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Committee of Supply -- Subcommittee A

Department of Environment

Tuesday, June 19, 1979

Chairman: Mr. Campbell

9:30 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, are we ready to go? Would you mind taking out your estimates of expenditure for '79-80, the supplementary information element details. This carries the summary of some of the material that has been asked in the past.

MR. HYLAND: Jack, did we vote on the special warrants, or don't we have to?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, they say they're already gone.

MR. HYLAND: Oh, okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, are we ready? Page 149. We'll ask the minister for his opening remarks.

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, I'll start out by introducing Mr. Walter Solodzuk, my deputy minister for the department. Maybe I could just say a few words before going to the estimates, to give members a little background of Environment. The Department of Environment estimates are in the area of \$90 million. We have a pretty large staff in the province, somewhere in the area of 900. Our department is divided up with one deputy and three assistant deputy ministers. We have Mr. Kupchenko, whose responsibility is enforcement of clean air and clean water legislation, amongst a number of other responsibilities; Mr. Peter Melnychuk, who at the present time is in ERCB hearings on the McMurray tar sands, the new Alsands project. His major responsibility is dealing with water, irrigation, et cetera. Then we have Henry Thiessen, who is also an assistant deputy. One of his big responsibilities is land purchase for a lot of departments. For most of them, I guess with the exception of Transportation, we have a land assembly branch within the department.

In addition, in the structure of our department we have the Environment Council of Alberta, which I'd like to touch on just briefly as to its responsibilities. Then we also have the environmental trust fund which administers funds for different purposes in Environment.

In Environment we're largely responsible for about 12 different Acts. I can't name all of them but, generally speaking, they deal with clean air, clean water; we have the land surface conservation and reclamation, the water resources Act, the environment Act, the drainage districts Act, beverage container Act, litter Act -- what else? That pretty well covers it -- the hazardous chemicals Act and the agricultural chemicals Act are both

administered by the department. So, as I say, we have about 12 different pieces of legislation.

There are seven votes we have to go through. The new environmental research centre that's in the process of being constructed at Vegreville is a major concept, and perhaps in the estimates I could expand a little on that. Vote 5 deals with the Environment Council of Alberta. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, under Vote 5 I could say a few words about that. The total amount is in the vote, but it's not broken up in terms of manpower, et cetera.

So that's basically the sort of layout of the department. It's a busy one and it's quite interesting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good. Thank you very much. This is Department of Environment and we'll go through the estimates to March 31, 1980. We'll start off with Departmental Support Services.

MR. THOMPSON: Could I ask a general question that doesn't deal directly with any particular vote. Mr. Minister, is it true that a superintendent has to have authorization from the department to spend over \$25 on an item?

MR. COOKSON: By a superintendent . . .

MR. THOMPSON: I can specifically talk about the man; he's the superintendent at St. Mary's dam. That used to be under PFRA. Twenty years ago the federal government allowed them to buy items up to \$100 without special authorization. Since Alberta took it over, that's been cut down to \$25. Today you really don't get very much for \$25. It increases your paper work. To get something in a hurry these people are sitting there and getting bills made out, two bills for something that costs \$50. If this is true, I'd like to find out what the rationale is behind having such a small amount.

MR. COOKSON: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. The deputy could probably answer in this area.

MR. SOLODZUK: Mr. Chairman, I think you're referring to what we call the direct purchase order or an emergency purchase order, as it was known at one time. As far as I know, the \$25 limit on an individual buying by a DPO, or as it was called, an emergency purchase order, EPO, has been 25 bucks now for the last -- I don't know -- 15 years?

MR. THOMPSON: I realize that.

MR. SOLODZUK: It is a concern. I know that the controller and the deputy provincial treasurer know about it as well. But that's what it is: 25 bucks, and it's a treasury board order. That's it.

MR. THOMPSON: You mean then it isn't -- there's no way you can change it?

MR. SOLODZUK: There's no way I can change it.

MR. THOMPSON: I'll ask Treasury then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good, we'll carry on then. We're on Vote 1.0.1, Minister's Office, \$121,694 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.0.2: Deputy Minister's Office, \$543,729 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.3, Finance and Administration Office, \$96,825 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speak up boys, and ladies.  
Vote 1.0.4, Accounting, \$345,830 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.5, Personnel, \$203,943 -- agreed?

MR. KUSHNER: Shirley, you had your hand up for a question?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes. How come we've got Accounting here and we haven't got it in other departments? What's the difference?

MR. SOLODZUK: I really don't know. We have it as an element under Departmental Support Services and we show it as a separate item. Why other departments don't have it, I really don't know.

MRS. CRIPPS: It doesn't go through Treasury?

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh yes, it's there someplace. It'll be on the subprogram, perhaps. What we have here under Departmental Support Services is a program with only elements in it and not subprograms in the program. So that's why it comes out as Accounting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.5 -- pardon me, Bill Mack. How would you like to sit up here so we can look at you?

MR. MACK: What is the difference between Administration Office and Personnel? When you talk about Personnel, does that cover everybody, a certain section of your staff?

MR. SOLODZUK: Mr. Chairman, that covers our personnel office, the people who are in it for recruitment, selection, development, training -- that sort of thing. It's the personnel service, if you will, to the department.

MR. MACK: But there are other personnel working in the office as well as that in the executive capacity.

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh, there are. But that's strictly the director of personnel, plus recruitment, selection, payroll clerks -- that sort of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Osterman.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I'm going to ask permission of the meeting and the chairman to go back to item 1.0.2, the 89 per cent increase. I missed that as I was going down, I'm sorry.

MR. COOKSON: I was wondering about that too.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I hope you fellows know.

MR. COOKSON: Perhaps just a word about that, because I guess that's part of a considerable cost we'll be facing throughout the budget. A commitment was made to hold the second world environmental conference with regard to the northern hemisphere here in Edmonton. That conference is to be held in September. In order to pull together all the odds and ends and bits and pieces . . .

MRS. OSTERMAN: That's a lot of odds and ends and bits and pieces.

MR. COOKSON: It's quite a thing. We have employed Dr. Ballentyne to do all the preparation for it. Part of the budget in there is required for all expenses, et cetera, we're going to be involved with. This is a major undertaking and commitment by the Premier at the first world conference, I believe in Japan.

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, it was in Japan.

MR. COOKSON: Our intentions are to take these folk to the tar sands while they're here. All those costs are worked into that particular budget.

MR. SOLODZUK: It works out to \$226,000.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you, I was going to ask you that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.5, Personnel -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.6, Office Support Branch, \$387,979 -- agreed.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.7., Systems and Computing, \$852,489 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.8, Communications, \$159,267.

MRS. OSTERMAN: What are Communications?

MR. SOLODZUK: This is our unit that provides the public affairs service. There are three people in it. Now they're all seconded or they're from Government Services' Public Affairs staff. In here we do the publishing of our Environmental Views, also in here we have liaison in the area of environmental education. This is close liaison with the Department of Education. We supply material for libraries, schools, that sort of thing.

MRS. OSTERMAN: And how many staff?

MR. SOLODZUK: There are three staff that are from Public Affairs, Government Services. Then we have one who is the liaison with environmental education. I'm sorry, I can't answer how many stenographers there are, but I think if we went through the book we'd find it.

MRS. OSTERMAN: So this would include materials also.

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh yes, it would.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Fine. That answers my question, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. CRIPPS: Public affairs or public relations?

MR. SOLODZUK: Public Affairs of Government Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good. Vote 1.0.8, agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.8, Management Training and development, \$64,816 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.10, Library, \$203,234.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Who's first? Nigel.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Chairman, through you to the minister. Mr. Minister, could you explain the increase in that, from the '77-78 estimates?

MR. COOKSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether I can explain the 37 per cent increase. Perhaps I could leave that to the deputy. But let me say this about the library. I had the opportunity to go through the library in the Oxbridge Building and it's quite a major facility. It's continually being updated. A lot of research work in all these various areas of air, water, et cetera, is accumulated and is used for research by Environment. So I think it's probably one of the more envied libraries in terms of environmental research, I guess, in western Canada.

As for the 37 per cent increase, Walter?

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think the 37 per cent articulates itself into \$55,000 over the '78-79 forecast. Of the \$55,000, we have a \$20,000 for conversion to computerized book catalogue, more supporting the regional libraries. The next big item is \$12,000 for one new permanent position, which was allotted to us. The next items contain some microfiche collections of \$8,000; small items on increasing on-line searching of \$3,000 increase; wage of \$2,000; and that just about makes \$55,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Connie, does that take care of . . .

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Peter.

MR. KNAAK: The increase was explained, but a library isn't quite like a program. Once you have a library set up, it doesn't involve an increase in expenditure each year, at least it doesn't in a law library. To me it seems a huge amount to be spending in addition to already having a great library, as the minister explained -- you already have one of the best libraries. You already have that and you spend another \$203,000. You did explain the increase, but maybe you wouldn't mind explaining the other amount.

MR. SOLODZUK: Well I think one significant feature of our library is that it is also considered to be a public library. This is where the people come in. Most of the environmental information is deposited in the library. And we just make it known to everybody that our library is for the public.

Regrettably, I don't have the volume of trade that comes in but it runs into thousands of people who come in in a year. The volume of material that is sort of deposited in the library, which requires the service for these people -- we were finding of course that we just couldn't keep up with the demand on the library from, really, the public. Perhaps we're boasting a little, but we are recognized as having one of the better environmental libraries in the country.

The items I indicated of course are strictly the operating part of having an additional person which took most of the money, \$12,000; then of course trying to get a computerized catalogue of the library so it can be referred to other libraries in exchange of information, that sort of thing.

MR. KNAAK: That was the increase, but what about the basic amount? If I understand, you explained the increase very carefully. What I was interested in knowing was the base amount. You know, a library isn't renewed. Once you have a set of documents you don't repurchase the same documents every year.

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh. No, no. Do we have that information here? In other words, you're asking about the original . . .

MR. KNAAK: Yes.

MR. SOLODZUK: I don't have that information here, but I could certainly provide it. I have it in the office, to tell you where the base amount goes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Reid.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, when they were discussing the public use of the library, is that school children sending in for information for projects, or is it the general public, or is it repeated applications for information from the pressure groups?

MR. SOLODZUK: No, everybody is allowed in it. A lot of it is for school children of course. I think if anyone is acquainted with Environmental Views that we publish now, it is geared for the school. We have also published a little document for schools to determine just how they can get information from the library, sort of a guide of how you get this thing from us.

The question I can't answer right now is, say, out of the 158 how much of it is for purchasing periodicals. I can't give you that breakdown, but I certainly could provide it to you, Mr. Chairman, in written form.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. Norm Magee.

MR. MAGEE: Mr. Chairman, I take it then that this is an expansion program that is not likely to go on at this rate of increase in years to come, the foreseeable future in other words?

MR. SOLODZUK: Agreed. This is our first sort of major little increase in the library for the last, probably, three or four years, if one were to look back in our records. It has been kept to a very minimum increase of, you know, 10 per cent or so. MR. CHAIRMAN: Charlie Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Do I take this to mean that this is partially for new books and partially for staffing.

MR. SOLODZUK: No, generally all for operations -- the increase.

MR. STEWART: It's all material, not staff?

MR. COOKSON: No, the increase also includes staff. There are two new positions I think on the vote.

MR. SOLODZUK: There's one permanent position and one wage position, of \$12,000 and \$2,000 -- \$14,000 for extra help.

MR. STEWART: You wouldn't know what the total staff is relative to your library?

MR. SOLODZUK: I could sure provide that information, Mr. Chairman.

MR. STEWART: I was just wondering what the breakdown is.

DR. C. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, you mentioned something about computerizing your library. How much is involved in that?

MR. SOLODZUK: Conversion to computerized catalogue is \$20,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.11, Solicitor's Office, \$26,816.

MRS. OSTERMAN: What is a solicitor's office?

MR. COOKSON: I think you better answer that.

MR. SOLODZUK: Mr. Chairman, it's zero right now.

MR. COOKSON: I know what you mean. Okay, I've got you now. This is for legal requirements in our office, and right now we don't have an employee.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Ordinarily, you have your own legal person on staff?

MR. SOLODZUK: No. Mr. Chairman, the Attorney General of course provides us with legal services. The money there is in support of the legal staff on our payroll, that is, expense accounts, travel, et cetera, for the legal profession -- office support: phones, paper, that sort of thing.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, supplementary to that. I don't understand why we look at Transportation and see an amount for legal services, and we look at Environment and there is a solicitor's office. I do not understand why so many different terms are used.

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, yes, I guess. It's the same thing of course.

MRS. OSTERMAN: No, I don't say "of course" because I don't really understand. And I think I don't like that, actually. It's hard enough to understand as it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 1.0.11, agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KNAAK: I have a question on the total. If you don't mind, could I just have a general explanation of the -- I guess taking out the conference, I didn't quite get it calculated on my calculator but it looks like it would be about a 12 per cent increase in that area, which is higher than any guidelines we have as far as I know. Is there a particular reason for that significant increase in this first item?

The reason I ask, and my impression has been that the Department of Environment has been growing very rapidly over the last five years. Maybe I should ask the additional question while I'm on the point, Mr. Chairman. Would the minister know the total number of staff employed five years compared with today? I notice it's a reasonable increase this year -- 3.5 per cent.

MR. COOKSON: You're talking in terms of the total department?

MR. SOLODZUK: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could attempt to answer that question. When the department was formed in, what, '71, or more or less operational in '72 -- different units were put together to form the Department of Environment. To start with I think we had about 625. This would be in 1971. As of last year we had of course 787. I think that this year, if you look, our total complement will be somewhere around 895.

However, out of the total of 895 for this year, there are 82 positions for the environmental centre in Vegreville, which we'll be coming to. Of course there were some that are existing already. So, in general figures I guess, to answer your question, we started in '71-72 at 625; we're at 787 as of last year; 895 this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Amount to be voted is \$3,006,612 -- agreed?

MR. PLANCHE: Hold on just a minute. You're talking about 762 as a manpower authorization estimate, and you're telling me it's 900 and something?



MR. SOLODZUK: But you have to add on to that the environmental research thing of 82.

MR. PLANCHE: Okay. Just while we're on that particular point, your departmental service is really high. If you take even the Department of Transportation at \$5 million, they have a staff of over 2,000. In that particular thing they've got almost \$1 in equipment and supply services that you don't have. I mean you have a ton of dollars in here -- \$3 million for departmental support. Don't you think that's inordinate?

MR. SOLODZUK: I imagine it depends on the department and how they have structured their programs. In our departmental support of course we have a lot of centralized services that perhaps some other departments do not have; I don't know. Examples are the office support branch, we have the computing systems branch -- and this is a centralized service to the whole department, without it being split up into little other programs. So this could be an explanation, but to be honest with you I haven't made that comparison, so I couldn't answer that question.

MR. PLANCHE: It might be useful to do that, because it looks like it's very high. Even Accounting, which we went to earlier and just summarily dismissed, is almost 350 grand. Mr. Minister, it might be useful to run that comparison too for your overhead.

MR. COOKSON: That's comparison with Transportation?

MR. PLANCHE: Yes, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, do you want to vote on that -- \$3,006,612?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2, Pollution Prevention and Control. Vote 2.1, Program Support, \$570,386 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.2, Air Quality Management, \$1,442,872 -- agreed?

MR. MAGEE: Why would that be down 31.6 per cent?

MR. COOKSON: I think, Mr. Chairman, on that particular vote, there was a budget in place for, in this case, Crossfield. We had to relocate a pipeline there. We had budgeted for it, but the energy resources control board hearing with regard to that delayed the initiation of it. We are funding a considerable amount of that relocation of the Crossfield pipeline. Because of that delay -- I think we had it budgeted the year before, and it wasn't required this time. So it resulted in that decrease.

MR. MAGEE: Very good.

MR. COOKSON: It's kind of nice to see one of those.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.2, agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.3, Water Quality Management, \$1,268,047 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.4, Municipal Water and Sewage Management, \$19,886,852.

MR. PAHL: 219.2 per cent. What is the explanation?

MR. COOKSON: That's quite a spectacular jump, isn't it. Perhaps, on this particular one, we commenced April 1, 1979 on a new municipal water and sewage water management program. Prior to that we paid out borrowings by municipalities on a different formula. Since the inception of the new program, we are picking up approximately 90 per cent of the total cost of a project between \$200 per capita and \$2,000, for both water and sewer. The result is that with this new financing we are going to see some substantial increases in this area, but they should level off because the debt isn't spread out over a long period of time. In other words, we clear off on each project in terms of each request from municipalities. Basically, that's the reason for that considerable increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tom Sindlinger.

MR. SINDLINGER: That item, 2.4.3., Water Supply and Sewage Treatment, the increase from \$5 million to \$18 million accounts for most of the increase there, or more. Is there a breakdown of that program between major and minor centres, rural or urban?

MR. SOLODZUK: In coming up with the figure of \$19.8 million, it's really broken down to about \$18.7 which is strictly grant money, grants to municipalities, plus about \$200,000 for professional services. That's the way the \$19 million generally breaks down.

MR. SINDLINGER: Well where do the grants go?

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh. They go to all the municipalities that we have on our list for new water and sewer programs, projects if you wish. There's a whole list of them.

MR. COOKSON: The major centres, Calgary and Edmonton -- what other one would not qualify under that?

MR. SOLODZUK: Generally Edmonton and Calgary don't qualify.

MR. COOKSON: They don't qualify because of the \$200 per capita debt requirement. So most of this funding is going to smaller, more inefficient municipalities. (interjections) Well, big doesn't mean efficient but it sure as hell helps, let's put it that way.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, under 2.3.2, we have Water Quality Management, Pollution Control. Then under 2.4.2, Municipal Water, we have Pollution Control again. What's the relationship? They both have gone up by a colossal percentage -- 40 per cent to 50 per cent?

MR. COOKSON: Water Quality, 2.3, you're talking \$1,268,047?

DR. REID: I'm talking about the breakdown -- the Pollution Control part, which is \$1,087,438; then under 2.4.2., we have Pollution Control again, which is \$1,146,167. They have both increased quite radically from the previous year's estimates. Are we talking the same kind of thing here under Pollution Control?

MR. SOLODZUK: No, they're subprograms. One deals with Water Quality Management, and this is surface water. Generally the thrust we have here is to the biological studies of rivers and lakes from the consequences of added pollutants. Examples are the problems we're having on the Bow at this time; that is included. That is the kind of item that is under 2.3. We're also doing lake studies of Baptiste, Cold Lake -- these sort of things -- from the biological and eutrophication point of view. That is under 2.3.

When you come to 2.4.2, again probably a term of semantics here. But that Pollution Control really relates to Municipal Water and Sewage Management. We have currently the Calgary regional utility study is in there. We also have the problem of disposal of sewage effluents, and in it we're doing the work of putting the sewage effluents on land and the studies of disposing of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, 2.4 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.5, Earth Contamination Prevention, \$1,381,561 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.6, Waste Management, \$2,659,803.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. We're now on my favorite subject, sanitary landfills. I think you know my position, Jack. The same standards are used for Calgary and Edmonton as all the small towns and villages, and it's almost impossible for them to comply. I see you've increased it by 334 per cent. Does that mean you're going to give the smaller towns and villages a break on their sanitary landfills?

MR. COOKSON: That's a positive way to look at it, John.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

MR. COOKSON: The funding in that particular vote has been placed there because of the pending new legislation on the solid waste disposal program. The legislation will come in this fall -- we had hoped to bring it in this spring, but we'll bring it in this fall. In the meantime, the funds are there and some of them are already probably starting to circulate. The intent is to encourage, as much as possible, regional landfills. The funds will be used basically for capital costs, purchase of land, fencing for these regional landfills, equipment required, roadwork, et cetera.

MR. THOMPSON: Supplementary on that, Jack. You said "regional landfills". Are we really getting into that area now?

MR. COOKSON: Yes.

MR. THOMPSON: That's bad news, you know.

MR. COOKSON: I think our first major one is down in the Pincher Creek area -- you're more familiar with that one than I am. But we have three others pending, and the intent -- especially in our heavily populated areas, the Calgary-Edmonton corridor -- is to bring two or three municipalities together, to work together with one sanitary landfill site and to probably make the operation more efficient, with less waste of land.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I wonder if this figure includes the projected cost of the one that partly has to do with my area, on the east side of the Three Hills constituency, which will be hauling to Drum? Is that the kind of program you're talking about?

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes. Actually there will have to be two or more municipalities to qualify for this program, so in fact it is then a regional . . .

MR. THOMPSON: I'd like to get back to the regional landfill concept, Jack. I can see how you can make a town or a village comply to haul garbage 20 miles, but I don't see how you're going to make the individual person haul his garbage 20 miles. I think if you'll check out what happened down in Pincher Creek, you started seeing a lot of plastic garbage bags along the road allowances. I have real problems with this regional sanitary landfill concept. I just want you to make a note of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Reid.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I want to bring up three points. First of all, has any research been done on the suitability of so-called sanitary landfill in this climate for smaller places where nothing is burned or pre-treated before it's thrown in the dump and covered. We had an instance in Hinton when they were digging for the new forestry school and got into a dump that was more than 30 years old and the stuff still hadn't broken down. That's point number one.

Second, if this is supposed to be a form of pollution control, the smell that comes from these places compared to the old burning ones is beyond belief.

Third, I'll back up what was just said about the Pincher Creek one. They're talking about having a regional one outside the park gates for Hinton and Jasper. That means that I, living on an acreage, am supposed to drive 15 miles to dump my plastic bags. And I'm just damn well not doing it. I'll throw them in the bush.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan Hyland.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my comments are somewhat the same. The question between a couple of municipalities -- would that mean a town and a county?

MR. COOKSON: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: I know now that the dump is three miles out of town, to back up what Ian is saying, and by the time people get their garbage out there there

is an amount strewn along the road anyway. If they have to go 20 miles -- of course in our country it never hardly quits blowing, so you get half of it off anyway. And by the time you go 20 miles, it could be good business for the tire shops.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good. 2.6, \$2,659,803 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.7, Chemical and Pesticide Management, \$1,103,181 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Total amount to be voted, \$28,312,703 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 3, Land Conservation. Vote 3.1, Program Support, \$81,668 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 3.2, Land Conservation and Reclamation, \$1,642,888 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 3.3, Land Assembly, \$13,565,384. Alan Hyland.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. How come the 200-plus per cent increase?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, his land assembly involves what we call restricted development areas. We provide for some funds within our own budget and some are special warrant. But, as you know, we purchase most of the property for most departments with the exception, I guess, of Transportation. Besides restricted development areas, we are also involved with the major parks purchases. I think a good portion of this, Walter, would be involved in Fish Creek park in Calgary.

MR. HYLAND: Supplementary, Mr. Chairman. That again would be a roll-over fund that shows as an expense from your department, whereas another department gets away without showing it as an expense. You show it?

MR. SOLODZUK: That's right, with the exception of Highways and Public Works. We purchase lands for all other uses, historical, grazing reserves, et cetera. The increase really reflects -- you see we have a base here that we start with of \$4 million. The base here is the purchase of some lands in Fish Creek park. Again, I guess Mr. Minister, it's between April and when the budget -- so you have to include it in your estimates if a special warrant was passed. That's why it is there.

MR. HYLAND: So then, supposedly, this should go down, once the major expense of parks are purchased?

MR. COOKSON: That depends on the pressures by different departments and by the people. For example, our restricted development areas around the cities -- we are purchasing some of that when the opportunity lends itself. We think we have a purpose for that, and it's very difficult to predict what should be in there. I'm not sure, Walter, does the Dickson dam come out of that?

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes.

MR. COOKSON: So you see you're faced . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: Department projects as well.

MR. HYLAND: So would it be expected this would increase at that rate in future?

MR. SOLODZUK: Well I guess it's a matter of, you know, from year to year. If you examine the performance of Land Assembly, it's been higher than \$13 million some years. It's just as the need arises for a provincial park or an RDA, a transportation corridor -- that type of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed on 3.3?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 3.4, Resource Co-ordination, \$1,195,737 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Total vote, \$16,485,677 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we finish this tonight -- it's 10:15 -- or what is your pleasure?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Let's finish it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Vote 4, Water Resources Management. Vote 4.1, Program Support, \$64,707.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.2, Surface Water Development and Control, \$15,791,572 -- agreed?

MR. HYLAND: Is this drainage?

MR. SOLODZUK: Generally all our sort of major water resources projects are included in here, ranging from dams and that sort of thing.

MR. HYLAND: So the administration of irrigation works from the headworks down to where the district takes over, would that be in there?

MR. SOLODZUK: There are two parts to this in the area of water resources. For part of it we get our funding from the heritage trust fund, that is for the water management for irrigation use. That's the capital money. The operating money would be under 4.4.

MR. MACK: Mr. Chairman, would this include the water levels of recreational lakes such as Sylvan Lake or Gull Lake -- not so much Sylvan, but Gull Lake? Would this include that area as well?

MR. SOLODZUK: If a project should be approved for that purpose, yes. But we don't have one.

MR. PLANCHE: Just on that issue, are you not sustaining a level in Gull Lake with a pump?

MR. SOLODZUK: I'm sorry, right. That type of project would be there.

MRS. CRIPPS: I see the Dickson dam is included. That can't be the cost; what is that?

MR. COOKSON: Which one are we on now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4.2, Surface Water Development and Control.

MRS. CRIPPS: I'm looking at 4.6.

MR. SOLODZUK: What we're looking at, Mr. Minister, is the element you see, in the element book that breaks down some of the major expenditures and the Dickson dam is there. The question is how much is the Dickson dam total cost.

MRS. CRIPPS: No, no. That's not the question. The question is: there's \$3,662,922 allotted to the Dickson dam.

MR. SOLODZUK: That's right.

MRS. CRIPPS: What is that?

MR. COOKSON: That would be the portion that would be allotted for, I imagine, the works -- or would that be purchase of land?

MR. SOLODZUK: The \$3.6 million is for getting it on the way, for tender, for construction, consulting engineering fees. There will be some relocation of pipelines and probably some clearing -- that type of thing.

MR. COOKSON: But not land assembly.

MR. SOLODZUK: But not the building of the dam, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Anderson.

DR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, does this 4.2 include high water levels farmland as well, and drainage procedures that go off that, and joint ventures between counties and government?

MR. COOKSON: It could -- I was just looking at the breakdown here on 4.2. That's Surface Water Development and Control.

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, it does.

MR. COOKSON: And we have grants to a number of different areas: La Crete, Frank Lake, Fort Macleod. These are all water maintenance -- probably. Is there some flood control in there, Walter, on the 4.2 budget of \$15.5 million for Surface Water Development and Control? For example, would Paddle River be in there?

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, the Paddle River would be in there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, 4.2 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.3, Regulatory and Regional Advisory Services, \$1,133,942 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.4, Operation and Maintenance of Water Resources Systems, \$4,275,168 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.5, Data Collection and Inventory, \$3,342,348 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.6, Water Resources Planning and Co-ordination, \$4,432,741. Dr. Reid.

DR. REID: A question 4.6.1. The administrative support on this has gone up by some incredible percentage, from \$234,000 to \$1,888,000. What's the administrative support involved there?

MR. COOKSON: That's 4.6, eh? Walter maybe can give the breakdown. Under 4.6, we have what is known as the prairie waters board, which deals with a lot of problems that are interprovincial. Their budget comes out of there. One of the studies being done out of that budget at the present time is the Mackenzie River basin study, which deals with the total basin which enters Alberta and heads north, amongst other studies. I believe the water well emergency service comes in under that, too. That's starting to wind down. Is that under that one too, Walter?

MR. SOLODZUK: One of the major increases in this one here, perhaps you may be aware of it, is the announcement by the government that we will be undertaking a feasibility study of the hydro potential of the Slave River, way up by the



Northwest Territories' government. We've included an amount of \$1.5 million in this year's budget to get the study under way. It's a study that involves both Utilities and Transportation departments, and the Energy Resources Conversation Board. But Environment is the funding agency on this study.

DR. REID: So that's almost the entire thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.6, agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.7, Groundwater Development, \$1,591,620 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 4.8, Water Rights Administration, \$745,684 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Total to be voted: \$31,376,782 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 5, Environmental Research. Mr. Minister, would you like to speak on this, or should we just . . .

MR. COOKSON: On Environmental Research?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a notation here, but you needn't bother unless you want to.

MR. COOKSON: Well, I thought maybe somebody would ask me how come it's down 25 per cent under 5.2.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll take it item by item and then we'll get to that.

Vote 5.1, Environmental Research Co-ordination, \$1,038,854 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I have a question. What do you do when you have research co-ordination, to the tune of that much money? I don't understand it.

MR. COOKSON: Walter, maybe we can give them some kind of breakdown. We have, as part of the structure of the department, a research trust and a secretariat who administers. I think on that board we have an MLA, too. I think Mr. Fred Bradley was on; Dennis Anderson is to take over.

MR. SOLODZUK: We have a research secretariat within the organization that's the research arm for the problem-solving area that we have in the department. In it, all our research is co-ordinating through one central agency now and that's the research secretariat. The research secretariat also funds what the minister has just mentioned, the Alberta environment research trust. We fund it to the tune of about \$250,000 annually. The trust is there by a special Act; there is a board and the board solicits environmental research projects

from the various agencies of universities and groups within Alberta. It's been operational now since, oh, 1972 or so. I notice Mr. Bradley, sitting behind me, was a member on the board of the environment research trust.

The other is components that are within Environment as far as research requirements are concerned. Most research is done by outside agencies, universities or the private sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 5.2, Alberta Oil Sands Environmental Research, \$3,000,000.

MR. ISLEY: I'd like to know why it's down.

MR. COOKSON: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, AOSERP, which is the Alberta Oil Sands Environmental Research Program, was commenced as a joint project with the federal government in 1975. It was to be a 10-year program, with matching up to \$2 million by the province, \$2 million by the federal government. We received notice about a year ago that the federal government no longer wanted to participate, and in fact they broke their contract with the province. We wrote a few threatening letters, but other than that we took it on the chin. So, AOSERP is probably of considerable value in view of the work that's been done in the tar sands and the environmental problems. They have a staff in the area, in a camp, and they're doing a number of projects regarding the flora and fauna and effects on the environment, SO<sub>2</sub>, et cetera. We are continuing to fund AOSERP, although we're winding it down in a sense. However, we're still going to communicate with the new government to see if they would be prepared to pick up their proper portion for the next five years. Whether or not we'll be successful remains to be seen. That's basically why it's down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan Hyland.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the minister: why would the support services be 20 per cent, or thereabouts, of the grant. Granted, they're down from last year, but they still show \$700,000 administrative support in \$2,200,000 payout.

MR. COOKSON: Do you know, Walter?

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, we have really two things to do now, after the announcement by the federal government that they're pulling out from this program. The minister made the decision that we will not drop it. We will continue on with it. We will continue the projects we have to conclusion.

However, there're two things that we're doing now; one is a report that is to say where we are in the program. The other one of course is to say what should be done with the program, that is, after 1980 -- after next year. So we funded for this one year, to try to make a recommendation to government as to what the future of this program should be after 1980. Therefore, we have a fairly heavy workload in completing the reports that are ongoing right now and, of course, presenting a new program for the government to consider as to what the future of AOSERP should be, after next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One last question, Ernie Isley.

MR. ISLEY: It isn't really a question; it's a comment. Being from an area that's involved with the oil sands, I would prefer to see us spending more

money to answer some of the unanswered questions we have with respect to sulphur dioxide effect on plant and animal life, groundwater disposal, probably even moving into a public relations job to communicate findings to local residents, and so on. So I am hoping in the future to see that program beefed up as opposed to going down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shirley Cripps.

MRS. CRIPPS: Supplementary to that question on administrative support. I notice that each one of these votes has a high amount of administrative support. What's the . . .

MR. COOKSON: Well I think, Mr. Chairman, we have to be honest. These are high-priced people. If the salaries are in there, they are practically all one- or two-degree university-calibre scientist types. I don't know if you want to add to that, Walter.

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, I think this is basically right. In the AOSERP program, for example, we do have a separate unit that operates, with a director, managers, because it was a \$4 million program. I would imagine that salaries and everything are included in there. I can't give you a figure of just how many staff there are right now, but I would say there are probably 15 or 20 people if we count the camp operation. We have a complete camp operation at Fort McMurray, where the researchers live. I do know that the catering for that camp alone is -- Milt, what was it, \$200,000?

MR. PAHL: \$300,000.

MR. SOLODZUK: There it is; that's what the catering bill is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 5.2, \$3,000,000 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote on the total amount, \$4,038,854 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Vote 6, \$1,024,000 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7, Interdisciplinary Environmental Research and Services. Vote 7.1, Program Support.

MR. COOKSON: Maybe I could give just a quick overview. On this one we're dealing primarily with the new environmental research centre located at Vegreville. Part of the new building will be coming on stream in the fall of 1979. It's quite a huge thing; involves about 180,000 square feet when it's finished. You're talking 4 acres or so, if that relates to the country crew here.

Eventually we're looking at 235 staff, most of them in high salary brackets because of research. They will be dealing 40 per cent with agricultural problems, as I understand it, and about 45 per cent of the time with

environmental problems that come from other departments. There are five major branches that will deal with different areas, and they're listed. The estimated cost for this year -- we anticipate it will probably be one of the most respected environmental research centres in Canada. It's going to be an expensive operation; I don't know what you do about that.

But we will be pulling some of the areas of research from some of the other departments. For example, in the area of agriculture, I think they are now doing research in the Longman Building. A lot of that will be transferred to this major centre at Vegreville. That will also apply to some of the testing and research -- a large part of that is in the environment area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Connie Osterman.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes. Sorry, I just have to go back to this first item again. What, then, do the Information Services provide under the breakdown -- 7.1.5?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 65?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes.

MR. COOKSON: 7.1.5 -- would you like to answer it?

MR. SOLODZUK: I'll try.

MR. COOKSON: Public relations anyway.

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, there will be -- and I can't give you the exact answer whether there is or not -- but there will be a public relations person. It would follow the same criteria as all other departments that will be provided by Government Services. However, when it's provided by Government Services, we still have to have the support for it.

However, the thrust at this time in Information Services is really to get a technical information service, if you wish. This unit is going to be a centre of excellence in Alberta, probably in the country. I really don't know of any other facility in Canada that would be comparable to this one. It's organized in a much different way. It is not organized on sort of departmental lines. The whole unit is on functional lines, crossing all departmental boundaries. In other words, we have about six user departments in the facility. It's not structured on a departmental basis; it's structured functionally, Mr. Chairman, as the minister explained: the plant sciences, chemistry, the animal sciences, and that sort of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Milt Pahl.

MR. PAHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have three areas of comment and observation. First, could you confirm that the \$6,960,000 that's indicated as DPW -- Department of Public Works -- would be added to the \$2,200,000 in terms of the capital involved in the Vegreville research lab? Is that correct?

MR. COOKSON: The \$6 million comes out of Public Works, doesn't it?

MR. PAHL: Yes, there's a notation at the bottom of page 147. Is that part of the capital cost of the Veg. plant?

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't have that book with me right now, so I don't know. I just took mine out, you see.

MR. PAHL: There's a notation at the bottom of the page.

MR. COOKSON: Yes, I noticed that too.

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, that is correct.

MR. COOKSON: They're paying for that.

MR. SOLODZUK: That is correct. The Department of Public Works is responsible for building the building, plus furnishing it with certain furnishings.

MR. PAHL: But not all, because there's a few million . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: That's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Vote 7.1. Oh, you've got one more?

MR. PAHL: No, I said I had three questions. The second one is that although you noted there's a 40 per cent component for agriculture, I just happened to skip through to Agriculture, and I can only see a reduction in their research of about \$1 million. Yet we're spending \$3 million. All I'm pointing out, and this is a general comment, is that although you see increases in one area, you don't necessarily see the decreases in other areas.

That relates to my third concern, that looking at the overall department's total budget, I note that 15 per cent of the manpower budget is going to research. That means that of every \$100 paid in salary in the Department of Environment, \$15 is paid to a researcher. Now, the question or observation I have for the minister is: this appears to be the trend of the department. Is that the future direction? I have a concern with respect to the fact that that many people are involved in research in the department.

MR. COOKSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, that's a good question. I suppose I've never analyzed what part Environment should be doing in terms of research. Certainly this new Vegreville research centre is going to change the relationship between the dollar spent and the dollar spent for research. It's going to escalate.

Now, I don't know whether our department should be doing all the research for the government of Alberta, but we're certainly taking on a pretty substantial part of it in these five areas. As far as the share percentage that would involve agriculture, I can't comment on what is happening in agriculture. But I do know that anything I've read indicates that approximately 40 per cent of the research in the new centre will be involved in some way with agriculture. And I'm really happy about that. Whether it reduces Agriculture by 40 per cent, I don't know. It doesn't.

MR. PAHL: It doesn't. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Connie Osterman.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes, I just wonder, in terms of how the Vegreville centre will be operating, how autonomous are they going to be? Or is the direction for their work going to come from the department?

MR. COOKSON: That's a good question. Walter, I don't know whether you'd like to . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, first of all, I think it was recognized that the Vegreville lab should be a separate vote and accounted separately, because of its interdisciplinary nature, of course, serving all the other departments -- Occupational Health and Safety and all the other ones. That's why it's a separate vote.

Now a comment on yours, Mr. Pahl. You're charging that we're . . .

MR. PAHL: It's growing.

MR. SOLODZUK: I think you have to consider that in your figures. Anyway, the centre has a director, who has the branch heads of the five different sections. The director reports to me, as the deputy, on a routine, day-to-day basis. I also chair a board of directors who are deputy ministers of all the user departments, and we are advisory to the minister on the conduct and policies of the Vegreville lab. We hope that it will work with as much freedom as possible, as researchers could. But it is up to the minister reporting, through me, to the minister on matters of programs, budgeting, staffing, and all that sort of thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan Hyland.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is somewhat like Milt's. I look and can't help but feel concerned: the general accounting of the department is up some 30 per cent. If you look at 7.1, Program Support, accounting is up 60 per cent, plus director's office has more than doubled. Even the administration of the thing has more than doubled. Why such increases specifically in accounting and personnel?

MR. COOKSON: Is this dealing with Vote 7?

MR. SOLODZUK: Yes, Vote 7, and these are the figures.

MR. COOKSON: Well, I don't know. Maybe Walter can answer this.

MR. SOLODZUK: I'm not so sure I can truthfully answer this question, to say why specifically accounting is there. I do know that we now in a program of trying to get the lab operational. Hopefully it will be opened in 1980, just about the new year. We are recruiting 82 positions now. This of course is not the end, because we have a staff complement of about 160 new positions. So next year it's going to be the same sort of thing. So I don't know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, Vote 7.1.

MR. HYLAND: Sorry. To follow that up, then. Supposedly in theory, but it might not happen, the other departments should lose personnel in comparable . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: Well, that's happening. You see, out of the total complement, about 70 are being transferred from other departments. So if you have 72 plus 163, you get 235. I think that's the way the figures break down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7.1, \$1,086,501.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7.2, Plant Sciences, \$842,420.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7.3, Chemistry, \$2,408,550 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7.4, Animal Sciences, \$1,106,800 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bill Mack.

MR. MACK: You have a fairly substantive increase in Animal Sciences. What generated that?

MR. COOKSON: Well, I guess they're substantial all the way along. The breakdown on 7.4 -- you've got the total breakdown?

MR. MACK: Yes, I have it here. It doesn't really tell me much.

DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Veterinary medical sciences is the big one.

MR. MACK: Yes, it had nothing for the previous year, and \$550,000 for this year. Just what generated that? Did you start up a new . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: It's all new.

MR. COOKSON: It's all new, the whole thing. There's a very small -- there's no . . .

MR. MACK: They had some for wildlife; that's not new.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Peter.

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. SOLODZUK: Oh, here it is. I can answer that.

MR. COOKSON: We got it here. The 15 new positions for a starter. Relocation costs, start-up costs of that particular branch. Fixed assets, probably equipment: \$643,000 is involved in that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Peter.

MR. KNAAK: I just want to give you notice that I would like to speak at the end of this, rather than on a particular item, so we don't go so fast from 7.5 to the conclusion. I'd like to get in after 7.5

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've got all night. We can stay just as long as you want.

MRS. CRIPPS: We've got to be here for breakfast.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, the cafeteria opens up at 7:30. It's your pleasure.

AN HON. MEMBER: Just remember who your friends are, Peter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 7.5, Environmental Technology, \$524,932 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Amount to be voted, \$5,969,203 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And now, Peter, do you want to speak at this particular time, or would you rather wait until we get to the total amount?

MR. KNAAK: I think the total amount.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the total amount is \$90,213,831 -- agreed?

MR. KNAAK: This is where I'd like to speak, Mr. Chairman. I gave this matter a lot of thought during the last hour or so that we've discussed the particular figures here. If I might just review for the committee what we're considering here: item 1, 21.9 per cent increase; item 2, 123 per cent increase; item 3, 130.8 per cent increase; item 4, 21 per cent increase. And the size of the numbers is large. Then a very small item, which is a -18 per cent increase. But if you look at the actual expenditure, it was well above the forecast, the way I understand it; but aside from that. And we have item 6, 21.8 per cent; and item 7, 197 per cent; for an overall increase of 61.0 per cent.

Now, there are probably certain new programs in the budget that I could support, and I abstained from voting on each estimate because I wasn't sure which programs they included. It just isn't possible to determine that.

I'd like to remind the subcommittee that the basic philosophy of the Conservative government is that we have a balance between the size of government and the free-enterprise or private-enterprise system. This kind of increase of 61 per cent, notwithstanding some desirable programs, is much too high. In the event our resource revenues decrease, this kind of load will have to be carried by a much higher rate of taxation.

I cannot support this increase in this budget. I'm sorry, I just can't do it. That was short. That's all I have to say.

MR. PAHL: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to share, in part, that concern about the growth in research. But I think in fairness to the department, there are a lot of one-shot operations in there. There's the debt reduction program on the sewer and water programs; the start on the Dickson dam; and the start-up of the research lab. So, if this were an ongoing thing, I think there would



be -- I just temper Peter's comments with that thought. But I think in part it supports my concern, particularly about an expanding research commitment, because these people are high-priced, as the minister has said. They're an awful lot easier to acquire than to get rid of, believe me. I speak from experience. So there is some element of concern there, in my view as well, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have any other comments?

MR. MACK: Mr. Chairman, would it be feasible to have a breakdown, or a summary of a breakdown, of the one-shot major expenditures which are expanding, such as the Vegreville deal and any others that are large? I think it would give us a much better appreciation of the direction that we're going.

MR. COOKSON: We could do that.

MR. MACK: Perhaps it would allay some of the concerns in having such a burgeoning budget.

MR. COOKSON: I think we could do that, Mr. Chairman. You also have to keep in mind that we do the land assembly, you know, for other departments. That places us in a dilemma, because I get a call from Fish and Wildlife or from Parks or whatever, and they say, buy that land. So we proceed to buy it, do the best we can. If we can't come to terms, of course, we don't buy. But that's also part of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Connie.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I just wondered if it was possible to obtain information as to the terms of reference of the whole Vegreville thing: how people are hired, what kinds of contracts they're receiving, do they have tenure, and so on. I would be very interested in the material, the package on that particular project, if it's possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ernie Isley.

MR. ISLEY: I'd just like to twist the Conservative philosophy in a little different direction from Peter's, and say that excluding the land assembly programs, dam construction, and things of this nature, I think we have to put an emphasis on conserving our environment. I'm not sure that we're putting enough effort and input into research in that direction. I support the increases in those areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very good. We've got a vote coming on \$90,213,831 -- agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we'll ask the minister for his closing remarks, then we'll have a motion that the report be sent to the Committee of Supply.

MR. COOKSON: Thank you for your patience.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now can we have a motion?

DR. C. ANDERSON: I'll move it.

*Motion carried*

*The meeting adjourned at 11 p.m.*