great respect to the government benches, I don't believe the case for the change has been made, particularly when I read Friday's *Hansard*. There was little doubt that the consultant who looked into this — and I'm not talking about the public service assessment, but the private consultant — had examined three alternatives. The third alternative is the one the minister is putting before the Assembly today and has received second reading. The management consultant did not propose that option; it was merely identified as one option. As the minister indicated on Friday, it would appear that the management consultant had endorsed the second option, which was essentially keeping the structure of the Environment Conservation Authority but working out an arrangement of team captains to deal with specific projects.

So we have a very radical proposal here that is based on altering the structure, and one of the arguments used to advance the proposal is that the internal personnel problems had forced the government to this conclusion. Again, Mr. Chairman, we do not have any reasonable evidence. The government says this is a judgment decision, but it appears that the private consultant who was engaged to give the government advice did not advise this course of action. So on blind faith we are asked to jump on board this new proposal, notwithstanding the fact that the consultant had advised the government that this was not the best course to follow.

I notice also, Mr. Chairman, that seven ECA staff members have resigned in protest from the Authority. So the criticism of the proposals we are looking at this evening not only comes from public organizations such as the Alberta Fish & Game Association that I cited, but a number of the people who worked in the

Authority are strongly of the view that these amendments are ill-conceived, ill-considered, and not in the interest of proper environmental control.

In reviewing *Hansard*, I was interested to see a number of statements, made both in the House and outside, concerning the whole question of hearings on the oil sands. Last week I raised this question, and the minister once again appeared to close the door on environmental hearings on the oil sands. I think that's a really major mistake, because if there is one part of the province where the public should have the assurance of proper environmental hearings it's on the Alberta oil sands. I had to be slightly amused when the minister indicated that GCOS was really quite a clean industry. I have to smile a bit when I look at a record of sulphur dioxide violations, oil spills, the migratory bird deaths which led to one of the investigations by the Environment Conservation Authority, the tailings pond seepage, even dumping of industrial tires. When one looks over the record, one can say many things. But it is rather difficult to stand up and say without equivocation that Great Canadian Oil Sands is a clean industry.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to refer to several other general points before getting to the specifics. Let's take a look at this question of the importance of the ECA. When we assess the inevitable conflict between land use on one hand, and various types of flow management — whether it be for industrial purposes as is obviously the case along the Red Deer River, whether it be the example of the Paddle River — it seems to me that the argument for a dispassionate authority with the credibility of the four-person ECA is really unchallengeable when we look at the question of land-use conflicts.

There is no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that no legislature is going to be able to design a land-use policy in the future that will reconcile all the conflicts that exist or will set in place the kind of protection for landowners on one side, or for the province as a whole. We just don't have that sort of wisdom. Nor can we anticipate all the implications of many of the major projects that lie ahead for this province. That's one of the reasons the ECA is so important. It can assess the options, carefully weigh them, and make recommendations.

Just to further illustrate my point I noticed, for example, that in one of the releases from the minister's office over the summer, 72 per cent of the additional water drawn from the Red Deer River was allocated to coal-related projects. Mr. Chairman, I think we have a right to know, since obviously the Sheerness project is not going to take 72 per cent of the water flow, what in fact is in store for central Alberta. Are we talking about major projects, additional coal/thermal power projects?

I think I mentioned in my remarks on second reading that the power requirements of the province are doubling every eight years. One takes an inventory of the possible projects. There are a number of major coal-related projects, all of which will have very significant land-use implications. I think if we're going to protect the balance between those who want to preserve farmland, and the industrial developments that may occur, it's necessary to have an Environment Conservation Authority which not only is neutral, but is seen to be neutral; which not only is authoritative, but is seen to be authoritative; which can in

fact allow the public to state its views before the hearings of that body.

Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to make a couple of comments about the method of operation of the Environment Conservation Authority. I think it's important to underline that the ECA had as a philosophy an approach which I would say was very humanistic. You can have public hearings set up in such a formal manner that you literally scare the heck out of the average person. You make it so intimidating: people are sitting, waiting to make a submission, and the board comes in and everybody stands and applauds. You have a very formal, almost intimidating atmosphere. The ECA recognized from the very beginning that you couldn't really elicit the public's opinion in that sort of atmosphere. You had to have a much more — I think I could probably say casual approach without saying it was a careless approach. For example, when we had the hearings in northwestern Alberta on soil erosion, the ECA members who conducted those hearings took time to have a cup of coffee before the hearings even began. They were conducted in a way that people who had done work on their briefs were encouraged to express themselves, but they weren't jumped on if they hadn't dotted every "i" or crossed every "t". It was really a very impressive performance to watch, because you could see it was deliberately designed to draw views from the public.

I was also impressed by another case that I think I should inform members of the committee about. It was during the assessment of the restoration of water levels in the Peace-Athabasca delta. Conservative members should be interested in the whole question of water levels on the Peace-Athabasca delta, in view of the fact that that seemed to be the major issue before the 1971 election. Of course that was when they were in favor of a strong environmental watchdog. That's when they had a slightly different approach. I forget who it was who said the price of a consistent foreign policy is that you're going to be hanged for treason. I can say that this government will never be hanged for treason on the question of the environment. There's been no consistent environmental policy.

Anyway, back in the days when the party that is now the government was extremely concerned about the environment and had made the Peace-Athabasca delta question the major issue in the province, I remember sitting in the gallery and watching the 10 Tory members on this side make their eloquent pleas on behalf of Mr. McKay and quite legitimately raise issues on water management in that particular question.

But, Mr. Chairman, the point I want to relay to members of the committee is that when the ECA held hearings on the question of restoration of water levels on the Peace-Athabasca, they were dealing with native people to a large extent and were wise enough to make sure that all the preliminary information that went out from the ECA was printed in the Cree language. That was not the sort of thing most government departments do. Most government departments expect people to know the verbalism, all the technical jargon. But here with a government agency that had a sufficiently humanistic approach to the public hearing process, in order to ensure that native Albertans had a chance to say their piece the

information was translated into the Cree language before the hearings were conducted.

Mr. Chairman, that's one of the reasons the Fish & Game Association, Unifarm, the National Farmers Union, the Alberta Federation of Labour, a whole host of organizations are extremely troubled about the changes in the ECA. That's why PAC, the advisory committee to the ECA, is concerned about the changes in the structure of the Environment Conservation Authority — because it has established criteria for ensuring genuine public participation.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make just two other comments before moving on to some of the specifics. The first is to raise a question that I brought up earlier today in question period. When I raised the question I noticed that the minister was rather astonished, so I assume he didn't have the information. He said he didn't anyway, and he was going to get it. But I look over the list of publications for the Environment Conservation Authority in 1976 and, by George, we have all sorts of publications. That's one of the impressive things about the ECA. There have been a number of very significant studies — publications paid for by the taxpayers of Alberta. When one looks over the 1976 studies, among other people you see the former Minister of the Environment, now the Minister of Housing and Public Works. He has a number of papers, and that's fair ball. But you see the papers listed by Dr. W.R. Trost, the former chairman of the ECA. All of a sudden, Mr. Chairman, I look at the list of publications for 1979 and, by George, the Minister of Housing and Public Works still has his publications listed. Yes, we still have him on the list, but Dr. Trost's publications are omitted. I just wonder what has happened. When they changed in the Soviet Union, they had what was called de-Stalinization. Here it is apparent that we have de-Trostification of the Environment Conservation Authority. Dr. Trost appears to have vanished into thin air — you know, rewriting history. Mr. Chairman, I wonder where those papers are.

The minister implied that Dr. Trost may have taken some of his personal possessions with him. I have no doubt he did. But, you know, these aren't personal possessions. These are papers published under the authorization of the Environment Conservation Authority. What has happened to them? Are they stuck in a dead storage file someplace, removed from the library so that if you want to get hold of Dr. Trost's writings you have to know who to arm-twist? What are we doing to the information compiled at public expense and, as I say, compiled by the former chairman of the Environment Conservation Authority? Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, I think a number of questions have not been answered by the government in this debate to date.

The final thing I want to say is that in the course of second reading the minister indicated that he wished to clarify the role and function of the ECA. Of course as members will recall, in 1970 the Environment Conservation Authority had the right to launch investigations and to hold hearings of their own volition. That was subsequently amended in 1972. The suggestion was made at the time by the now Minister of Housing and Public Works that the real reason was just to make sure there wasn't overlapping or duplication so that the minister and the ECA were doing an investigation of the same thing. We could have

someone sort of directing traffic. The minister didn't use those words in 1972, but that was certainly the thrust of his argument. Well, I gather the current minister has assessed that change in a rather different way. As far as I'm concerned, regardless of what we do with the rest of the bill, I think one of the things we should be considering is just the basic rights of the environmental council or the Environment Conservation Authority, call it what you will, to launch investigations and hearings of its own volition.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would like to move the following amendment to members of the committee. I have copies here for the opposition, for Mr. Taylor, for the Chairman, and for the minister and the government members. I don't have enough copies for all government members. The amendment reads:

Section 7 of the Bill is amended:

- (a) by striking out clause (a) and substituting therefor:
 - (a) as to clause (b) by striking out the words "after consultation with the Minister"
- (b) by striking out clause (b) and substituting therefor:
 - (b) as to clause (e) by striking out the words "or of the Minister" and substituting the words "by Order-in-Council"
- (c) by striking out clause (c) and substituting therefor:
 - (c) as to clause (h) by striking out the words "with the approval of the Minister."

Mr. Chairman, the basic intent of the amendment is to restore to the Environment Conservation Authority in a clear and unambiguous manner the authority to launch its own inquiries and public hearings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood have leave of the committee to revert to introduction of visitors?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS** (*reversion*)

MRS. CHICHAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have pleasure this evening to introduce to you members of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee in the public gallery. Many members of the Legislature had the pleasure of their company at a luncheon today. The members are attending a conference, which commenced last evening and is continuing through today and tomorrow. We are pleased they have taken some time in their itinerary to visit the Legislature to observe some of the debate that is carried forward. I would ask them to rise, and members to welcome them to this Assembly.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (*Committee of the Whole*)

Bill 74 **The Environment Conservation** **Amendment Act, 1977** (*continued*)

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, in speaking to the amendment, we get to the first problem the Environment Conservation Authority had. That was when this government in fact emasculated the Environment Conservation Authority by saying, the minister shall in essence dictate what the Authority may investigate. That was the first move in the destruction of the Environment Conservation Authority. In reviewing my thoughts over the weekend on why the Environment Conservation Authority has been killed by this government, I thought when the Leader of the Opposition, my colleague Mr. Clark, tabled in this Legislature some Red Deer area earth that will be forever inundated and lost that we should take that earth and have a public, mock ceremony on the steps of this Legislature, using that dirt to say ashes to ashes, dust to dust, the Environment Conservation Authority is dead, and it has been killed by this government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I feel very, very strongly about this issue, and I feel that government backbenchers are not listening to their constituents. I feel the media of this province are not doing their job in bringing to the attention of the people of this province exactly what is going on in this Legislature at this time. If all the people of this province were properly informed as to what is happening, they would rise up in righteous indignation and condemn this government for what it is doing.

MR. NOTLEY: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, the first step in the murder of the Environment Conservation Authority was the section that said, the minister shall direct the Authority into what it shall study. Are we in such a big hurry that we are going to industrialize this province from one end to the other without worrying about what happens to the environment? I as a member of this Legislature do not feel the people of this province want this to happen. I do not want this to happen for my children. I do not want some of our rivers to be replicas of the Ruhr River valley in Europe, where we have industrialization at any cost. I don't think that is what the people of this province want.

So I say we should have a public burial and we should let the people of this province know who is responsible for the destruction of the Environment Conservation Authority.

Mr. Chairman, one of the responsibilities we as elected members have in this Legislature is to take part in debate. Be we opposition members or government members, if we think an injustice is being done to the people of this province in looking after their interests, that's the way we should vote. There should be a free vote on an issue such as this. We shouldn't be hampered by party ties or how the big five have told the backbenchers they should vote. We haven't had any of that input from government back-

benchers. We haven't had any input from government backbenchers when Bill 15 was before this House. Some of the hon. members have the audacity to say, nobody in my constituency said they were upset about Bill 15. Well, they must be listening with earplugs.

So, Mr. Chairman, in supporting the amendment I say it's time the members of this Legislative Assembly got up and expressed their views on why the Environment Conservation Authority should be returned to its original form. I challenge the media to let the people in Alberta know what is going on, what we are doing, that this government is not genuinely concerned about protection of the environment. Mr. Chairman, I look forward to listening to the government backbenchers express their views, as I'm sure views have been expressed to them. Let's hear from them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I want to make one or two comments on Bill 74. The ECA was given no authority to actually make decisions as far as this province is concerned. When the original bill was brought in, there was a loud cry in this province that the government wasn't doing anything about the environment: that our waters were getting dirty, that our air was getting dirty, that the environment generally was being destroyed. So we create a body to conduct hearings and make recommendations, but without any authority in spite of the fact that it was called "the authority". It could make no decisions, actually, in regard to any of these things. It was never intended it could make any decisions. That was part of the plan when the ECA was conceived and discussed in cabinet and on the floor of the Legislature. Actually, if the air and water, the environment, of our province is satisfactory today, the ECA made no decisions to bring that about. The ECA conducted hearings. Some were done well, some weren't. But it was simply another government body at arms length from the government and from the minister. The government and the minister didn't have to accept the recommendations. That was the point from the very beginning: they could recommend what they like, but the government that brought this bill in was not bound by the recommendation. I challenge anybody to say differently in that respect. It was intended as a public way of listening to all complaints, and I think it had its place.

When I listen to some of the representations today, I wonder whether we really believe in representative government or not. Representative government makes a minister responsible to the Legislature and to the people; it makes a government responsible to the people. And here we are, arguing that because a minister is assuming responsibility that he's done something terrible. Well, I don't think he's done anything terrible at all.

Whatever government is in power, whether Progressive Conservative or New Democratic — I doubt that day will ever come in this province, but if it does — that party will then have the responsibility of deciding how it will conduct its business. Or the Social Credit or even the Liberals, after they get rid of their present leader who seems to be haywire most of the time in regard to everything that the people want, will have the responsibility of setting up the machinery to

carry out the wishes of the government. The people elect the government and expect the government to govern. That's what a government is for.

But whatever party is in power, if we're going to have representative democracy the minister has to be held responsible. I've heard this said so many times in regard to other bills. Why isn't it just as applicable now? I just can't follow the reasoning that suddenly it's all wrong, that the minister shouldn't be responsible, shouldn't have the power to direct a body; that the body has to be something set up in isolation, almost on sacred ground, that the minister can't even touch. Well, I don't agree with that at all.

If the government feels it can administer the affairs of this province better through a council than through the Authority, it's the responsibility of the government to do that. And I'll wager that five years from now, when this has been in operation for that length of time, there will be just as big a holler if somebody tries to change it. Maybe a bigger holler, because what is the main thing the people want? They want a good environment. They don't care what machinery, what instrument the government uses to get it. I would remind my honorable former colleagues that the basis of the Social Credit government for many years was set out by Douglas himself: the people say what they want and the government decides how to give it — not whether to give it, but how to give the results the people want. I think that's a basic section of democracy: the government endeavors to give the people the results they want. That's what most of the people I talked to want. They want good, clean water and a good environment. They're not concerned about how to do it. If they want a bridge, they want engineers to design it. They're not going to tell you how to build the bridge. But they'll know whether there's a bridge there and whether it does the job. That, I think, is the important thing.

I'm not going to talk here all night about the ECA being murdered and so on. In many respects I'm glad to see the ECA going. It's not being murdered. It isn't the first time this or any other government has changed the set-up of carrying out policies. It's a continual thing. Because something was good 10 years ago doesn't mean it's good today.

I'd like to wager, Mr. Chairman, that generally speaking a large proportion of the people of this province want a good environment. They're not extreme environmentalists, but they do care. There may be a few who don't, and a few who are extreme environmentalists. Most people are in the middle. They want good results and good administration. They want to make sure we have clean water, clean air, and a good environment. Where does the action come from that gives us those things? It's not from an authority. It's not going to be from a council. It's going to be from the government, which has the responsibility to bring in legislation and administer that legislation. That is where the results are going to be from.

If you listened to some of the extreme environmentalists, in 10 years or less we'd hardly have a job in this province for anybody. I just wonder what we're going to say then, if we get to the point where we are so anxious about the environment that we won't even have a job for anybody. That's quite possible. Some are so extreme you couldn't even farm, because there's a certain amount of pollution

that comes from farming. Pollution comes from mining. Some pollution comes from almost anything. You have to set tolerable limits. We have chemists and scientists to set those limits. The world's been going on for a long time before an ECA was ever dreamt about. It'll go a long time after the ECA is forgotten. The main thing the people will be concerned about is that we continue to have good water, good streams, good clean air: a good environment in which to live. The important thing is results, not the means you use to get them. There are several ways, not only one. This may not be the best, but it's certainly a way.

I'd like to say a word or two in connection with the hearing conducted by the ECA on the dam on the Red Deer. In my view, the ECA did not report the findings in accordance with what the people said. I say that publicly. I've said that before, and I'll say it again. I'm quite sure I can prove it. I sat at a meeting in Drumheller and heard brief after brief saying, we want a dam built on the Red Deer and we know where we want it. Of all the sites, they wanted the site which was eventually chosen by this government. When the reports came out I hardly heard any mention of those who wanted the dam built; it's all those who didn't want it built. At the last hearing in Drumheller, practically everyone there wanted the dam built at the site that was chosen. But I didn't hear much about that in the report, nor the sentiments of individual extreme environmentalists [which] were quoted. I have no objections to the extreme environmentalists. If that's their view they have every right to give vent to it. But I do object when a government body takes the view of one against 7,000. That's exactly what happened. The mayor of Drumheller spoke for the people of Drumheller, 7,000 strong, and I didn't find a person there who didn't want the dam built where it is being built today. Was any mention made of that in the ECA report? No, that was brushed over. But one environmentalist who had moved into Drumheller from Red Deer, speaking for himself, was the one who got all the representations, as if his word was better than all those who had to live there. He doesn't live there in the first place.

I spoke too, and I think I spoke for some 10,000, 12,000, or 15,000 people, farmers and so on, but that was taken as one person against one environmentalist. Now I ask anybody who wants to be fair: is that fair? Well, it's not my idea of fairness. When you compare representations, you have to consider who the speaker is speaking for. Is he speaking for himself, for a group of 10 or 15, or for an association like Fish & Game, which is quite a large representation? Did they go to the trouble of finding out what all the Fish & Game members wanted, or is he speaking for himself?

I would just like to mention one or two other things. I am always sorry when I see agricultural land destroyed or used, but I would like ask those who are so concerned about this particular land that is being used how they would like it if they had similar land that was being eroded — as good land, maybe better — or that couldn't be used because there is no water. Land is fine. It is very important. But without water the land isn't very valuable. It's not worth very much. A lot of land below this dam will produce large crops if it can get water. It needs water. When you're

talking about destroying some lands where the dam is going to be built, just remember that you're reclaiming hundreds of acres of land that will grow crops equally well, if it has water.

Surely you have to weigh one against the other in order to be fair, but I don't hear that talked about at all. The ECA didn't give vent to those feelings that were brought before it at the Drumheller hearing, and maybe elsewhere. People can talk all they want about the tremendous attitude in the ECA hearings, and it was quite good. Sure, they had a cup of coffee with the people and it was a friendly atmosphere. I like that too, but I am more concerned about what it says from the representations from the people.

I want to commend the government for choosing the site on the Red Deer River. If they had gone further west, there would have been more tributaries running into that river that would have made it less effective, if effective at all, for erosion or flood control. The decision was proper according to my view and the view of hundreds of people who are going to benefit from the results of that dam.

I'm not concerned about industrialization in the future. We're going to need industrialization if we're going to have jobs for our young people. We can have industrialization without polluting the atmosphere. There's a tolerable limit in any industry, in any country, if followed and if the expense is gone to where you can still keep the water and air clean, keep a good environment, have jobs, have the benefit of that industrialization and the buoyancy it brings to the economy. You know, I believe one of the reasons there are large line-ups of unemployed in some parts of Canada today is that the government was so concerned about other things that it didn't have enough vision to see what was happening 10 years ago. Today it's catching up to whatever government happens to be in power. There are no jobs, unemployment is increasing, there's no buoyancy, and the economy is stopped — it's standing still or going backwards — the dollar's eroding.

Yes, there are a lot of things, but it didn't happen yesterday. It's because governments have mismanaged the economy for the last 10 or 15 years. I'm glad to see a government that's going to take some action and try to protect the future — the sons and daughters of people who are living today who will want jobs, an industry that will provide taxation for the running of this country when the oil and gas are diminished further than they are today. We're going to need coal mines again in the future, and I'd challenge anybody to tell me how you can have a coal mine without some pollution. But you can keep the pollution to a tolerable limit, and with proper planning today we can have the use of the coal in this province for the people of this province and Canada.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'm not a bit alarmed that the Authority is being done away with and that another body is being created to take its place. I would be concerned if the government said, we don't care about having clean water, clean air, and jobs for the future. I would be very concerned then. But the government is saying we need jobs for the future. We need business for the future so there will be revenue for the government to operate, revenue for the people, buoyancy in the economy, jobs in offsprings industries, and so on. I believe we can have all that with clean water and clean air, at least within

tolerable limits.

I would again like to commend the government for choosing the site on the Red Deer River. I think it was an act of courage and wisdom. It's in accordance with the thinking, I believe, of the majority of the people downstream from the Red Deer River and the majority of the people of the province, if they had a chance to vote on it because they would look at it objectively.

When I was in Highways, I sometimes used to wish I could build highways on skyhooks because people raised such a fuss about taking good land. I felt bad about it too. But you can't build highways and dams on skyhooks. You have to build them on land, and you have to compensate whether the land being used for that purpose will create greater benefits for the people of the province and the country as a whole. In my view the Red Deer dam does just that. Since it's the government's decision to have a council rather than an authority, I can see no reason why that council can't continue to have hearings in just as nice an atmosphere as did the ECA — and I commend them for that part of their work — and can still make recommendations. But over and above all that, the minister will be responsible to this Legislature and to the people of the province. That's the kind of a country I live in and that's the kind of a country I want to continue to live in, where a minister must take responsibility for the actions of those in his department to whom he issues directions.

I support Bill 74, and I do not support the amendment.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, it's strange if we reflect on the challenges being thrown our way for the backbenchers, as certain members in the opposition choose to call themselves, and think that the rest of us file into that same basket. Well, we don't. The same hon. Member for Clover Bar didn't see fit to remain in his place in this Legislature to hear some of the comments those backbenchers may have.

MR. CLARK: It's so seldom you speak.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, let us say that if we do not often rise in this House to speak, that doesn't necessarily mean we do not have a mechanism by which to express our concerns and views on behalf of the those who elected us and brought us here. Perhaps we have a better system than the official opposition ever dreamed they could put together in another decade.

I would just like to say how much the basic environment of this province has changed since 1970, how much the land has changed, how much our economy has changed. I would like to convey to the hon. Member for Clover Bar that it wasn't until 1971 that concern for the environment was really brought to the fore on behalf of the people of this province, by this government establishing a Department of the Environment. Surely the environment didn't change that much all of a sudden in 1971. The concern was there prior to that. Now as I remember, the hon. Member for Clover Bar was in the Legislature for a good number of years prior to that. In those years he did not demonstrate his concern for the environment, because there is no evidence of it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

MRS. CHICHAK: Mr. Chairman, I recall in 1970 and 1971 that the requirement for reclamation bonds with respect to surface mining was in the vicinity of \$25,000 to \$50,000, not even a drop in the bucket with respect to the work that would have to be done. I think the records show very clearly that every member of this government has been concerned about the environment and has demonstrated that concern on behalf of the people of Alberta by the proper requirements that are now in place. Surely there wasn't a lack of that requirement in 1970 and 1969.

We might say, why go back; let's look at the future. I simply say, when hon. members in their places in this House throw out challenges, they had better remember that there wasn't the ability to work on those challenges in the few short years prior to when we took the steps forward. I think all we have to do is look back [over] the years and see that we have introduced legislation for clear air and clean water. That happened to be in 1973 and '74. That didn't happen without input from the backbenchers, as the hon. Member for Clover Bar would like to refer to them. There are no backbenchers in this government. They are all members who represent their constituents, and they certainly try to represent them extremely well.

Mr. Chairman, we look at what is happening to agricultural land these days. There has been a great deal of concern about the amount of land that would be taken out of use for agricultural purposes because of the flooding for the Red Deer dam to be constructed. Let us take into consideration the quality of all that land, then let us look at our own individual, personal kinds of concerns for environment. When we ourselves are owners of that agricultural land, if the price tag is right we don't hesitate to sell it for urban or commercial development. Let us take that into proper perspective with what happens when land is being flooded for the greater good of a very large number of Albertans.

I think the hon. Member for Drumheller raised some very clear issues on the advice that was being given with respect to the study by the ECA. Surely we have to recognize that when a body is appointed to advise the government, that body has no responsibility to be accountable to the people because it has not been elected by the people. It is the decision of the members of this Legislature that it's either going to bring forward the kinds of fruits that Albertans at large ought to receive and benefit from, or not. And it will be those Albertans who will tell us whether we have tried, and honestly and fairly performed in the best interests of Albertans, those who have put us here. Let not the hon. Member for Clover Bar throw challenges which he himself has failed to meet in any proper perspective.

I do not support the amendment to this bill on the very basis that we have been elected to govern and not to be rubber stamps for self-interest groups.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few remarks on Bill 74 this evening. In my opinion Bill 74 is a step forward, and I'd underline "in my opinion". I wish the hon. Member for Clover Bar had stayed in

his place because I planned to take a run at him. When anybody insinuates that we came here to be told what to do — we didn't. We came here to bring the people's mind to government, not to take the government's mind back to the people.

I've said that Bill 74 is a step forward, and I will endeavor to outline the reasons I think this. Setting up the council and calling it a council rather than the ECA is changing the name but is also changing the structure. I think that structure is good. There needs to be a certain amount of continuity. That will be supplied by keeping the same chairman. It will also give the minister the versatility to get the proper men with the proper expertise to conduct each hearing. Every hearing is going to be different. Some will be on strip mines, some may be on building dams that will flood some land, some may be up in the oil sands, others may be at a timber forest operation. With that much versatility there has to be a versatility in the men picked to sit on these councils. This bill does exactly that. For every hearing that comes up the minister will be able to select the men with the proper expertise and knowledge to carry out the hearing and come up with a decent recommendation. Not that I'm referring to the ECA as not coming up with decent recommendations, but I think versatility is necessary.

As far as the dam on the Red Deer River is concerned, this was long overdue. Anyone who says otherwise has not spoken to the people who live downstream along the Red Deer River. It's going to be a very positive step forward. Something should have been done with the Red Deer River in regard to that east country many years ago. But it was never done. I caution anyone: this is not the start of the old Red Deer River diversion, but at least it's the start of a continuous flow of the Red Deer River. It will ensure a proper water supply to the people who are irrigating with wheels along the Red Deer. Once the flow is controlled it may lead to something better. A lot of water is needed in that east country. Believe me, you never really miss the water until the well runs dry.

I hope this thing will continue. I hope that after they control the flow of the Red Deer River more development will come. So I'd like to say, Mr. Chairman, I cannot support the amendment. I do support the bill. It is my idea, and no one told me how to vote or how to think.

Thank you.

MR. ZANDER: Mr. Chairman, I believe, as our native people used to say, the white man talks with forked tongue.

We saw hon. members on the other side standing and condemning the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care for non-accountability. I stood in my place and almost said the same thing. I think the minister must be finally accountable, and the responsibility rests with his office. That responsibility must be administered by the minister.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot go along with the amendment. I have to look back a number of years and would say, let's look at what happened approximately eight to 10 years ago. If the environment conservation board was in place at that time, I can't see why some of these things happened. I may point out a few of them.

Let's look at the beautiful agricultural land north of

137 Avenue, north of the city of Edmonton. In the expansion we put thousands of acres under cement — non-recoverable. We look at the expansion of St. Albert. Many of us can look back about eight or 10 years and can see that the population has doubled and tripled. Nobody said [we are] using good agricultural land. Nobody in the former government stood up to defend it. Look at expansion in Fort Saskatchewan. Look at industry row, the refinery row east of the city of Edmonton. Let's look west of 169 Street. Nobody in the government of that day stood up to say, we have to till and keep this land for agriculture.

I'm not condemning the former environment conservation board. They did a good job. But I think accountability and responsibility must lie with the minister. Every one of us in this in this Assembly . . . I think when the crunch comes, the minister is ultimately responsible. If we in this Legislature lose sight of that — our argument that the minister is non-accountable, that it must be done by boards not responsible to the Legislature — I think we have then lost the position of elected members of this Legislature.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make some comments with regard to the amendment. I'd like to say I support the amendment.

I recall in 1970 having the responsibility of working with the legislation and with the person who was to become the first Minister of the Environment in putting together the concept of the Environment Conservation Authority. At that time we envisaged very clearly, and felt there needed to be an independent body that could react not only with government as such but with the general population, whether they be individuals or groups, in talking about various items in the environment, and to be able to do it on the most objective and independent basis possible. That was the basic assumption or premise we used in designing the Environment Conservation Authority. Even in saying that, Mr. Chairman, at no time did we ever feel that the minister or the government of the time was off the hook. They were responsible for decisions, directions, and expenditures of government funds that had to be made with regard to aspects such as the Red Deer River dam, the one that is going in on the Oldman River, and any other type of question at hand.

At that time we also felt it very necessary to have men of experience and capability sitting on the Environment Conservation Authority. As we well know, we have had some good men serve in that capacity. I think the record stands for itself, in that a very high percentage of their recommendations were very acceptable, not only to government but to the population as a whole. I don't know what happened internally in the last year or two, nor can I answer for that type of thing. Certainly that has been between the minister and the Environment Conservation Authority, and he felt it best to make the decision he made.

I want to say, though, that I still believe that that type of structure is sound, and I feel the one being presented to us by the minister at this time has a defect I cannot accept. That defect was the strength of the Environment Conservation Authority. It was a group that could hear individuals and groups outside the influence of government. It could also take on topics or concerns about the environment that it felt

were important, not ones that maybe the political people felt were important or felt should be investigated because it was for our own political good. I recall us discussing that particular aspect. Being involved somewhat in the political organization at that time, I said to myself, there are going to be recommendations from that Environment Conservation Authority that will do us little good as a political party. I remember hesitating about that, but I recall having discussions with my colleague at that time, Mr. Henderson, and we said, maybe it's time we take that chance. If it's better for the environment, if the information that comes to us is more objective, let's gamble on those kinds of recommendations. We did.

Now we had only a short period of time of operation relative to the Authority. But I feel the recommendations that have come from these men have not hurt this government. I think the input from people has been excellent. It has been able to bring in information that an established committee, or the new environment council of Alberta, will not be able to derive in the same objective and independent manner because, one, the minister appoints the committee; two, he places there people who will not have the same kinds of experiences or maybe the interests the Environment Conservation Authority had. As has been mentioned earlier, there may be a rotation, or a changing type of committee or council presented to the people on different environmental questions. I don't think that would bring consistency. The opportunity here for political influence and for ignoring some of the real environmental questions is certainly before us.

To me, Mr. Chairman, I think that is the defect. I'm sure people sitting in this Legislature and many others who are concerned are going to come to a point where we're going to be very unhappy because we removed this objective body, the Environment Conservation Authority. I say this because that's the way I feel about the whole thing.

A few moments ago one of the members inferred that the Hospital Commission was a similar type of body. I cannot agree, because the Hospital Commission was dealing with people on a different basis. They were dealing with organized hospital boards. They were people elected at the local level representing a certain interest. The input from people is different. It's not quite the same as it is with regard to the environmental question. Many people who make representation on environmental questions are not from organized groups. There's no specific type of government organization such as there is in the administration of hospital affairs across this province.

I've said openly in this House that I have no case for the Hospital Commission. But I do feel very strongly that the Environment Conservation Authority was right, and I do carry a case for that very concept. I feel it has worked and has delivered a lot of good information and direction to this province. I think it's unfortunate if we're dropping a good concept because of personalities. We should have dealt with that problem and tried to support the concept of the Environment Conservation Authority.

I don't know what is happening at this time to the advisory body, whether that will be necessary any more. I think it will be unfortunate if we drop that, because all we're going to be left with is a political body. As one of the sections of the act states, the

minister has control of input that is being studied. The minister determines what subjects come under review. That's the limit. I think it has to be broader than that, Mr. Chairman.

So we have the political end: the minister, members of this Legislature, and higher departmental officials. What about the public as a whole? Is there a body they can call upon to hear various issues they are concerned about on an independent and objective basis? I don't think there is under this present concept. On that basis, I think the amendment can be supported.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much the contributions made by a variety of members in what I think has been a good debate.

I'm going to come back to the issue, because I believe the proposed amendment does deal with an issue. Certainly we can take arguments and sides on that. I think the hon. members for Drumheller, Edmonton Norwood, Hanna-Oyen, Drayton Valley, and in fact Little Bow all dealt with the essence of the issue of the amendment. I want to come back to that, as I say.

But I was a little disturbed by the licence, if I can call it that, of the two other speakers who entered the debate in dealing with the facts. I must admit that the loose use of the words "murder", "kill", and "executioner" by the Member for Clover Bar had me puzzled. He used them quite frequently Friday and again in debate today.

DR. BUCK: Dead is dead.

MR. RUSSELL: There he goes again. I look at the bill and one of the first lines in it says, "The Environment Conservation Authority is continued as a corporation. . . ." [interjections] If you embody in legislation the line that you're continuing a corporation, which is what it is now, that's hardly killing it. Maybe they don't like the new name, and maybe they don't like the method of appointment of members. Maybe they don't like the clarification of the terms of reference for how hearings are going to be held. But let's not stretch the truth and play with facts by saying it's killed or murdered or [interjections] using all this inflammatory poetic licence. I know it's difficult to deal with facts when you're shooting from the hip, as some members around here are wont to do. [interjections] But I look at that, that the Authority is continued as a corporation embodied in the bill, yet we get these puzzling statements from the Member for Clover Bar.

I must say I'm equally puzzled by some of the things the Member for Spirit River-Fairview is saying. He manages to work up a great deal of indignation when he's making these statements, as if that somehow lends to their credibility. He was very concerned: what were these mysterious coal proposals that would require a 72 per cent use of the proposed controlled flow of the Red Deer River? He'd like to read about those. The minister should make that public.

MR. NOTLEY: Let's hear about them.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, they're all detailed in writing in the reports that were the subject of the

public hearing in the off-stream management options. They deal with coal washing, coal gasification, and the coal mining projects. They talk about using Buffalo Lake for one reservoir, using a coulee as another, and getting so much water out of the river. The member says he'd like to read about those. The other day he was indignant because we'd said something, and I showed him in *Hansard* where I'd said it. He says, I don't listen to what you say. Tonight he says, I don't read what you put out. So he doesn't listen.

DR. BUCK: You don't listen to the ECA.

MR. RUSSELL: He doesn't read. I wonder what he does. [interjections] He's very anxious to have instant opinions on anything without the benefit of any sort of allusion to the facts. I took a number of notes about things he was saying. It's so riddled with inaccuracies and hypotheses that it really doesn't bear response. I don't mind debating with the hon. member the issue of his amendment, because I think that's a basic one and I'm coming back to it. But all this other jazz he throws in — I think it would do a service to all members if he stuck to the facts when he spoke. At least it would to me; I appreciate that.

Now, the issue of whether or not the government, elected officials, shall have the authority to determine what subjects are going to be the topics of public hearings is really the essence of the amendment in front of us. Our government takes the attitude that today, of necessity and for many good reasons, elected people must direct and decide what the hearings are going to be. In fact, Mr. Speaker, that has been the practice of the ECA for the last seven years. I don't know of one of those 12 hearings we've alluded to in the appendix to the report that was not done with the full support of the government. In some cases the suggestion was initiated with the governments and in others by the ECA, but in all cases the hearings went ahead with terms of reference agreed upon by the ECA and the government of the day, whoever they were. That's what we're continuing to do. But we're putting it in legislation to make it absolutely clear that's the position this government is taking. I think it's a strongly defensible one.

Can you imagine, for instance . . . I want to get back to some comments the Member for Little Bow made. He said he thought it was very important to have an independent authority, but it must be the government that's on the hook. Now I ask you, how can you have those two things at the same time? Several members spoke of the Red Deer River. Of course at that time the government was on the hook for making a very difficult decision. But a lot of the mail we got — and we knew we'd get it — said, how can you go against the advice of your own Authority? So on one hand how do you have an independent authority that has absolutely no responsibility to the elected people, and on the other hand have an elected government which has direct responsibility to the people — this is the decision-making body — yet the public believes that you must accept in total the recommendations of this independent body? It's an incredible situation.

Let us imagine today, in this era of developing energy, that in conjunction with the other provinces and the federal government the decision has been

made to unlock the energy resources that lie in the oil sands. Let us suppose we got a Berger type of inquiry into the oil sands by a committee or an authority of lay people with absolutely no responsibility to anyone, conducting hearings, making recommendations to the government which go completely against the national interest, the objectives of the elected government, or the interests of other provinces. What is a government supposed to do with that kind of report? You can all think of other examples. Quite frankly, we're saying we as a government are not going to consider that kind of situation. I really don't think the previous government did either, because when we were preparing for the forestry hearings I discussed this matter with the previous chairman of the ECA, Dr. Trost. I said, where on earth did you ever get the idea to hold hearings on the forestry industry? He said, Premier Strom asked us to. This wasn't an independent thought that came to them; they had been directed by the government. He showed me the letter. Well, that's the issue we're debating.

MR. CLARK: So what?

MR. RUSSELL: So what? We've put it into legislation. We are embodying in legislation what in fact has been the practice by the previous government and our own, and by the previous members of the ECA for the past seven years. I suggest members in the House know that, but they don't like to admit it. [interjections]

So let's deal with issues. We've put our cards on the table. We've said we believe in a good, strong Department of the Environment — high standards, good legislation and a continuing review, stop orders if necessary, court action if necessary — and we'll continue to try to administer and protect the environment. We'll also hold good public hearings by lay people.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know where some people get this very superior knowledge that at this time they are able to predict with such authority that the new forums of four lay people are going to be so ineffectual compared to the past forum of four other Albertans. I don't know why they are so quick to conclude that the new forum won't sit down and have coffee with people while they're conducting hearings, that they'll be some kind of inhuman monsters without feelings. Where do they get that garbage?

AN HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

MR. RUSSELL: The ECA had four lay members. They had no particular expertise in the environment whatsoever, any more than any other four lay people we'll select from time to time to serve on these hearings.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, it's interesting that if we wanted to we could [have] the method of these rotating forums without a change in the legislation. We could change members. The method of appointment isn't going to be changed at all. They were appointed by order in council, and they'll continue to be appointed by order in council. They'll serve at pleasure with 90 days' notice, just as they did in the past. So if you want to set up a forum with a limited life, you could do it under the existing act. I think it's more straightforward and a service to the people who are going to be serving on these forums if

we put it in legislation and say what we're doing.

For those reasons, and many others that I can think of, I suggest that members do not support the proposed amendment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few comments about some of the contributions made to the debate this evening — the constructive criticisms I've heard from some of the members, plus the loose talk from the minister. The minister's speech tonight was really a classic example of loose talk which I think should probably go into a political science textbook.

But, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to deal first with the comments made by the hon. Member for Drumheller, because in my view he raises a fairly important point. I disagree with it. I respect his right to hold the point of view that we should be looking at the results in government and not necessarily how those results are obtained, but quite frankly I think it is an error. With the greatest respect to the hon. Member for Drumheller, I would suggest that how we do things is in many ways just as important as what we do. If any lesson is to be learned from the rather tragic events south of the border, if any lesson is to be learned from some of the things the opposition is raising in the House of Commons today about the operation of the RCMP, it is that very important point that the way in which we do something is just as important as what we do.

I think another point has to be made. The basic philosophy of the people on the Environment Conservation Authority was that the basis for sound recommendations to the government was an informed public opinion. The former acting chairman of the ECA, Mr. Kinisky, several days ago made the point very well, I thought, that the best way to get recommendations which are fair and balanced is to rely to a very large extent on the contribution of an informed public opinion. There is no question about that, and that's one of the things the ECA did. They made sure that before hearings were held, papers were presented and advance information kits were available so people who wanted to participate in the hearings had a background of information. I would just say that implicit in the operation of the ECA was the very fundamental concept that an informed public opinion is the basis of democracy.

We can talk all we like in this House about ministerial accountability; no one is arguing that point. The amendment I am proposing to the committee tonight does not alter the principle of ministerial accountability. The buck still stops at the minister's desk, and the government collectively has to be responsible. But the question is whether we are going to have an agency or authority which has the independence necessary to be able to gather the information, provide avenues for public input, and provide the necessary background so we can have an informed public debate on the options.

Mr. Chairman, I say again to members of the government: you have not made the case for this change. The amendment today specifically deals with the question of the necessary latitude the ECA requires to go out, gather information, and make it possible for public opinion to be assembled and passed on to the government and the public. The fact of the matter is that the changes contained in this act

are just not going to do that. In my judgment it will make it more difficult, because at the very best we are going to have a scaled-down authority, a council which is now simply an advisory council.

When the ECA legislation was introduced in this Legislature in 1970, we were talking about an environmental ombudsman. Those were the words used by the minister of environment Mr. Henderson when he introduced the legislation. That was the thrust of the Tory amendment in 1970. That was the debate that occurred in the newspapers across the province. Those were the words that the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Lougheed used as he crisscrossed the province campaigning.

I remember that in the 1971 campaign the now Premier didn't refer to the ECA as simply an advisory body. What nonsense. Those were the days when the leader of the now government was a champion of the environment. I might say to the hon. minister, he was more indignant about the environmental omissions of the former government than any of us on this side of the House is today.

Mr. Chairman, with great respect to some of the members who have contributed to the argument, I do not believe this amendment has any effect at all on ministerial accountability. It is based on making sure that the ECA is in a position to be an effective vehicle to gather public opinion, and that those recommendations are made available not only to the government but to the public.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to refer specifically to several other points, because I thought they were useful. The hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen raised the question of continuity versus versatility. I think the problem with the government's position is that you're not going to have both. You're not going to have the continuity, because all you will have is one business manager and a rotating panel of people. The people will not be there long enough to develop the continuity and the stature that goes with continuity. I would say quite frankly to the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen that we will have the versatility but not the continuity, and continuity was one of the strongest arguments in favor of the present structure of the ECA.

The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood pointed out that there had been a number of environmental improvements. No one is disputing that, hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood. I think it should be said though, and it's a small but important point, that the Department of the Environment as such was established by the previous government in 1970, if my memory serves me right, and Mr. Henderson was the first Minister of the Environment. I don't want to throw too many bouquets to the former government, because I think they have a number of skeletons in the closet as far as environmental matters are concerned. Some of those skeletons hurt them in 1971, as I'm sure members here would testify. But the legislation to set up the Department of the Environment was brought forward by the former government.

Before moving to some of the other comments I wish to make on this amendment, I just want to say one other thing on the question of the role of authorities, commissions, and what have you, and their relationship to the elected member and the minister. The hon. Member for Drayton Valley and the hon. Member for Drumheller presented the argument that we should get away from commissions which in a sense

act as a go-between between the administration and the elected people. You can make that argument, but I would say you can also make the argument that we are looking at the ECA — and let's remember that in my judgment the ECA has to be examined in light of the debate that took place in 1970. We are looking at an ombudsman. We are looking at an authority which has to be independent enough from the day-to-day administrative and partisan political concerns of government to do the necessary investigative work.

With respect to the proposition advanced by both members, I would say quite frankly that there are times and places when some such body as the ECA is necessary. I suppose we could argue this philosophically for some time. I respect the arguments of those who differ, but I do not believe an agency or authority designed primarily to channel the feelings of Albertans and to make sure there is an effective hearing process is in itself in violation of the concept of ministerial responsibility. If we were saying to the ECA that the ECA will have the power to do thus and so, the ECA will have the power to force government — that would be a different matter. That would indeed be something which would strike at the very heart of ministerial accountability.

But that's not the point. That is not the point that Mr. Henderson made in 1970, when he introduced the act. In 1970 the former Minister of the Environment used the argument that the ECA would have a tremendous impact through moral suasion, if you like, the stature of the Authority. And it would be difficult for the government to ignore the recommendations of the ECA, but it would not be because the ECA had statutory power. It would be the authority earned by doing the job well. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that that is not inconsistent with the concept of ministerial responsibility.

Two other points before I say a word or two about the minister's contribution to the debate. The hon. Member for Drayton Valley raised some points that quite frankly I agree with; that is, we've seen a good deal of expansion of the city of Edmonton, smaller communities. In the Edmonton area, St. Albert and Fort Saskatchewan have grown over some valuable agricultural land. But that is not something we can lay at the doorstep of the ECA. That has nothing to do with the mandate of the ECA. As a matter of fact, the way in which this government interpreted the change after the amendment of 1972, it would have been very difficult for the ECA to have proceeded. Members should realize that after the amendment was passed in 1972, the Alberta government commissioned the Land Use Forum, which had as its specific responsibility as a result of an act of this Legislature the examination of land use policy in the province of Alberta. So on the basis of the 1972 amendment — and I wish the hon. Member for Drayton Valley were here — it really wouldn't have been possible for the ECA to have conducted hearings on the points he raised, even if it had wanted to, because we had another forum, another agency, which had been designated by this Legislature to do the job. So while I think it is regrettable that a good deal of valuable agricultural land is used as a consequence of urban expansion, don't lay that at the doorstep of the Environment Conservation Authority.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make just a couple of observations about the minister's contribution

tonight. I was interested in his definitive position on what was going to happen to this excess water. He was asked that question at the Red Deer meeting and wasn't able to answer it, apart from the general answer we got in the news release. But the reason the people along the Red Deer raised this question, quite frankly, was that they know perfectly well there are projects along the Red Deer River. The argument I advanced in my speech, if the minister had bothered to listen, is that we all know those projects are going to lead to land-use conflicts.

That is their concern over the mechanism that exists. Are we going to have a mechanism that ensures the conflicts are examined in an objective light or not? That's basically the concern expressed by the people troubled over Site 6. That was the thrust of the debate that took place in Red Deer last summer. That's the basic concern expressed as well by various other groups concerned about land-use conflicts in this province.

The minister went on to say that with an ECA, somehow the public is left with the impression the government has to act. Therefore, we have an authority that has immense power but isn't accountable to anyone. That is not true in terms of the facts of the matter. There was never any statutory requirement that the government act on the recommendations of the ECA. But I go back to the point Mr. Henderson made in 1970 in this Legislature, that a government which ignores the recommendations of the ECA does so at its risk. There is nothing wrong with that, nothing wrong at all.

If the government feels that the case is strong enough, they have to accept the risk. As Harry Truman said, if you don't like the heat, get out of the kitchen. You're the government; if you don't like to accept the political problems of answering the recommendations of the ECA, tough luck. But don't emasculate the authority that from time to time is in a position to come up with recommendations you may disagree with, although looking back over the last five or six years the government has agreed with a large number of the recommendations.

Then we had what I thought was a rather regrettable comment from the minister tonight. I don't know if this is the position of the Alberta government, but it certainly called into question both the Berger inquiry and the Lysyk inquiry. I would say quite frankly that whether one agrees with the recommendations of either of those reports, they were conducted in a fair and honest way. They evaluated the options carefully. The Lysyk inquiry has formed the basis of some important decisions made by the federal government, decisions I would hope we as Albertans would support; for example, the whole question of a heritage fund for native people in the Yukon.

Mr. Chairman, when one listens to the debate raging in Alberta, it is my submission that the alterations proposed by this government will seriously erode the effectiveness of an outstanding authority. The minister says, why are we so sure this new format won't work? The question would be better put to the government. Why are you so determined to change a format that has worked, and has worked well, and substitute something that is at best untried?

Mr. Chairman, the government has not made the case for Bill 74. The amendment I propose would at least ensure that this agency has at least some

independence, so it can begin to do the job. This amendment attempts to set the new authority off on the right foot, and I urge members to support it.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, it hadn't been my intention to become involved in the debate this evening, because I spoke Friday on the matter. But I'd like to make four comments. First of all, I get this feeling from members on both sides of the House, yonder and over here, that members are confusing — mixed up perhaps isn't the right term — the decision the government has made on the dam at Red Deer, regardless of our point of view on whether it's right or wrong, and the decision basically to change the ECA. Perhaps the second most serious mistake the government made, after making the decision where to put the dam, was to announce during the time of that discussion that they were going to make basic changes in the ECA.

We've had the ECA do a number of studies in this province over many years, from 1971 until the last one in 1976. On many occasions, in fact on virtually every occasion until the Red Deer dam question, the government has chosen to accept the recommendations. On those occasions, I've heard government members take the credit for the government following those recommendations and rather pat themselves on the back because of the recommendations the ECA made.

In this particular situation, really, for the first time the ECA was at direct loggerheads with the government. They made a recommendation the government didn't agree with. I think many people across the province have found it very difficult to separate the decision on Site 6 from the government's decision to emasculate — I've chosen the term — the ECA. It seems to me the government has brought a great deal of this problem onto itself by making the decision and saying, well fellows and ladies, we're going to get a lot of static on the Red Deer dam decision, so we'll try to sweep a change in the ECA under the rug at the same time and hope people don't distinguish between the two.

What we have before us are really two things: the decision on the Red Deer dam; then a week or a few days later the minister came along and said he was going to make these major changes in the ECA. It seems to me a much more responsible approach for the government to have taken would have been to stand up, take the flak, and give information to the public on why they made the decision on the Red Deer dam. Perhaps if the government then wanted to make changes in the ECA in the spring session or some other time, do that. But they've tried to do the two things at once. That, Mr. Minister, is the reason why in many of the letters you and I have received, you have people saying on one hand, how can you turn down the advice of the ECA?

With great respect, Mr. Minister, other than the members of this Assembly, I think very few people in Alberta can afford to spend all or a large portion of their time understanding the differences between the ECA and other recommendations the government gets. It's understandable that a number of very concerned people would look at the recommendations from the ECA and say, look, you're not accepting the recommendations; why not?

The government would have been in a far stronger

position to take the Red Deer dam question head on, deal with that one — I think you made the wrong decision — but go ahead and deal with that question. Then at some other time, when the waters aren't muddy, deal with the question of reorganization of the ECA, if that's what the government feels it has to do. I can recall government members taking credit on more than one occasion for the recommendations the ECA has made and the fine things that have flowed from there. Yet I get the impression tonight that government members don't want to take responsibility for the recommendations they've made when the government hasn't found them so acceptable.

Mr. Chairman, the second point I want to make deals with the public advisory committees. I think the work put in by the people on the public advisory committees of the ECA has basically gone unnoticed for a number of years. I suppose the thing that really impresses me most about the public advisory committees is their ability to pull together the points of view of people from a whole bunch of different interests — fish and game, the petroleum industry, cities, rural areas, and other groups across the province — and in most cases come out with reasonable compromises which have carried the judgment of most of the people on the public advisory committees. I have not heard one comment from the minister, tonight or Friday or during second reading, that would assure me that the public advisory committees are going to continue to have a very important place in the restructured organization. I've heard nothing from the minister that indicates that is to happen. I've waited for some comment from the minister along that line.

Mr. Chairman, the third comment I want to make deals with the ability of the Environment Conservation Authority to have the initiative and, frankly, the confidence in itself to investigate or become involved in issues, even though they hadn't been asked to by the government. Despite the legislation this government brought in in 1972, the ECA was prepared to become at least marginally involved in the Dodds-Round Hill question. And they did. Members will recall the Member for Camrose asked in the House if there would be ECA hearings on the matter. I think it's fair to say he got less than a commitment from the government that there would be ECA hearings.

Nevertheless, because of the concern that had been expressed by people in the Dodds-Round Hill area, where did those people go first? They went to the ECA and said, really, can't you help us? Isn't there some way you can be of some help to us here? In fairness to the ECA they didn't turn them out, but they did make it possible for them to get a great deal of information. In fact some of their staff did some work in the area. I think that has to be to the credit of the ECA.

I just see nothing in the new organization the minister is talking about tonight, or on Friday last, or last week when we discussed it earlier — I see nothing in the legislation that's going to guarantee that kind of flexibility in this new organization. It's basically for those reasons that, unaccustomed as I am to supporting a point of view of the Member for Spirit River-Fairview . . .

MR. FARRAN: You do it more and more all the time.

MR. CLARK: Just control yourself, Mr. Solicitor General. We plan to support this particular amendment, because regardless of where it comes from — once in a while even the Solicitor General has a good idea.

DR. BUCK: Not too often.

MR. CLARK: Wherever the suggestion comes from, the amendment basically preserves the integrity of an environmental ombudsman in this province. It seems to me that's needed, given the state of our industrial development in the province, given the pronouncements by this government as to how it's moving in that direction — very rapidly in some areas — that this is the route we're going to go.

MR. CHAMBERS: Government by commission.

MR. CLARK: The usually responsible Member for Edmonton Calder refers to government by commission. I have found there is much better opportunity to get answers from commissions, when you have responsible ministers whom those commissions report to, than we've been able to get answers from the Alberta Energy Company or Syncrude.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, that's right.

MR. CLARK: But that's perhaps an argument we could have on another occasion.

I think what we're talking about here tonight is: are we going to continue to have an environmental ombudsman or aren't we? That's really what this amendment proposes.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition made some comments as to my constituency that I think stand to be corrected. I don't think he realizes that I am a member of the Round Hill-Dodds Protective Society, I am on their executive, and I probably attend 90 per cent of their meetings. Their executive went first, well in advance, to the ministers of this government who were directly involved with that decision-making, sat down and talked with ministers of the Crown, and the government listened. Why did they listen? Because they were credible, they put up good strong arguments. But they went there first, and this government listened to them.

MR. CLARK: But they went to the ECA.

MR. RUSSELL: I just want to deal very quickly with two points raised by the Leader of the Opposition, because there's been some misunderstanding, I think, among a fair percentage of the public with respect to them; that is, that somehow the reorganization of the ECA is tied to its Red Deer River report. He suggested how, perhaps, I ought to have dealt with it. He suggested a longer time frame between the two things happening. When I look at it in retrospect, I think what I should have done after that incredible meeting — and it was — in January with the ECA members is accepted that day all their resignations; then gone on with a new ECA and tried to finish the Red Deer River hearings. Looking back on it, perhaps that would have been the better way to proceed.

But let's go back and see what happened, because I will never forget that day in January. I doubt if many

ministers in any government have had laid before them the tale that those members told me that day. I was very concerned, because this was on the eve of the final phase of the Red Deer River dam hearings. That segment of Alberta I think had been kept in a state of preparation and suspense for long enough. The hearings had been started once, adjourned, and were scheduled to start again. Practically on the eve of their recommencement the ECA laid their problem on me. I didn't go to them. Let's get the facts straight. They brought this to me, and my first reaction was to try somehow to maintain and finish credible hearings with respect to the Red Deer River. In the interim I undertook to have two studies done, in fair detail I should say, to examine the charges, countercharges, and concerns laid on the table by the members of the ECA. We did that. Laid on that situation, you had a chairman whose health was not very good.

Here's what I did. We got a new acting chairman, a gentleman who I think had the respect of Albertans from one end of the province to the other. That was Dr. Wood, who agreed to chair and try to finish the ECA hearings. The other members agreed to stay on until those hearings were finished. They'd been involved in the first phase, and I was concerned about the continuity and credibility of the panel that would finish those hearings. That's the way it happened.

After the studies were in from the Public Service Commissioner and the management consultant, I went to the members and said, yes, there was good reason to accept their resignations. That's the way it happened. Looking back, perhaps I should have accepted their resignations first. In the public eye it looked as if accepting the resignations, which were offered in January, was a reaction to the report that had been received. I want to say publicly, and with some emphasis, that that was not the case.

The other point the hon. leader brought up that I want to deal with was the role of PAC. I don't know how many more times I can say it: insofar as this government is concerned there are no changes on the books with respect to the basic structure of PAC. They're having their annual meeting in three weeks, and I intend to be there and discuss their future role with them. Insofar as the legislation is concerned, there's been no suggestion that there will be any change. Quite frankly, I hope they'll become more effective.

The concern I have — and the hon. Member for Cardston dealt with it — is that out of a committee in excess of a hundred organizations, six or eight individuals through the co-ordinating committee have literally run the thing. It has become a pretty closed shop. That's what the hon. member was referring to, and I don't mind telling the co-ordinating committee members that. It's a group of primarily university-oriented people. That's what the Member for Cardston was concerned about: the farm and municipal groups, the road builders, and all the others, weren't involved in the day-to-day activities of PAC.

But as far as PAC is concerned, I think they're essential, important, and useful. I hope they'll become stronger, not weaker. There's never been any suggestion that anything was going to be done with PAC, certainly not by way of legislation or any other means. I'm glad the hon. leader brought up this

subject, because it has given me the opportunity to respond and, I hope, give that assurance.

[Motion carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll read the amendment to Bill 74 brought in by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview:

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Section 7 of the Bill is amended:

- (a) by striking out clause (a) and substituting therefor:
 - (a) as to clause (b) by striking out the words "after consultation with the Minister"
- (b) by striking out clause (b) and substituting therefor:
 - (b) as to clause (e) by striking out the words "or of the Minister" and substituting the words "by Order-in-Council"
- (c) by striking out clause (c) and substituting therefor:
 - (c) as to clause (h) by striking out the words "with the approval of the Minister."

DR. McCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration Bill 74, The Environment Conservation Amendment Act, 1977, and begs to report the same.

MR. SPEAKER: It's my understanding that the House constituted itself into Committee of Supply when I left the Chair. Perhaps it might be appropriate if I were to ask the Assembly whether they unanimously approve the Committee of Supply having reconstituted itself into Committee of the Whole for the consideration of certain bills.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. Chairman wish to continue with his report?

[Motion on the amendment lost]

MR. CHAIRMAN: With respect to Bill 74, are you ready for the question?

DR. McCRIMMON: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration a certain resolution and reports the same:

[Mr. Chairman declared the motion carried. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, amounts not exceeding the following sums be granted to Her Majesty from the Alberta heritage savings trust fund for making the following investments: \$9,000,000, the irrigation rehabilitation and expansion project to be administered by the Minister of Agriculture; \$6,650,000, the irrigation headworks Improvement project to be administered by the Minister of the Environment; \$3,740,000, the Alberta reforestation nursery project to be administered by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources; \$3,958,000, the grazing reserves development project to be administered by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources; \$5,000,000, the land reclamation project to be administered by the Minister of the Environment; \$40,600,000, the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority project to be administered by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources; \$6,943,000, the Capital City park project to be administered by the Minister of the Environment; \$2,000,000, the Fish Creek park project to be administered by the Minister of the Environment; \$1,789,000, the Fish Creek park project to be administered by the Minister of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife.

[Three minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Adair	Hohol	Musgreave
Appleby	Hunley	Peacock
Backus	Hyland	Planche
Bradley	Jamison	Russell
Butler	Johnston	Schmidt
Chambers	Kidd	Shaben
Chichak	King	Stewart
Cookson	Koziak	Stromberg
Crawford	Kroeger	Taylor
Dowling	Little	Tesolin
Farran	Lysons	Thompson
Fluker	McCrae	Topolnisky
Gogo	Miller	Webber
Hansen	Miniely	Wolstenholme
Harle	Moore	Young

Against the motion:

Buck	Mandeville	R. Speaker
Clark	Notley	

Totals:	Ayes - 45	Noes - 5
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Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration a certain resolution, reports progress on the same, and asks leave to sit again.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the reports by the hon. chairman of committees, does the Assembly agree?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I move that the bill be reported.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the request for leave to sit again?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee of the Whole rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move the House now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at 2:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Minister of Labour, do you all agree?

MR. SPEAKER: The Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at half past 2.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The House adjourned at 10:10 p.m.]

