

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Wednesday, June 20, 1979 2:30 p.m.

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, I hereby report that with respect to Bill Pr. 4, The Stockgrowers' Insurance Company of Canada Ltd. Act, the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommends to this Assembly that the Bill be proceeded with. With respect to the petition of Canadian Union College for The Canadian Union College Amendment Act, 1979, the Standing Committee on Private Bills has considered the non-compliance with Standing Order 77, and recommends that the Assembly waive Standing Order 77 to permit the petition to proceed.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly wish to deal with the recommendation to waive the Standing Order? Is it agreed that the recommendation should be acted on and the Standing Order waived?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 215
An Act to Amend
The Individual's Rights
Protection Act (No. 2)**

**Bill 219
An Act to Amend
The Individual's Rights
Protection Act (No. 3)**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce two companion Bills: Bill 215, An Act to Amend The Individual's Rights Protection Act, and Bill 219 of the same title.

Bill 215 would forbid discrimination solely on the basis of marital status. Bill 219 would prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of physical and mental handicap. It would not preclude discrimination in favor of handicapped individuals in the realm of employment. Both Bills would allow a board of inquiry to investigate complaints relating to a class of individuals.

MR. SPEAKER: Reserving for the moment the question as to whether these two bills ought to be one, having regard for the possibility that perhaps as many as half a dozen bills might be introduced by the same

member to amend the same act, apart from that, does the Assembly wish to adopt the motion?

[Leave granted; Bills 215 and 219 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the 1978 report of inspection, laboratory animal care and facilities, Alberta universities, as required by The Universities Act.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, for information of all members I'd like to table brochures entitled Help Prevent Crime. Copies will be distributed to all members.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the annual report of the Department of Education for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1978, as required by statute.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to file with the Assembly the fourth annual report, for 1978-79, of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, together with copies of the provincial transfer guide for universities, colleges, technical institutes, and other postsecondary institutions.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Assembly reports of the governors of the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, the University of Lethbridge, and Athabasca University.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. HYNDMAN: Today, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly some 21 enthusiastic grade 6 students from Parkview in the Edmonton Glenora constituency. They're in the members gallery with their teacher Mr. Larbalestier. At this time I'd like to ask if they would stand and receive the welcome of the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege and pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, 31 grade 7 students from Colonel Walker school in the constituency of Calgary Forest Lawn. They are seated in the public gallery in the company of their teachers Mr. Gathercole and Mr. Thomas, and one of the parents, Mrs. Parsons. I would invite them to stand and receive the cordial welcome of this Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Department of
Utilities and Telephones**

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the government has approved the application by Alberta Power Limited to build a 750-megawatt generating station at Sheerness, about 25 kilometres southeast of Hanna.

It is expected that the first 375-megawatt unit will be in operation in 1985 and the second unit in 1986. They will be the next units to be brought on stream after

completion of the similar units at Keephills, near Lake Wabamun, which are now under construction.

The government is aware of the need for additional generating in the mid-1980s and agrees with the findings of the Energy Resources Conservation Board that approval of this major generating capacity in the Sheerness area provides system diversification and improved system reliability.

A work force of almost 700 will be needed at the peak of construction of the plant, and there will be an eventual permanent work force at the project of approximately 240, including the 40 employees at the existing mine. The town of Hanna has facilities available or being planned that can absorb the additional population. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$700 million, and it will provide much-needed economic diversification in the area. It is estimated that \$45 million in taxes will be paid to the Special Areas Board over the life of the project.

In addition to meeting the conditions required under the Alberta coal policy and by the Energy Resources Conservation Board, the approval is conditional upon the matters related to the Department of Environment. One has to do with the location of acceptable sites for the plant and cooling ponds as well as the size of the cooling pond. The other condition is that discussions take place between the Minister of Environment and Alberta Power Limited to consider arrangements to augment the water supply in the area, particularly to provide additional water to the town of Hanna.

Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise that during the past few weeks considerable attention has been focused on the province's X-ray inspection program. The federal government regulates the manufacture, import, sale, or transfer of radiation-emitting equipment. The provincial government is responsible for its safe installation and subsequent use. The current interest was initiated by press reports of a study in Ontario which showed that some techniques being used by operators of X-ray equipment in hospitals could result in unnecessary exposure of patients to X rays. The study did not mention that lack of inspection or faulty equipment were implicated in any way. Nevertheless, the publicity given to this study has resulted in criticism of the X-ray inspection program, which needs to be put into its correct perspective.

The X-ray inspection activities of the radiation health branch have to be seen as a sequence of discrete stages in relation to a particular installation. The first stage is a statutory requirement under the terms of The Radiation Protection Act. This involves the review of plans for a new facility, and usually results in the issuance of a certificate of registration. Plans awaiting review now number 18.

The second stage, also a statutory requirement, involves premises with a certificate of registration but which are awaiting an inspection before a certificate of inspection can be issued. Facilities in this category number 126, of which 26 are veterinary.

The third stage, which is not a statutory requirement, involves a periodic reinspection. The frequency of this is determined by an internally developed priority system, based on guidelines issued for states' use by the United States public health service in their radiologic-

al health data and reports in 1970. This calls for an annual visit to major hospitals, visits every two years to small hospitals, and every three years to all others, which are medical clinics, chiropractors, and veterinarians, except dental offices, where the frequency is every five years. There are 200 installations currently due for reinspection. However, statutory inspectional activities and investigations of complaints are given priority, particularly during periods of staff shortages.

Other branch staff has been assigned to clear the list of facilities waiting to meet statutory requirements of the first two stages. The number of new or renovated facilities requiring statutory inspection varies from one year to the next. This year, and unfortunately at a time when there are some staff vacancies, there has been an unusually high number — more than 80 in the first six months — of applications for registration of new equipment. This reflects economic growth in the province in which more capital has been made available for the purchase of new equipment and the setting up of new facilities, especially in rural hospitals.

Ten years ago, when the X-ray inspection program was first established in the Department of Health, attention was directed primarily to X-ray equipment. Evidence at that time indicated that considerable progress was possible in reducing patient and operator exposure to X rays through improvements in the facilities and equipment.

During the first three years of equipment inspections, it was found that on average there were 242 equipment and facility faults for every 100 X-ray installations examined. The inspections have continued since the inception of the program, but we now find that on average there are only 36 deficiencies for every 100 installations checked. Where these deficiencies are important, there is immediate attention to their correction, although most items are now usually of a minor nature.

The program today is focussing less attention on equipment inspections, although they are continuing. Instead there is a greater concern for the techniques used during X-ray examinations, and for minimizing the radiation dose received by patients. In preparation for this change in program focus, the branch applied a special survey technique in 1978 to all X-ray facilities in the province used for the examination of the breast for cancer detection. This project has resulted in a marked reduction of patient dose and improvement in detection procedures at the clinics involved.

An internal review of the radiation health branch is being carried out, and a full report of its activities and capabilities for inspection will be assessed by the Radiation Health Advisory Committee established under The Radiation Protection Act. This committee will then make recommendations to me for the future direction of the program.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, could I revert to Introduction of Visitors?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce, if I may, in your gallery today our ex-colleague, the flying doctor from Fort Macleod, John Walker.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Metis Settlements — Documents**

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Will the minister now advise the Assembly with respect to the six Metis settlement offices from which material was removed on Monday morning? Was material removed which was not the property of the provincial government?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the material removed was primarily material owned by the government of Alberta. From the information provided, I've estimated that 98 to 99 per cent of it would fall in that category. There were some files and other materials that belonged to the Metis settlements, and those materials have been returned.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Can the minister indicate to the Assembly from which of the six offices materials not deemed by the government to be property of the government were collected on Monday morning?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, if I might answer the question by giving some examples. On the Gift Lake settlement there were four filing cabinets in all, one of which was deemed to be the government's filing cabinet. That was the cabinet which was removed. There were three items in that cabinet which in fact should not have been there; they were not the property of the government of Alberta. Those items were returned. That would range up to one of the other settlements where a number of files were mixed in with government files; that was from Fishing Lake.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Then is it the position of the minister's department that Gift Lake and the other colony the minister mentioned, Fishing Lake, were the only, two colonies where materials were taken which were not the property of the Alberta government?

MR. BOGLE: No, Mr. Speaker. Some property from each of the six settlements inadvertently was with the government files, and that has been returned.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm to the Assembly that among the information or property taken from the Gift Lake settlement office was correspondence from the Federation of Metis Settlements regarding education projects and oil and natural gas exploration and development?

MR. BOGLE: Last evening I did provide information to the subcommittee while we were on our estimates, Mr. Speaker, and I did mention that one of the three items from the Gift Lake file contained a folder marked "Federation of Metis Settlements".

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is more precise than the area the minister alluded to. Specifically, in the information that was received and viewed by officials of the Alberta government, was there information dealing with natural gas exploration and development which . . . I ask the ques-

tion because that can have a very direct impact on the court case which is coming up.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I gave specific instructions to my chief deputy minister to pass on to the executive director of the Metis betterment branch that they were to ascertain whether or not a file folder, which was not the property of the government of Alberta and would therefore be the property of either the council or someone else, might be within our files, and if they were, that that folder should be set aside immediately.

Mr. Speaker, if it was not possible to ascertain from the file folder what might be in it, because there was no identification on it, the director was to quickly peruse but not read the material. For example, some blank T-4 slips were in one of the folders. Because the folder itself had no markings on it, obviously the director had to open the file jacket to ascertain that. And it was very easy to see and to identify that although they were T-4 slips, they were blank. That file was returned.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Using the minister's own terms "quickly peruse but not read", how did officials of the minister's department quickly peruse but not read the correspondence between the Metis Association and its officials and the people on the colonies with regard to the very question that is the basis of litigation between the government and the Metis people?

MR. BOGLE: Another question, Mr. Speaker, which should be asked is: what were those files doing in our file cabinets with our files?

But more specifically to the question, I think I can certainly appreciate how one can peruse a file without reading it in any detail. Obviously if a file contains correspondence from some group like the Voice of Alberta Native Women, that is easily identified. You don't need to read the entire file to do that.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister give the Assembly an assurance that none of the files dealing with the question of ownership of resources, which were included in some of the files the government acquired — that none of those files that dealt with relationships between the colonies or their organization and their solicitor were read or copied by officials of the minister's department?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, again the question arises: if there were files of that importance and confidentiality, what were they doing with our government files? Anticipating that the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury might ask it, I asked the question today very specifically of the director of the Metis betterment branch, and was given assurances that no files such as those indicated by the hon. member were there from his point of view, from his very quick perusal, and that no copies were made of any material not deemed to be the property of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the minister in a position to confirm to the Assembly that in fact the staff paid for by the province on the settlements were clerical staff who, in almost every case, had responsibility for the filing systems?

MR. BOGLE: That's the very point I've been trying to make in this Assembly for two days, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about our offices, our staff, and our files.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister is asking why this material was misfiled. Is the minister in a position to confirm that Alberta government employees are misfiling the files?

MR. BOGLE: As I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, the offices are shared. There are officials in those offices who report to the councils of the Metis settlements. I wanted to clarify today that there not be a mixing of files. To ensure that, a filing cabinet that can be properly locked must be in each settlement office, so that government files can be kept in one place clearly separate from any other files. That instruction is going out from the director of the branch to the government employees.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of the information given today that some private property of the Metis settlements was taken to Edmonton and has been perused or reviewed in some manner, will it be the minister's intention at this point in time to review the actions of the staff of his department, relevant to The Alberta Bill of Rights, which says that:

... in Alberta there exist without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or sex ... the right of the individual to liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof, except by the due process of law ...

Will the minister be reviewing the actions of the members of his department in light of that section of The Alberta Bill of Rights?

MR. BOGLE: It is of real concern to me, Mr. Speaker, that if filing cabinets are in government offices, how can material be in those cabinets which is not the property of the government of Alberta? That's one of the concerns.

If the hon. member is asking if there will be a general review, the answer is no. Obviously I'm concerned. I've said that before. In the discussions I have with the chief deputy minister and senior officials of the department there's an ongoing review of the various procedures, as I'm sure there is in my colleagues' departments.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate that he has assured himself that there have been no illegal actions and that the Metis people, specifically the executives on the Metis settlements and their officers, have been treated fairly by the officials of the Department of Social Services and Community Health in this act of taking private property?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, if the question were one of taking something from someone else, as some hon. members have suggested or others may have surmised, that's clearly a different matter. We're dealing with government offices, government employees, and government files.

In co-operation with our legal advisers our staff was

trying very hard to carry out a policy directive I gave them several months ago to accelerate the entire process so that the litigation may proceed and we can get that behind us one way or the other and the Metis people can go about their business and we can go about ours.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Deputy Premier. At the present time my office has government files; it has a government file case; I'm paid from government funds. When will the Deputy Premier be sending somebody down to take my private files? [interjections]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Is the government considering any disciplinary action at this time with respect to the seizure of property which the minister has indicated in some cases — three or four cases from Gift Lake, but more from another settlement of files which were seized — did not belong to the government of Alberta?

MR. BOGLE: No, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated, the file cabinets were the property of the government of Alberta, and the files contained therein were our files.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister relating to the operations of the settlements which, as the minister indicated last night in subcommittee, are small, relatively informal offices and to the 98 per cent figure the minister gave us today. Is the minister giving us an assessment of the review by the director of the Metis development fund, the individual who in fact authorized the seizure? Is that the compilation the minister is giving to the House today?

MR. BOGLE: I'm advising hon. members through you, Mr. Speaker, that I have carefully reviewed this matter with the chief deputy minister of the department, and we are satisfied that the actions taken were completely legal.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister indicated a figure of 98 to 99 per cent. My question is: where did the minister get that figure? Did it come from the director of the Metis development fund, the individual who authorized the seizures in the first place?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the total number of files brought in was quite substantial. In order to try to determine just in terms of bulk what we were dealing with one of the questions I asked officials today was: if we were looking at ordinary files what would be their thickness — 2 inches, 2 feet, or what have you? I was given the understanding that the files were not substantial in number, very few. Approximately 98 to 99 per cent of all the material brought in was clearly the property of the government of Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The information the minister is giving to the House, the 98 to 99 per cent, obviously is not based on his assessment: the minister didn't review these files. Is it in fact based on the assessment of the director of the Metis development branch who, accord-

ing to the minister's statement yesterday, was the individual who authorized the seizure?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the files were perused by the director of the branch as well as two other officials from the department. The information I've provided today is based on that perusal and on a report from my chief deputy minister.

DR. BUCK: To the hon. minister, Mr. Speaker, on a point of clarification. Did the minister say he has not personally looked at the information that was gathered?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I have not examined any of the information which was obtained.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, another supplementary question. Again, it flows from the informal setting of the settlement offices. Is the minister in a position to assure the House that the information kept is clearly that of the government of Alberta, as opposed to those documents which, in my discussions with settlement councillors, are of a shade-of-gray nature? This raises the question of the process by which the government decided which documents would be kept and which would be returned, and whether or not any consideration was given to having a representative from the settlements there when the review was taking place.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first part of that question is that certainly I concur with the member. That's why the directive went out today that there should not be a mixing of any files. If we're in a situation where a filing cabinet being used by the settlement council is not adequate in terms of its size or condition, we'll certainly provide another filing cabinet for that purpose. But in all eight offices there should be separate filing cabinets which are clearly identified and used only for government papers.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, followed by a final supplementary by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I should observe in passing that in addition to the original question by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, we now have had five supplementaries by the hon. leader and 12 by other hon. members. That would appear to exceed somewhat the limits of coverage of even an important question.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister on a point of clarification. Was any request that this information would be required made by the minister to the people in the settlements, before this commando raid was carried out?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member is not entitled to inject that kind of very obvious 'insinundo' in his questions.

MR. BOGLE: Taking your comments into account, Mr. Speaker, I think we must clearly understand that if we were attempting to obtain information that might be the property of someone, other than the government, that certainly would have been the appropriate action. But surely the hon. member is not suggesting that

when the government is retrieving its own files it must first consult someone else.

MR. NOTLEY: But Bob, you've already retrieved some of theirs.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: We'll come back to this if there's time. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition wishes to ask a final supplementary, we can have it now.

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask one more supplementary question of the minister, in light of the minister's earlier comments about the files being in government cases. Having regard for the fact that all the files were taken from the Gift Lake settlement and that all the files and the filing cabinets were very carefully labelled as to which were government files and which were not, can the minister indicate to the Assembly why the Gift Lake settlement has still not received back correspondence from the Federation of Metis Settlements which relates to education projects and oil and natural gas exploration and development? Why has the government chosen to keep that information?

MR. BOGLE: It hasn't, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the files from three of the settlements which inadvertently were in our filing cases were returned yesterday afternoon. The other three sets of files and material were prepared and ready to go yesterday afternoon but were not placed on the express until this morning at 9 o'clock. But all the material — I repeat, all the material — in question has been returned.

Agricultural Chemicals — Prices

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the Department of Agriculture been monitoring the excessive increases in the prices of agricultural chemicals?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, Agriculture Canada has a committee that monitors price fluctuations in insecticides and pesticides between the United States and Canada. The province accepts and relies on those facts and figures.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I wonder if the minister could look into this and reply to the House. My concern is with the price of chemicals. On the weekend I asked about the price of one chemical to spray for wild oats, and it's approaching between \$10 and \$14 an acre. I believe there is a closed border on chemicals imported from the States, and it is my understanding that they are somewhat cheaper there. I wonder if the minister could supply the House with those details.

MR. SCHMIDT: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I believe the information is available at the present time. The border is closed to the movement of insecticides and pesticides from the United States into Canada. The pricing, of course, will vary. It is my understanding that the spread between Canadian and American prices is not that great, with the exception of some herbicides that have now had the patents taken off the basic material;

it's now being manufactured by a number of other companies. Because of the availability, of course, there has been a differential in price from the original patent owner and manufacturer to those who are now manufacturing it and have it on sale. So in some ways there is a small price war.

Human Rights

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Labour. Can he advise the Assembly what specific steps the government proposes to take or is now taking to review and evaluate the rather serious assertion in the Human Rights Commission report "that latent racism and prejudice do exist" in Alberta "and that heroic measures will be required to reduce significantly the amount of" these unfortunate beliefs in the province?

MR. YOUNG: In response to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the commission will be making a presentation to me in the near future. Especially in light of the hon. member's having raised the matter, I would expect that the commission would take that under advisement in terms of one of the inclusions it will make in its report of what it would like the government to consider.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Labour. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly when the government proposes to make the amendments to The Individual's Rights Protection Act which were promised in the 1978 Speech from the Throne as a commitment to the 1978 legislative agenda?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I think that matter may well have been responded to by the minister of the day. For my own position, I have given the commitment that I would review whatever submissions are made to me by the commission and advance whatever is requested to the caucus for governmental review. I have not made any commitment as to what government might or might not enact. I have indicated that we would always consider whatever advice the commission wishes to offer with respect to its undertaking and responsibility under the legislation.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary question. Is the minister in a position to assure the House that "The Individual's Rights Protection Act will in fact be opened up for amendment during this Legislature, as was implied last May when his predecessor indicated that the review should be done on the basis of a term of the Legislature? Will the minister assure the House that there will be an opening up of the Act sometime during this Legislature, particularly in light of the promise in the Speech from the Throne in 1978?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to reiterate for the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. It appears he didn't understand my answer to his last question.

Let me express it this way, Mr. Speaker. I have made the commitment to the commission chairman, and I will make it here, that I will consider presentations put to me on the respective issues which the commission chooses to advance once during my tenure of office, to

assure that they have received fair consideration. It is my understanding that the commission believes it has additional experience and information which it wishes to advance to me, and I would welcome that when it is received.

With regard to an earlier question of the hon. member, I would point out that in its report the commission raises a question about why it received fewer complaints of discrimination last year than in previous years.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the Minister of Labour in a position to outline to the Assembly the process of review of those recommendations made on September 2, 1976, and when the government proposes either to move on those recommendations or not, as the case may be, in view of the fact that the government has now had three years to deliberate upon those recommendations?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to go from memory on the basis of dates and a generalization as to the recommendations. Inasmuch as I've very recently had discussions and some other communications from the commission, I wouldn't wish to fall into the error of responding when I'm not certain what I'm responding to.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I'll be more specific with respect to the recommendations contained in the communication of September 2. What is the position of the government of Alberta with respect to the recommendation that protection from discrimination be expanded to include the handicapped and people over the age of 65 years?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I think I've just responded. It's my understanding that at least one and perhaps more of those matters may again be brought to my attention. It's my understanding that the commission intends to do that, as has been expressed to me, with the added experience which has run since that time. So the commission apparently is of the view that it can make a different case, from their perspective perhaps a better case, and I await their submission. I wouldn't wish to be in the position of arriving at a decision on those matters without giving the commission a fair chance to make the fullest case it cares to.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question to the hon. minister. The minister indicated a better case on behalf of the commission. Is the minister advising the House that the reasons the government did not proceed with the recommendations of September 2, 1976, particularly with respect to the handicapped and people over the age of 65, were that the case presented in this document was not sufficiently strong, and that the government wishes to wait until the commission goes at it again and makes a still stronger case to confirm what they already suggested in 1976?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, it seems the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview is deliberately trying to express for me thoughts which I'm not uttering. Let me be perfectly clear: I am saying that the commission has said to me that it feels it can make a better case. Now, that is not the same as my saying that the commission

can make a better case. I have no idea whether it can or not. If it feels it can make a better case, it ought to do so. I'm giving it that opportunity. That's why I'm not prepared to explore the situation or to make a decision now.

In fairness, there are some new commissioners, and I am new to the responsibility. The commission has stated it would like to bring some points to my attention. It should have the opportunity to do so at its determination. That's what I propose to give it.

Economic Development Staff

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic Development: Has the minister received a list of possibilities as to his deputy minister, and when will that appointment possibly take place?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, I don't expect the appointment to take place until late summer. I am not aware of the number of applications to date.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Could the Deputy Premier indicate the reason for going through a private agency rather than through the executive search division of the personnel department of government? Was there a specific reason for going that route in this application?

DR. HORNER: Mr. Speaker, the reason was to get the highest-quality person we possibly could.

MR. R. CLARK: You don't get that otherwise, eh?

Lamb Processors' Co-op

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. It's to follow up a question I asked earlier in the session. Could the minister indicate what success they've had in selling the Lambco plant at Innisfail to a private owner?

DR. BUCK: Who wants the *Titanic*?

MR. SCHMIDT: It's almost unnecessary to answer, Mr. Speaker. The Lambco plant is indeed generating a certain amount of interest. I have nothing further to report at this time.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate if the plant is operating at a profit or at a loss?

AN HON. MEMBER: Probably.

MR. SCHMIDT: Yes.

MR. MANDEVILLE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. My question is: is the plant operating at a loss at this point, or is it showing a profit in its operations?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Speaker, I don't have those figures at hand, but I'd certainly be happy to look into the matter and report.

Agricultural Chemicals — Hazards

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct

my question to the Minister of Environment. Recently the environmental protection authority in the United States banned two herbicides, 2,4,5-T and Silvex. Could the minister indicate the present use of those herbicides in Alberta and, secondly, whether we've received any complaints similar to those the EPA has received, namely stillbirths and mutations in pregnancies?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can answer this way. Under The Agricultural Chemicals Act and The Hazardous Chemicals Act, the province has a responsibility to license and control chemicals coming within the province. However, the federal government has the responsibility for licensing chemicals coming into Canada. 2,4,5-T and the other chemical the Member for Edmonton Glengarry mentioned, which has similar characteristics, are still licensed within Canada.

The province of Alberta has taken the position that as long as it's used within certain parameters, we still feel 2,4,5-T is a chemical that can be used safely. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that there still is considerable controversy in terms of research as to whether these particular chemicals in fact cause birth defects.

MR. COOK: I wonder if I might ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. What are the parameters for use in the province of Alberta?

MR. SPEAKER: Unless the minister can answer briefly, it would appear to be a question that might be suited for the Order Paper. We're getting into a considerable amount of detail, however important that detail may be.

MR. COOKSON: If I could respond this way, Mr. Speaker, we do require licensing of operators to use these particular chemicals.

Suicide Prevention

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Given that Alberta, along with B.C., has the highest suicide rate in the country, and that it is growing, can the minister inform this House whether the government is going to implement the recommendations of the Boldt report submitted a couple of years ago; and, if not, what alternatives the government has to this growing problem in the immediate future?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the approach taken to this very sensitive area is to work primarily with community-based organizations to assist them primarily in the role of prevention. I might cite as an example the many, many branches of the Canadian Mental Health Association which operate throughout the province and draw on the services of many, many volunteers. Those people know the needs in their communities. It's my understanding that they're in the process of gathering materials and information so that when an individual is seeking help, information, or advice, those sources are readily available.

On the specific question as to when and if the report done by Professor Boldt will be implemented, my predecessor dealt with some specific recommendations in that report. Some aspects are being examined more carefully today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplementary question of the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. In light of research which indicates that the majority of individuals who commit suicide have been to a medical practitioner in the two months prior to their suicide, could the minister indicate if the department plans to encourage medical practitioners to note the symptoms associated with potential suicide victims and to evolve some follow-up and referral procedure to deal with the potential problem of those individuals?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm unable to answer that question today. I'd better take it as notice and report back.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower and to the Minister of Education.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is going to have to make a choice.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, then I'll ask my first supplementary question of the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. Could the hon. minister indicate what programs are available in postsecondary institutions with respect to informing guidance counsellors, and other individuals associated with students, of the symptoms associated with suicide, and what referral process is there to deal with those potential problems?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I really believe that the concerns expressed by the hon. member are best referred to the administrations at the various institutions such as the universities and colleges.

I do know a fairly extensive system of counselling is available. In addition, I know that many institutions have chaplains available to them. I think one member now in the Assembly has served in that capacity. I would like to have the opportunity of discussing that with the hon. Member for Calgary Millican to acquaint myself better with the type of counselling services available through chaplaincy and with other services available at higher institutions in this province.

I thank the hon. member for raising this matter of concern today.

MR. D. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question along the same lines to the Minister of Education. Given that a growing number of suicides are taking place among younger and younger individuals in our society, could the minister indicate what program there is to teach the counsellors in our educational institutions the symptoms of suicide and how to deal with them?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that there is any direction from the Department of Education to teachers respecting the need to attach significance to symptoms of suicidal intention. I would be sceptical that such a statement from the department would be helpful in the situation. It seems to me that it would be better dealt with through the professional council of the Alberta Teachers' Association and through course development in the ed. psychology departments of the faculties of education at the various universities.

If I am incorrect about direction from the department, I will bring word of that to the Assembly and will discuss with my colleague the work of the interdepartmental committee that lends assistance to structuring courses at the university.

Power Grid Proposal

DR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Utilities and Telephones. In addition to the very positive ministerial statement he made today regarding Sheerness generators, which I'm sure will be a positive contribution for all Albertans, I wonder if the minister would advise the House whether he or his department has had an opportunity to review the joint western provincial grid system study?

MR. SHABEN: As hon. members are aware, Mr. Speaker, the four western premiers met in Prince George in the latter part of March and issued a communique that each of their respective provinces would examine the implications of a western electric grid to the individual provinces.

We are in the process of closely examining the study prepared jointly by the four provinces and the implications to the citizens of Alberta of a western interconnection of the four provinces.

DR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would indicate whether there's any reference in that study to the benefits that may accrue to Edmonton utilities specifically?

MR. SPEAKER: This study is generally available. It shouldn't really be analysed in the question period.

Vietnamese Refugees

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, who's responsible for immigration. My question relates to the problem with the boat people in Vietnam.

I wonder what discussions have been held with the Minister of Employment and Immigration, his counterpart in Ottawa: secondly, what quotas have been established by the province of Alberta for receipt of those immigrants: thirdly, how did the province arrive at those quotas: and finally, are we considering...

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly the hon. member could just ask a main question and avoid a shrapnel approach.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to advise members of the Assembly that I was in telephone conversation this morning with the Hon. Ron Atkey, the Minister of Employment and Immigration for the federal government, with respect to recent discussions he has initiated with the provinces in regard to the balance remaining on what has been established by Canada as its immigration level for refugees this year. I expect that in the very immediate future further announcements will be made, and I have assured the hon. minister that Alberta will continue its high level of co-operation in that program.

I want to point out that I do not believe it appropriate, nor has it been the policy of the government in the past, to establish a quota system, as a fixed percentage, of the number of refugees admitted to this province.

Indeed the figure, as I indicated the other day, has fluctuated from year to year, and with different groups of refugees who have been admitted to Canada. A number of factors have been taken into consideration, and I believe the appropriate policy is to be flexible and co-operative in dealing with this very difficult problem. I assure members of this Assembly, as I assured the minister in Ottawa today, that Alberta will co-operate fully with the federal government and the other provinces.

MR. SPEAKER: We've run out of time for the question period. If the Assembly agrees, perhaps a brief supplementary, and I've already recognized the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, as a final supplementary, I wonder if the province of Alberta has made any representations to the government of Canada to increase the number of refugees, given not manpower requirements for the province or the country but rather the very serious plight of those refugees. Many people think it's a situation similar to the holocaust in the 1930s. Has there been any representation by the province of Alberta to increase that 2,000-person quota that has been supplemented?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member might well reserve his questions until tomorrow.

Metis Settlements — Documents

(continued)

MR. R. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, having regard for the fact that it needs to be very short. Can the minister assure the Assembly that representatives of the Metis settlements will be able to come to the Metis betterment branch and view documents which the government has chosen to keep or feels are the government's documents, so the Metis can ascertain that in fact all their documents have been returned to them?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday a member of the media asked if I would give consideration to having someone from the various Metis settlements come in and supervise, if you like, the separating of any files that might be necessary. I said I would consider that. The unfortunate part was that the process was almost completed by the time I checked with the chief deputy minister of the department.

The question which the hon. member is asking now is one I'll take as notice and give some consideration to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might ask the House for unanimous leave in respect to reverting to Notices of Motions, and give notice of a procedural motion I'd like to make tomorrow.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, estimates subcommittees A and B have progressed at different rate. Since the original motion, being Government Motion No. 9, allotted certain estimates to those subcommittees, perhaps it would be useful for the progress of business in those subcommittees if the Culture estimate, previously ascribed to Subcommittee B, could be assigned to Subcommittee A. It would be my intention tomorrow to move that Government Motion No. 9 be amended to transfer responsibility for consideration of the Culture estimates to Subcommittee A, and I propose to make that motion tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: On business of the House, could I also suggest to hon. members that if they would again leave out their copies of *Standing Orders* sometime this afternoon, tomorrow morning the staff of the Clerk's office will insert the latest and, I guess, permanent version of Standing Order No. 7.

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

head: (Committee of Supply)

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

First, the chairman of Subcommittee A will report on the estimates.

Department of Utilities and Telephones

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, Subcommittee A of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, for the Department of Utilities and Telephones. The subcommittee recommends to the Committee of Supply the estimates of expenditure of \$172,087,272.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Having heard the report of the subcommittee on Utilities and Telephones, are you all agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: I'd like to ask the hon. minister one question. In light of the fact that we still have in place the 34-mile radius for flat-rate dialing, can the minister indicate to the committee when that program will be extended? At the same time, will he look at some of the inconsistencies now in the program, where people within that radius do not have flat-rate dialing?

I know the mechanisms that were in place when the old franchise was taken over by AGT and the same area had to be served. But, Mr. Chairman, in many areas we have people farther out than some other people, and they're getting flat-rate dialing. Can the minister indicate very briefly if he's able to resolve that problem, and when we're going to the 40-mile radius?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Chairman, the Associate Minister of Telephones will respond to the question.

DR. WEBBER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member raises a question involved in extended flat-rate calling. As he knows, this program began, I believe, in 1973. Since that time, a number of exchanges throughout Alberta have been hooked to other exchanges at a flat rate instead of being charged the long-distance toll. Routes are planned for late 1980 and early 1981. I believe 22 exchanges will get extended flat-rate calling.

I believe the question of possibly extending the 34-mile limit to 40 miles, or whatever, is on the Order Paper, in a motion by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, which hopefully will be debated this session. But as an ongoing process this is being reviewed.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to the associate minister. Can the minister look at the areas where we have inconsistencies? I'll give an example, which he can look up in his fine, colored charts: The minister is mouthing Bruderheim. Also in the south Cooking Lake area there are exchanges, some of the old franchise areas that are farther out than, say, Cooking Lake. Sometimes there's a 10-mile difference. The people 10 miles closer to Edmonton or Sherwood Park have to go long distance east and then back. That is a great inconsistency, to say the least. I know the reason for it and I know the problem. I just want to know from the minister what the solution will be.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Chairman, I'd be most happy to look into the problem for the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll go through the estimates for the department by vote, not item by item.

Agreed to:

Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$862,458
Vote 2 — Utilities Development	\$31,143,286
Vote 3 — Natural Gas Price Protection: for Albertians	\$140,081,528
Department Total	\$172,087,272

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, would you like to move that the vote be reported?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of Transportation

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next report from the chairman of Subcommittee A, Transportation.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, Subcommittee A of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, for the Department of Transportation. The subcommittee recommends to the Committee of Supply the estimates of expenditure for the Department of Transportation of \$441,625,933.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Having heard the report by the chairman of Subcommittee A, are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions or comments? Very well, we'll proceed by vote.

Agreed to:

Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$5,034,277
Vote 2 — Construction and Maintenance of Highways	\$306,438,320
Vote 3 — Construction and Maintenance of Airport Facilities	\$8,995,017
Vote 4 — Transportation Planning Services	\$7,779,067
Vote 5 — Urban Transportation Financial Assistance	\$106,753,320
Vote 6 — Surveys and Property Acquisition	\$6,625,932
Department Total	\$441,625,933

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of Environment

MR. CHAIRMAN: The third report from the chairman of Subcommittee A, Environment.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Chairman, Subcommittee A of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, for the Department of Environment. The subcommittee recommends to the Committee of Supply the estimates of expenditure for the Department of Environment of \$90,213,831.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Having heard the report by the chairman of Subcommittee A, are you agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments? If not, we'll proceed to consider the various votes.

Agreed to:

Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$3,006,612
Vote 2 — Pollution Prevention and Control	\$28,312,703
Vote 3 — Land Conservation	\$16,485,677
Vote 4 — Water Resources Management	\$31,376,782
Vote 5 — Environmental Research	\$4,038,854
Vote 6 — Overview and Co-ordination of Environment Conservation	\$1,024,000
Vote 7 — Interdisciplinary Environmental Research and Services	\$5,969,203

Department Total

MR. KNAAK: Mr. Chairman, would it be in order to make a small comment at this point, before voting on the total?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. KNAAK: It arises from the subcommittee last night. I just wanted to say that the budget increase is fairly significant. I understand, Mr. Minister and Mr. Chairman, that the budget process has gone on before you assumed responsibility and that the caucus that approved the budget in principle was slightly different from what it is today.

I also understand that with the kind of revenue situation this government has at this time, there's great pressure to increase programs and, on the other side, there is pressure to have greater spending restraint. I think I've expressed it before, but my view is: given that sometime in the future the very high degree of royalty revenues will decline, our reliance will be on the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. I certainly support the Heritage Savings Trust Fund fully and see the need for it in the future. If my calculations are correct, of the 60 per cent increase approximately 22 per cent is in the operating budget and the rest is in the capital budget. Nevertheless it's a trend which would have serious implications for the necessity to tax to support this kind of increase, if it continues in the future.

Mr. Minister, I hope my concerns will be taken note of, primarily with respect to the increase in the operating budget, and that next year when the budget comes down a smaller increase in the operating budget, or perhaps a holding of the line, can come forward.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you wish to comment?

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much the concerns and comments the Member for Edmonton Whitemud has made with regard to this problem of escalating budgets. I will certainly take note of the comments he has made in terms of future budgets and pass those on to my staff.

As hon. members know, one of the problems we will have is certain commitments we have made. One is the environmental research centre at Vegreville, which is in the process of completion. We will be tied to major operational costs there. Hopefully our capital costs will level off in that area, because I think Public Works is doing most of the construction. We will complete several other ongoing commitments this year, so hopefully I can convince my colleagues to review the escalating costs.

Agreed to:

Department Total \$90,213,831

MR. COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote for Environment be reported,

[Motion carried]

Department of Agriculture

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

MR. SCHMIDT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make just a few brief opening remarks before we go into the estimates for the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Chairman and members of this Assembly, I am indeed privileged to accept responsibility for management of the programs designed to develop all

phases of agricultural activity within this province and to promote our best resources toward those in the agricultural industry in this province, who produce over 20 per cent of the total production in Canada and represent but 8 per cent of the total population.

Mr. Chairman, in the five votes that make up the estimates for the Department of Agriculture, I'd like to point out just a few areas of increased funding and the direction for that increase and two areas where there have been reasonable reductions in the basic funding.

In Vote 1 there's a reasonable increase of \$308,000, which is increased funding to agricultural societies. The agricultural societies of course are scattered throughout the province, and the people who make up societies within various communities make up a very large portion and accept the responsibilities of communities in their area. The \$308,000 is toward the maintenance of ag. societies and should be well received.

In Vote 2 we've expanded to \$340,000 for farm irrigation management. That deals directly with soil classifications and ground water monitoring in the areas of the irrigation districts in the southern part of the province; indeed a needed and timely program. Also in Vote 2 we have an increase of not quite \$.5 million in grant funding to the Research Council of Alberta for analysis of the weather modification program, which is in its last year.

There's \$.25 million increased funding to food processors within the province. Indeed that is one of the areas of responsibility and, with increased funding, hopefully there can be some renewed effort and interest in food processing for this province. Indeed, one of the directions government would like to go is the processing of our agricultural products within our own province.

The largest sum in the estimates, Mr. Chairman, is the change in funding of the Agricultural Development Corporation, making it a priority for the department to fund not only its operation but also the operational losses, because of the change in the funding aspect now being part and parcel of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

A \$140,000 increase for the distribution of our basic commodity farm account books, for availability to producers throughout the province. A program which indeed is being met with complete support throughout not only rural but urban Alberta is the school nutrition program, and there is an increase of \$160,000 to continue and advance that program.

Mr. Chairman, there is an increase of slightly over \$.25 million to help fund soil conservation area programs to agricultural service boards representative of all municipalities throughout the province. That extra funding at this time should be well met by all municipalities.

Two areas of major reduction that will show up in the estimates, Mr. Chairman, are the \$1 million reduction in the cow-calf producer payments, and the \$1 million decrease from the previous estimates in regard to DREE funding and the DREE nutritive processing agreements.

Mr. Chairman, those are the highlights of areas of increase and the two major areas of decrease within the estimates of the Department of Agriculture. I look forward to the questions and the dialogue as we go through them vote by vote.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any questions or comments to the minister?

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two questions for the minister. Under Vote 1.2.2, Ag. Societies and Research, I see a decrease of \$700,000 or \$800,000. I'd like the assurance of the minister that this doesn't mean a decrease in grants to the ag. societies of Alberta. I really don't care about Calgary and Edmonton, as long as Lethbridge is not decreased. They're very important ... [interjections] Well they're getting their stadium domed, and I think that's probably enough. [interjections]

SOME HON. MEMBERS: When, how, where?

MR. GOGO: In Vegreville.

Mr. Chairman, the matter that concerns me perhaps the most is that in '75 we campaigned on many issues, one of them being the expenditure of about \$200 million on irrigation in southern Alberta. Obviously this is now awaiting the conclusion of the public hearings that have been held. But assuming that that decision for off-stream storage and the upgrading of irrigation districts goes through, Mr. Minister, I'm a little concerned when I look at Vote 1.2.1 and really don't see much increase. I'm concerned that perhaps Agriculture will not have the financial ability to do any meaningful research into marketing agricultural products, as a result of the tremendous increase in production. That concerns me very much, Mr. Chairman, and I'd like the minister to respond to that, if he would, either now or at the end of the vote.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, I recognize the concerns of the hon. member in regard to any indication that there would be a cutback in support to communities through agricultural societies. That is not the case. The reduction in that vote takes into consideration part of a special warrant that provided some pari-mutuel funding to the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. Part of the original vote is no longer a part of the budget. It may appear as a reduction, but there is actually an increase in funding to ag. committees, from an operating point of view. The member can rest assured that we in Agriculture recognize the basic responsibilities of those organizations that make up communities and the ag. societies' pulse on each community, and we will continue to see that funding goes in that direction.

In regard to the \$200 million announced in 1975, the hon. member should not confuse the basic budget of Agriculture with those of special projects under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, of which irrigation is over and above what is shown in the basic estimates here. There is substantial funding, and Agriculture's share of that \$200 million was some \$90 million for upgrading the existing facilities and working with the irrigation districts in that upgrading.

The funding that appears in the estimates is over and above the moneys expended under the \$90 million allocated to Agriculture. The expenditure in irrigation this year under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund is quite substantial and will be brought forward at a later date. We have been and will continue to upgrade with the funding available, and we feel quite secure in reaching the objective announced in 1975 in regard to

role of the Department of Agriculture in upgrading the existing channels.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I have no concerns or illusions about the intent of spending the money in either water supply or upgrading irrigation systems. As Alberta Agriculture is the means by which all marketing of agricultural products is done, Mr. Minister, my concern is that a special research effort be made by the department in view of the increased production from specialized crops as a result of increased irrigation ability and their export perhaps to Pacific Rim countries. My concern is that unless someone else is doing it, Alberta Agriculture would appear to me to have the responsibility for researching marketing opportunities for that increased production. Really that was my question.

MR. SCHMIDT: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I didn't turn the page; I had made a note about research. Agriculture does assume its basic role in research and recognizes its responsibilities. The research program for the Department of Agriculture is some \$10 million under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, farming for the future, on which we expended in the area of \$2 million last year. Research is ongoing and covers those basic areas which the hon. member mentioned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any more questions or comments? If not, we'll proceed to Vote 1.

Agreed to	
1.1.1 — Minister's Office	\$146,013
1.1.2 — Deputy Minister	\$99,787
1.1.3 — Financial Services	\$774,460
1.1.4 — Personnel	\$365,306
1.1.5 — Communications	\$2,177,722
1.1.6 — Systems and Design	\$1,167,699
1.1.7 — Agriculture Library	\$171,317
1.1.8 — Director of Administration	\$124,624
Total Vote 1.1 — Departmental Services	\$5,026,928
1.2.1 — Planning and Research Secretariat	\$448,785
1.2.2 — Agricultural Societies and Research	\$3,102,800
1.2.3 — Farmers' Advocate	\$139,983
1.2.4 — Surface Rights	\$700,247
Total Vote 1.2 — Agricultural Assistance	\$4,391,815
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$9,418,743
Vote 2 — Production Assistance	
2.1 — Program Support	\$763,428

22 — Irrigation

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question on this vote, in regard to the formula. I realize that's under the heritage trust fund, where the province pays 86 per cent and the irrigation districts pay 14 per cent. I think the past Minister of Agriculture in several meetings with the Irrigation Projects Association and in some comments he's made in the House [said] there was a possibility they were going to change this formula to 75:25. Do they anticipate changing the formula for the coming season, or do they anticipate changing the formula? The reason I

bring this up, Mr. Chairman, is that some of our irrigation districts have the financing and are able to take advantage of the monies as long as they put up 14 per cent. But if some of our smaller districts had to put up 25 per cent, in the financial situation they're in ... I'm sure districts that are better off financially would be able to take more advantage of the matched grant, the 86 and 14 per cent, if it's left as is than if it were 75 by the province and 25 by the irrigation districts.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, the subject of percentage sharing in financial support to irrigation districts was considered. In light of the consideration in discussions we had with various irrigation districts prior to the opening of the Legislature, it was felt that we would leave the 86:14 for the remainder of this year. It's something that should be considered for the future.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further comments?

Agreed to:

2.2 — Irrigation \$5,339,811

2.3 — Animal Products

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, on this vote. I've had representation from some of our dairy farmers, the cream producers. I'm sure the minister has had some input from the cream producers. Their concern is that with government regulations and inspectors they are going to find it difficult to operate. Could the minister indicate if there are any problems as far as continuing with our cream producers and not going to all fluid milk production?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, the problem the hon. member brings up is really tied in with the basic regulations: how any changes in the regulations as they stand now affect individual cream shippers who, by choice, would change from cream shipping to fluid milk; how the regulations affect each and every one. I've had the opportunity to discuss some problems with some of the cream shippers and to review the regulations to some degree. At present we are doing a review of regulations to see whether those regulations or any changes that could be made would provide that flexibility and relieve some of the financial burden, if it exists, between that change from a cream shipper to a fluid milk shipper. They are under review.

Agreed to:

2.3 — Animal Products \$6,674,236
2.4 — Animal Health \$4,164,569
2.5 — Plant Products \$14,043,773

Total Vote 2 — Production Assistance

MR. COOK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the minister about the horticulture research branch. It's 2.5.5. As a rookie urban MLA, I would just like to know what the department is doing. I'm particularly interested in the department's research program in development of fruit and other specialty crops that might be available in some parts of Alberta.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, the Department of Agriculture is responsible for two areas in regard to horticulture: the station at Brooks, being tied with fruit trees and, of course, shrubbery, and the station at Oliver, being tied with the production of trees involved in shelter belts, farmstead beautification, and this type of direction. Of course the Department of Agriculture works closely with municipalities in the provision of free trees to service boards that, through their farming representatives, are willing to set up a shelter-belt program; provide the trees and plant them free of charge in many cases. The horticultural aspect, as far as our budget is concerned, is with the operation and the planting and rearing of available seedlings.

MR. COOK: Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask specifically about the station at Brooks and research into production of fruit. Could the minister indicate what kinds of activities that research station is doing? There isn't much budget increase. In fact it doesn't even look like it would keep up with inflation.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, I shan't comment on the dollar assessment. Brooks has always been noted, of course, for the rearing of fruit trees that have been grown and tend to fit in well with our climatic conditions, those fruit trees that can be grown in this province. As to the degree of change in varieties that is ongoing at the present time, I don't have that particular answer. But they were basically dealing with apple, plum, crabapple, and smaller fruit varieties that fit in well with the temperature conditions in this province.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Now that my colleague has brought up the question of the substation at Brooks, I have to pursue the matter. For a number of years the substation has had test plots at Bow Island. At one time there was — I hate to use the term for fear I get called out of order — a rumor that there may be another substation opening at Bow Island, being a little more than just the test plots. In view of the fact that for a number of years reports have shown a considerable increase in the amount of heat units between Bow Island and Brooks, and that the Bow Island Chamber of Commerce made a presentation a number of years ago to a cabinet tour for a substation at Bow Island, as we think that maybe the Member for Bow Valley would gladly give us some of the excessive facilities he has at Brooks, I wonder if the minister could comment on any chance of a substation in the Bow Island area, more than just the test plots they have now?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, in light of the budget figures, I would have to say that for this year it's still a rumor. Perhaps I could take the comments of the hon. member and consider its future. But for this year it would appear it's still in the rumor stage.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, a supplementary. In view of the reports to the priorities committee, would the minister recommend that it would be a good idea to build an additional substation in an area of the province with the highest heat units and availability of water?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sure the minister would have to give that consideration. I believe it's rather hypothetical.

MR. COOK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might direct a further question to the Minister of Agriculture. I'm referring to Vote 2.5.7, Soils. A little while ago the Dean of Agriculture at Guelph noted in a speech out here that the humus level in prairie soils is dropping dramatically. He believes that research and techniques have to be developed to encourage farmers in the west, Alberta included, to develop programs to improve the humus level in prairie soils.

In light of that, it's interesting to note that the budget for soils research or development is dropping in this estimate. Could the minister explain that? Does he share the concern of the Dean of Agriculture at Guelph? I think that's also been expressed by the Dean of Agriculture at Saskatoon.

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, the amount of research going on, not only by the Department of Agriculture but by other areas — indeed both Agriculture Canada and the research that's ongoing with areas at the present time, also with the irrigation districts . . . Part of the funding has now been split from the agricultural point of view, and ongoing research will show up under the irrigation part of the budget. I read the comments the hon. member mentioned. Of course it is indeed a concern. Also, research is being transferred, is being carried out by other areas jointly with the Department of Agriculture. Some of the soil research will show up under farming for the future, which is under the \$10 million allocation, a separate area of research set aside for Agriculture.

MR. COOK: Just one quick supplementary. Is that farming for the future estimate in a program you could identify, Mr. Minister?

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, that estimate is not within Vote 2. It's not part of the estimates. It's a separate Heritage Savings Trust Fund amount, amounting to \$10 million, of which we expended approximately \$2 million in the last year.

Agreed to:

3.1 — Program Support	\$629,306]
3.2 — Marketing Services	\$5,081,220
3.3 — Economic Services	\$1,472,803
3.4 — International Marketing	\$1,179,811
Total Vote 3 — Marketing Assistance	\$8,363,140

4.1 — Program Support	\$1,869,253
4.2 — Family Farm Services	\$13,181,887
4.3 — Advisory Services	\$5,112,174
4.4 — Community Services	\$6,436,043
Total Vote 4 — Rural Development Assistance	\$26,599,357

Total Vote 5 — International Development Assistance —

Department Total \$75,367,057

MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Chairman, I move the votes be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of the Attorney General

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

MR. CRAWFORD: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any general comments or questions by hon. members?

Agreed to:

1.0.1 — Minister's Office	\$137,130
1.0.2 — Deputy Minister's Office	\$176,350
1.0.3 — Information Centre	\$651,160
1.0.4 — Planning, Research, and Development	\$696,320
1.0.5 — Administrative Services	\$217,860
1.0.6 — Personnel	\$592,720
1.0.7 — Finance	\$2,858,310
1.0.8 — Materials and Facilities	\$1,680,750
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$7,010,600

2.1 — Court Support Services	\$2,251,350
2.2 — Court Operations	\$18,025,250
Total Vote 2 — Court Services	\$20,276,300

Total Vote 3 — Legal Services \$9,434,940

Vote 4 — Support for Legal Aid

DR. BUCK: Is the minister in a position to indicate, when a person receives assistance through legal aid to defend himself and then it goes to appeal — as far as I could understand from information given to me, it's quite difficult to get legal aid funding for appeals. Is that so, Mr. Minister, or was I misinformed? Can the minister indicate the mechanism?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not entirely familiar with the current policy in regard to civil matters where legal aid is granted. That practice was considerably extended recently.

In criminal practice, I suppose there is a judgment or opinion to be expressed as to whether it's difficult. It is certainly true that numbers of appeals are handled by way of legal aid, and assessment is made of the eligibility of the person. Appeals are frequently conducted through legal aid.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 4 — Support for Legal Aid	\$4,518,000
5.1 — Public Trustee	\$2,349,310
5.2 — Central Registry	\$1,447,310
5.3 — Land Titles	\$4,982,140
5.4 — Land Compensation	\$221,760
Total Vote 5 — Protection and Administration of Property Rights	\$9,000,520

Vote 6 — Fatality Inquiries

DR. BUCK: Just one short question to the hon. minister. If he doesn't have the information, he can get it

back to me, if he wishes to or if he can.

This is to do with a sudden death where the report is written up by the examining officer, in this case an RCMP officer. As far as I can ascertain, the accident report is confidential in that the parents of the minor cannot have that information until there's some litigation and it can be subpoenaed and used as evidence in court. Is this so, Mr. Minister? As the Attorney General and as a practising lawyer, is that information confidential so it cannot be used to prejudice the case, or should that information be available to the parents of the deceased youngster in this case?

MR. CRAWFORD: I think the hon. member is asking about a police report that is required to be prepared because of certain provisions of the highways legislation. It used to be called the vehicles and highway traffic Act. There may or may not be proceedings; usually there would be. In the case of a guilty plea no evidence is provided in the court. Therefore the interested parties — whether their interest is a legal interest is what we're discussing — the parents in the example the hon. member used, might never get the information that might otherwise have come from the police investigation.

I might say that recently I had occasion to look into that because of an inquiry that came to my office. I referred the inquirer to his solicitor in order to get a further opinion, and didn't purport to advise him directly on whether or not under those circumstances he was entitled to the information under the wording of the section. I would be glad to refer the hon. member to the same sections of the Act that I referred this inquirer to. Then I think it would be apparent that clearly there are some circumstances under which the information can be given, but that it need not be volunteered by the police. I think it might also make a difference if the deceased or injured child was a minor.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, just so the minister and I are on the same wave length, I can give the instance. I'm not sure if this young person was a minor or not. It was a fatality: a single person in a single car, and the person was killed. The investigating officer took all the information, measurements, et cetera. I don't know if he draws a conclusion or not; I presume he does. But I want to know if that information on the RCMP report is available to the parents of the deceased child or driver of the car.

MR. CRAWFORD: To the best of my ability to answer, in those circumstance it would not. I'd be pleased to look further into the example provided by the hon. member and give a further opinion.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, may I address a question to the minister on this same subject of The Fatality Inquiries Act and the secrecy that goes with documents pursuant to that Act. Almost every document under that Act is marked "Confidential", so the information cannot be given to relatives, parents, or anybody else concerned with the death.

Since this Act was originally brought out because of the Kirby inquiry into the old Coroners Act and, having worked under both Acts; it appears to me that there are now fewer public inquiries than there used to be inquests, it would appear that the administration of this Act has in fact negated the idea behind the Kirby

commission's complaints and recommendations. In actual fact, less information is now available to relatives or the general public about sudden deaths in this province than there used to be under the old Coroners Act.

I notice that one of the objectives of the Act is to initiate uniform public inquiry selection procedures. The procedure almost seems to be to hold no public inquiries, and the information is all in confidential documents and therefore not available.

I'd like the minister to make some comments either now or later, after he's gone into the subject.

MR. CRAWFORD: I could make a brief comment on that now, Mr. Chairman. I'm most interested in the hon. member's point and would like the opportunity of sharing in any assessment of the way The Fatality Inquiries Act has operated and caused things to happen since it was passed and brought into effect. It was intended, of course, to make extensive changes in the system, only one of which is the aspect of public information and public inquiry. A major objective is to try to assure the most uniform basis possible for the timely gathering of facts by qualified people. I think that is a proper objective that perhaps is being better fulfilled. In fact I'm satisfied that it is being better fulfilled than in previous years. So in that sense, there would be no criticism of what's being done.

However I haven't compared the number of inquiries done by judges, in the case of The Fatality Inquiries Act, with what the coroners did before. The hon. member has offered the information that they are fewer. I'd be interested in assessing the reasons for that and whether or not, after careful consideration, it really has had the effect the hon. member believes it has. In saying that, I recognize that the hon. member is something of an expert on the subject.

DR. REID: A supplementary. The problem seems to be that with the old Act you could discuss the documents with the involved people. Now the documents are marked "Confidential", and you cannot discuss them with the relative or anybody else. Unless there is an official inquiry, the detailed information is not available.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 6 — Fatality Inquiries

\$1,511,990

Vote 7 — Crimes Compensation

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, to the Attorney General. When we look at the amount in the vote, \$600,000, compared to legal aid with \$4.5 million, I think there's a false impression that the offender is rewarded in greater ways than the victim of the crime. I ask the Attorney General if he would assure the House that the Crimes Compensation Board is really an independent board that reviews innocent victims who have suffered as a result of a criminal activity the principle being: it is an independent board.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, there's no question of the independence. I assure the hon. member that that is the case. It is an independent board. But I think the point the hon. member may be addressing is whatever limitations there may be under The Criminal Injuries

Compensation Act as to amounts that can be awarded, and a number of other limitations I have discussed with the chairman. For example, although at the present time the Act provides that compensation may result where physical injury occurs as the result of a crime, I believe one point made was that there is no ability to pay in respect to property damage, and that there is no ability to pay in the sense of the Good Samaritan type of person where no crime is committed. These were the sorts of things he said he would like to discuss further with the government, with a view to maybe expanding the policy a little.

I don't know what my own attitude would be about changing the guidelines under the legislation. But I assured the chairman when I met with him that we would certainly have the further discussion he asked for, and consider the proposals he has made in respect to possible changes. If that were done, it would probably give the board a little more scope to make awards.

As to what has happened so far, if the amount paid by way of compensation does not appear large, I think that could probably be explained by a careful review of the board proceedings. Up to whatever limits are established, I think they do feel the awards they are making are pretty carefully calculated to be appropriate in each case.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a small representation to the minister so he can make a representation to the Solicitor General. This is a unique situation; I think it could possibly apply to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West. This deals in the area of crimes compensation as it applies to property.

In Fort Saskatchewan we have a unique problem: every time we have a bust-out, either a car gets stolen — in one instance there was \$10,000 property damage. Part of it was covered by insurance, but part of it was just the donation of a private citizen to the benefit of the people of Alberta through the criminal action of an escapee.

So I'd like to say to the minister: could he consult with his colleague the Solicitor General and see if there could be some coverage in these communities that are unique because they have institutions in their borders?

MR. CRAWFORD: I'll respond if I might, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the hon. member for his representation. Certainly I'll be pleased to discuss it with my colleague.

But without any real feel yet for whether the Act should be amended to include property damage, if that were done it seems to me it would cover the situation. So it may be my jurisdiction as well as that of my colleague the Solicitor General.

Agreed to	
Total Vote 7 — Crimes Compensation	\$620,480
Total Vote 8 — Public Utilities Regulation	\$1,721,820
Department Total	\$54,094,950

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

**Department of Consumer
and Corporate Affairs**

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

MR. KOZIAK: Very briefly, Mr. Chairman. In looking at the estimates of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, hon. members will see some changes in manpower. We can deal with those as we move through the votes, if hon. members so desire. But I do wish to bring to the attention of hon. members the reduction of the man-year authorization in the rent decontrol board from 59 to 21 for the fiscal year, and indicate that there are some increases in positions with respect to the Securities Commission and the companies branch, and that some expenditure of funds is needed in the areas of data processing and filing systems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Any general comments?

Agreed to	
1.01 — Minister's Office	\$119,345
1.02 — Deputy Minister's Office	\$107,331
1.03 — Finance	\$105,877
1.04 — Personnel	\$115,332
1.05 — Planning and Analysis	\$83,575
1.06 — Resource Centre	\$92,423
1.07 — Administration	\$199,076
1.08 — Systems Management	\$347,504
1.09 — Records Management	\$238,933
Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services	\$1,409,396
Total Vote 2 — Consumer Relations and Education	\$2,849,093
3.1 — Regulation of Co-operatives	\$338,785
3.2 — Regulation of Insurance and Real Estate Industries	\$907,022
3.3 — Regulation of Automobile Insurance Premium	\$66,773
3.4 — Business Incorporation and Registration	\$1,681,275
3.5 — Registration and Regulation of Trust Companies	\$70,600
3.6 — Regulation of Credit Unions	\$490,149
Total Vote 3 — Business Registration and Regulation	\$3,554,604

Vote 4 — Regulation of Securities Markets

MR. MANDEVILLE: Mr. Chairman, could I ask the minister a short question on this? The Securities Act was introduced at the session last fall and held over. Is the minister going to reintroduce it? Has he had any representation from the brokerage industry as a result of The Securities Act?

MR. KOZIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Securities Act introduced by my predecessor last fall was of course permitted to die on the Order Paper. The purpose of the introduction at that time was to bring

forward legislation which could be discussed and considered by all concerned in the area of security regulation and registration.

The industry, to my mind, has not raised concerns directly with me at this particular point, but I believe they have corresponded directly with the chairman of the Securities Commission, raising points relative to that legislation presently under review. I expect that as I have the opportunity to delve further into this section, I will be able to study the recommendations and suggestions that are received both with respect to The Securities Act introduced last fall and The Commodity Futures Act that I introduced this spring, the idea being that the principles and procedures contained are similar in many cases and that one would follow the other.

I would see us moving with reintroduction of The Securities Act. I don't think it'll be this fall, but probably next year, and the same with The Commodity Futures Act.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the minister if the amount it costs the government to conduct investigations, security analysis, and looking at security dealers is raised in whole by licence fees and so on, or do the general revenues of the province subsidize that?

MR. KOZIAK: That's an interesting question, Mr. Chairman. There is really no relation between the fees received by virtue of the work of the department and the expenditures, whether it be in this particular vote or in others. The fees are of course collected by the Provincial Treasurer, not by the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I know that in many cases the fees far exceed the expenditures. I couldn't specifically indicate that in Vote 4 the funds received by the Provincial Treasurer as a result of filing and other fees charged by the Securities Commission in fact cover, exceed, or are short of the total expenditures of that commission. However, if the hon. member wishes me to pursue this privately and report to him, I would be prepared to do so.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 4 — Regulation of Securities Markets	\$1,418,890
Total Vote 5 — Rent Decontrol Administration	\$551,844
Department Total	\$9,783,827

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Chairman, I move the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of Economic Development

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

DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, very briefly to outline again, the new Department of Economic Development considers itself a co-ordinating and catalyzing department under six major branches.

The transportation services branch is a transfer from Alberta Transportation. The senior officers of that particular section have been transferred to Economic De-

velopment and will be dealing primarily in the freight rate question, the additional work that has to be done relative to grain transportation, and the interest Alberta might have and has had in port developments, on the west coast particularly, but in other ports as well. The strategic planning services branch will co-ordinate economic activity and will I hope be helpful to a variety of departments. The northern development branch, as hon. members are aware, will in due course be under the chairmanship of the Member for Grande Prairie and work closely with our department to try to achieve our objectives relative to northern development.

The business development branch and the industry development services branch are transfers from the old department of Business Development and Tourism, and will of course be concerned in a major way regarding major projects going on in Alberta. The trade development branch will be the direct responsibility of my colleague the Minister of State for Economic Development — International Trade. We would hope to put emphasis on the things we've already done in the past seven and one-half years and to re-emphasize our push in this direction.

Mr. Chairman, I just might say in conclusion that I would hope the evaluation of what happens in Alberta in the economic sense is done in a credible way. It hasn't happened in the past and hasn't happened in this House. Particularly the analysis of the economic activity in the province by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview is just not credible. When you start to do percentage analysis of the gross domestic product — obviously, as we all know the price for energy escalated very rapidly, so the percentages of gross domestic product are really not very effective in giving a picture of what's happening in this province. Indeed it should be done on sector growth itself, as compared to taking a percentage of gross provincial product.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I might just point out that fully half of the moneys required in my department are to pay the interest and the loss, if you like, on the Alberta Resources Railway. I'm afraid we don't have much choice in that, the reason being the decline in tonnage on the railroad relative to the difficulties the metallurgical coal people have had. We're hopeful of course that we can expand traffic on that section of the railroad. My objective four years ago was to try to get into position where we were paying the interest. We haven't achieved that objective, but we're still working at it.

Agreed to:

11 — Program Support	\$1,169,781
12 — Planning and Services	\$3,224,032
13 — Development and Trade	\$5,020,888
Total Vote 1 — Economic Development and International Trade	\$9,414,701

Total Vote 2 — Resources Railway Management	\$10,300,000
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Department Total	\$19,714,701
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DR. HORNER: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

Department of Education

AN HON. MEMBER: Short speech, King.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, the . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That's really good.

AN HON. MEMBER: Agreed.

MR. KING: I move that the vote be reported.
[laughter]

DR. BUCK: Before we vote on that, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. Can the minister indicate very briefly where in the appropriation the funds are that are going to be spent on mentally and physically disabled students, also what advances the minister foresees we'll be making in this area?

MR. KING: I might observe that I am very pleased to see one hon. member of the opposition here this afternoon to discuss questions of education. I thought for a moment . . .

DR. BUCK: There aren't too many more government members, either, Mr. Minister.

MR. KING: I thought for a moment, Mr. Chairman, that I might have made a point here this afternoon about the regard in which the hon. members of the opposition hold education. [interjections] Fortunately, I think for all of them, the hon. member was present.

DR. BUCK: The minister should show a little more responsibility as a minister of the Crown than to be facetious. We're expecting a speech on some new directions from a new minister. We don't need that kind of garbage from the minister.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, the question is about the activities of the Department of Education in the forthcoming year. I can say to members of the House what I have said on other occasions to other interested citizens: first, I very much appreciate the opportunity that has been given me as the Minister of Education. I am looking forward to those responsibilities and to the exercise of those responsibilities in the upcoming years. I am enjoying very much my responsibilities as Minister of Education.

I have said, and I will repeat for all members of the Assembly, that I believe this province has historically demonstrated a high regard for education, and that the regard in which the citizens of this province hold education has been demonstrated by the teachers of the province, by the locally elected school trustees, and by the representatives of the province sitting in this Legislative Assembly, not only currently but in the past. Basically I think we have a system of which we can be proud, and that has been well served by its participants since our formation as a province.

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, we can never be completely satisfied with what we are doing. We can always hope to do better, which is exactly the position I find myself in as minister and is, I believe, the position of the people in the department, the teachers, and the trustees.

One of the important priorities in education in the

coming year is going to be in special education, the field to which the hon. member opposite alluded. The greatest percentage increase in the budget is provided in pursuit of improved quality in special education services, and those are particularly Vote 2 and Vote 4.

The policy of the government, if I could state it generally, is that students roughly between the ages of 6 and 16 have a right to education in this province whether or not they suffer a handicap. Further, Mr. Chairman, the primary responsibility for delivery of that education to those children lies with the school board, in the same co-operative way used with respect to the delivery of educational services for other children in this province. The school boards must provide education for special needs in the province, and they are going to have the support of the department and the government in providing that education.

The second priority is going to be in terms of the involvement of the community in education. I would particularly draw hon. members' attention to the increase in grants to private non-profit agencies and associations, some of which range as high as 47 per cent and, in terms of the Alberta Federation of Home & School Associations, have increased from \$11,000 to \$14,000 this year.

The third priority, Mr. Chairman, while represented by only a small sum in this year's budget, is going to be in terms of broadening the opportunities of students, teachers, and administrators through travel: exchanges with other jurisdictions, particularly other provinces. Particularly, I would like to draw hon. members' attention to the recently announced program to exchange students with the province of Quebec for a school year: that is, five months in Alberta and five months in Quebec.

The hon. member may wish to ask additional questions, Mr. Chairman, and I'd be prepared to respond to them.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I appreciate the minister's undertaking to take the responsibilities of a department as important as this, and I would at this time like to congratulate the minister for his appointment. I think he will learn on the job. I think he has the enthusiasm to do the job, and I wish him well. I say that sincerely, not just because I was mad at him a few minutes ago. I think the hon. minister is capable of doing the job, as long as he remembers basically one thing, Mr. Chairman: that he doesn't allow those mandarins to run him entirely. I say that not to belittle the men who are professional educators. But too many times we elected people become so narrow in our vision when we are running different departments that we sort of forget what's going on out in the real world. I guess I say this, having some experience on the staff at a teaching institution and going back to the ivory halls in some small capacity. We forget what's going on out in the real world. I say to the minister: don't allow the blinkers to narrow your vision too much, so that you're hearing only what the top echelon people in the department want you to believe.

The area the minister touched on was that education of children with special needs is the school board's responsibility. Fine. But the minister knows the money has to come from the Department of Education, from this appropriation. Because the hon. Member for Vegreville and I know the problems involved when we're

trying to educate children who have disabilities, more funding is going to be required throughout the province. So the minister will have to make sure these funds are available.

Mr. Chairman, another area I'd like to bring to the minister's attention is learning disabilities. I guess the best way to have this brought home to a taxpayer is to have a child who has learning disabilities, or people you know who have children with learning disabilities. They are unique in that many times they are misdiagnosed as just fooling around and not wanting to do their studying. But in speaking to parents and educators, especially at the elementary level, children with learning disabilities can now be identified. As one principal said to me, we couldn't find out these children's problems before. Now we know the problems but can't do anything about them, because we don't have the funding. So I think you should give more thought, Mr. Minister, to helping the elementary institutions cope with these children.

It's not only a problem of the larger schools; it's a problem of the smaller schools. If we're going to put some emphasis on an area of education that needs emphasis, that has to be to the men who know better than I, the people teaching at the elementary level. If we put greater emphasis on the elementary level, Mr. Minister, then we can cut out the \$25,000 and \$30,000 and \$35,000 a year for many of the counsellors who have to try to reclaim these children in later years. If we spent the bucks at the lower educational level, we wouldn't have to solve the problems later. That is an area that I feel we certainly should be looking at.

I am pleased to hear the minister say we're going to be moving in the direction of assisting private schools, especially the Christian schools, because I think they serve a very, very valuable role in our society. Again I am complimenting the minister on so many things when I was a little upset with him a few minutes ago.

I think the exchange program is excellent. If we're going to keep this country together, we're going to keep it together not through us adults or legislators but through our young people.

While we're speaking on exchange programs, Mr. Minister, as the father of two children who are just into adolescence, when they don't know if they are fish or fowl, we drop them into that situation where they're having personality changes, physical changes, and then lay a second language on them in the age group I'm speaking of and in grades 6, 7, and 8, when they hate their parents, their friends, and everybody, including themselves. It's their first initiation in a second language, and they come home and say, I don't want to take, be it Ukrainian or French or German. They don't want anything in that age group. So if we're going to have these young people learn a second language, let's look at it at a grade and age level lower than junior high school.

Also I'd like the minister's comments on the meeting held in Banff. I believe, where one professional educator said, I think junior high school is outmoded, outdated. Maybe we should do away with it because of some of the problems I spoke of: physical, mental, et cetera. I'm sure the minister has looked at some of those suggestions and may be able to indicate to us if the junior high school system is on its way out.

Mr. Chairman, with those few comments, I would be pleased to proceed with the votes.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, if I could just make a brief response to some of the points the hon. member opposite has made. The point about the relevance of junior high school has been made to me. The only thing I can say right now is that while some people hold strongly to the view expressed in Banff, there are obviously large numbers of others who hold equally strongly to the view that there continues to be a role for junior high school. So I think we're going to have to experiment with both systems and make a judgment over time about where the weight of evidence falls in that question.

With respect to second language instruction, I think it is always desirable to initiate second language instruction as early as you can, although I'm not sure the reason for that is that junior high school students hate themselves or are going through a lot of other changes. Nevertheless the hon. member will be pleased to hear that yesterday or the day before I approved a new second language program for French which I think will respond in large part to the concerns he has raised. We're going to encourage instruction of French as a second language beginning in the elementary school rather than in junior high school. Depending on the success of that, obviously we would apply the same principle to instruction in other second languages such as Ukrainian and German.

The last point I want to make — or to repeat, because it is very important — is to enumerate some of the things happening in special education this year. I think the list is longer than most hon. members suspect. First of all, there is increased money in this budget for special ECS programs for handicapped children as young as two and a half years of age. That's categories A and B. So we are extending with financial support, the ECS program for children with handicaps.

Secondly, we are extending the educational opportunities fund into junior high school, to deal with some of the problems you described that are more psychological, motivational, or attitudinal. Thirdly, money is in this budget to make good the commitment of my predecessor with respect to the program unit grant, which will provide money for professionals and paraprofessionals to work with handicapped children at the local school board level.

Fourthly, we have under way the planning committee working on the question of whether or not we should operate a special facility for multihandicapped, sensory-deprived children in the province. Fifthly, there is money in the budget for increased professional staff at the Alberta School for the Deaf, including two audiologists and four additional speech therapists. Sixthly, we are providing increased support, in the amount of \$17,550 per year per pupil to sponsoring school boards, for children for whom appropriate educational programs are not currently available. And lastly, still with respect to special education, a significant portion of the money being provided to the building quality restoration program is designed to make school buildings accessible to children with handicaps. Those are some of the new and expanded programs in this budget relating only to special education.

Now, I know that school boards make the argument that money is the solution to their problem and that they need more. We have accepted the argument that money constitutes part of the response, and there are significant additional sums of money in this budget

for special education. But money is not the total answer. Even with provision of this money, local school boards are still going to have significant problems getting qualified teachers and in dealing with the attitude of parents and children in the local school when you are faced with the question of integrating into that school community a child with special education needs.

So I think it is fair to say we have gone a considerable distance in dealing with the monetary questions, and that it is appropriate that we should stop at this point, give ourselves time to judge the results of this infusion of money, and then determine whether it is really more money that is required or more different kinds of resources.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, a supplementary. The minister missed the area of private schools. Christian schools. Can the minister indicate the department's philosophy on that, if additional support will be going to these schools, and the minister's and the department's evaluation of these schools?

MR. KING: Yes, thank you very much. Last Friday I met with the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta and repeated to them statements which previously had been made publicly by representatives of this government; that is, it is our policy over time to bring the per-pupil grant for private schools to 80 per cent . . .

DR. BUCK: Eight, zero?

MR. KING: Eight, zero. Eighty per cent of the corresponding School Foundation Program Fund grant paid to public schools in the province and we are doing that at the rate of 5 per cent per year. Last year we paid 55 per cent of the SFPF grant to private schools; this year we're paying 60 per cent. It is our intention to increase it at the rate of 5 per cent per year until we have reached 80 per cent, the plateau at which we'll reconsider the question of any other financial support.

While we have been successfully able to do that for the last two or three years, I will make a qualification that perhaps doesn't need to be made; that is, that changed economic circumstances from one year to another might cause us to accelerate it at 10 per cent, or might cause us not to accelerate it at all in any one year. Nevertheless it is our intention to move regularly to the 80 per cent level. Of course the hon. member also knows we do not provide any other financial assistance to private schools, with the exception of some financial assistance to purchase books in the elementary grades.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Is the minister in a position to indicate what percentage of our school population is attending private schools or church schools? Does the minister have that information or the total numbers, or can he get that information?

MR. KING: Yes, I can provide it to the hon. member. I have it here, but it will take me a moment to find it.

DR. BUCK: Another question to the minister. This was brought to my attention by people who drive school buses, especially private school buses; that is, the dif-

ference in mileage paid by different jurisdictions to school bus drivers. This was a while ago, so maybe the minister can indicate to the committee if the situation has changed. It seemed that the poorer the school jurisdiction, the poorer the roads they had, and the poorer the rate of pay. It should be the other way around, because the poorer the roads you drive on, the shorter your bus is going to last. Can the minister indicate if that is a problem, and if the department is looking at it and has been in consultation with the rural school boards on this matter?

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware that that has recently been expressed to us as a problem, although I know it certainly was about two years ago. At least partly in consequence of that, some changes were made in the transportation formula. But I would also undertake to provide that specific information to the member.

I might say that the department has under way a complete re-examination of transportation systems and the financing of transportation in the province. But we're talking about a comprehensive review, not just of the rural situation but rural and urban. That review wouldn't be finished for some months yet, probably six or eight.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, the last question I would like to ask the minister relates to the boarding up of schoolroom windows. I would like to know what incentive the Department of Education has given school jurisdictions to board up many school windows in many cases, I believe under the heading of conserving energy, I would like to bring to the minister's attention the presentation to the county of Strathcona school board at a meeting about three weeks ago. The counterproposal given by concerned parents was that there really wasn't going to be an energy saving when we closed up the windows. The presentation was made so well and so proficiently that the council and the school board decided, in their wisdom, to have a second look at boarding up school windows.

I would like to know the department's involvement in this area. Are there any directives or incentives by the Department of Education to board up windows, to use the colloquial term?

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, there are no directives from the Department of Education to board up windows, and no incentives, financial or otherwise, in any of our programs that would encourage local school boards to board up windows. That decision is entirely a matter of local responsibility.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, in view of the hour, I move the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolutions, and reports as follows:

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Utilities

and Telephones: \$862,458 for departmental support services; \$31,143,286 for utilities development; \$140,081,528 for natural gas price protection for Albertans.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Transportation: \$5,034,277 for departmental support services; \$306,438,320 for construction and maintenance of highways; \$8,995,017 for construction and maintenance of airport facilities; \$7,779,067 for transportation planning services; \$106,753,320 for urban transportation financial assistance; \$6,625,932 for surveys and property acquisition.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Environment: \$3,006,612 for departmental support services; \$28,312,703 for pollution prevention and control; \$16,485,677 for land conservation; \$31,376,782 for water resources management; \$4,038,854 for environmental research; \$1,024,000 for overview and co-ordination of environment conservation; \$5,969,203 for interdisciplinary environmental research and services.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Agriculture: \$9,418,743 for departmental support services; \$30,985,817 for production assistance; \$8,363,140 for marketing assistance; \$26,599,357 for rural development assistance.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of the Attorney General: \$7,010,600 for departmental support services; \$20,276,600 for court services; \$9,434,940 for legal services; \$4,518,000 for support for legal aid; \$9,000,520 for protection and administration of property rights; \$1,511,990 for fatality inquiries; \$620,480 for crimes compensation; \$1,721,820 for public utilities regulation.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, may I ask unanimous leave to stop the clock until the hon. Member for Athabasca completes his report?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. APPELBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs: [\$1,409,396] for departmental support services; \$2,849,093 for consumer relations and education; \$3,554,604 for business registration and regulation; \$1,418,890 for regulation of securities markets; \$551,844 for rent decontrol administration.

Resolved that for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, amounts not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of Economic Development: \$9,414,701 for economic development and international trade; \$10,300,000 for resources railway management.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before leaving, could I remind hon. members to leave their *Standing Orders* out on their desks for placing in the amendment.

[At 5:34 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

