

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, March 18, 1983 10:00 a.m.**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 219
An Act to Amend
the Municipal Election Act

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, I ask your permission to introduce Bill 219, An Act to Amend the Municipal Election Act.

This Bill died on the Order Paper last year. It is a Bill which would give municipalities permission to limit expenses and donations, and to require disclosure of donations if they so desired.

[Leave granted; Bill 219 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file two documents: one, the Directory of Economic Developers of Alberta and, two, the Cold Lake Resort Complex Feasibility Assessment and Conceptual Plan.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1982 Farming for the Future progress report. Copies were forwarded to members on December 7.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature Library a brochure entitled Lady Beware, put out by the Solicitor General's Department. It is related to the subject of sexual assault prevention and is used by police forces across Alberta to give women guidance on that topic.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm tabling the 1981-82 annual report of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1981-82 annual report of the Northern Alberta Development Council. Copies were forwarded to members of the Assembly earlier this year.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the Northern Alberta Development Council's Community Impact Assessment Handbook and the workshop report of Alberta Education and Training in Northern Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: I have for tabling the fifth annual report of the Chief Electoral Officer.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, 61 grade 6 students from St. Phillips school, in the Edmonton Glen-garry constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers Evelyn Dunnigan and Roger Millette. They're in the members gallery, and I wonder if they could stand now and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 40 grade 6 students from the Lamont elementary school. These students are living in my constituency and in the constituency of the hon. Member for Vegreville, Mr. Batiuk. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Clarence Kitura, parent Mrs. Maudie, and their bus driver John Danyluk. They are sitting in the public gallery, and I'd like them to rise and receive the welcome of the Legislature.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, 19 gifted students representing grades 7, 8, and 9 at the Peter Pond high school in Fort McMurray, of course located in the Lac La Biche-McMurray constituency.

This SPECTRE group followed the past election very closely, interviewing and visiting all potential candidates. It is indeed a pleasure for me to meet with them again. I did say "SPECTRE" and not "special", to members of the Assembly. To clarify what SPECTRE is, I would like to emphasize that it's S for special, P for projects, E for enrichment, C for creativity, T for thinking, R for reading, and E for enjoyment.

Mr. Speaker, this group is accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Sharon Turner and Mrs. Avon Whittles, and their transportation supervisor Mr. Gil Williams. They're seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the cordial welcome of this Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Pincher Creek Gas Plant**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. It is with respect to serious concerns respecting metal and chemical contamination in the Pincher Creek/Twin Butte/Hill Spring area. With respect to the contamination, is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly when the government obtained information that would lead to concern about contamination in the area, and why no communication was made to advise people of or alert people to the dangers?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, in response to the question posed by the hon. member, it may be useful — and I would appreciate the time of the Assembly — to review the history with regard to the Pincher Creek plant, in terms of outlining the basic nature behind the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. BRADLEY: The Gulf plant is located approximately 12 miles south of the town of Pincher Creek. It was one of the first major sour gas plants in Alberta, estab-

lished in 1957. Associated with this plant is a cooling tower, and it's different from current sour gas or sulfur processing plants in operation in the province today. There have been a number of changes in the operation of that plant over the years.

Due to declining reserves and economics, last year Gulf applied to the Energy Resources Conservation Board to decommission or shut down the processing of gas at their operation. A hearing was held in Pincher Creek on November 15, 1982, to consider Gulf's application. The Energy Resources Conservation Board decision approving the shut-down was delivered on December 31, 1982. Gulf intends to shut down the gas processing in Pincher Creek in April this year.

The nature of ongoing operations at Pincher Creek would be to refrigerate the gas, separate liquids from the gas, and ship the liquids and gas in separate pipelines to the Shell Waterton gas plant for further processing. Ministerial approvals pertaining to the environment with regard to the processing plant have not been issued at this point, pending receipt of Gulf's report, in order that appropriate conditions can be attached to that ministerial approval.

With regard to specifics, on March 4, Gulf officials met with me and apprized me of the following. As part of their process to shut down the plant, they had undertaken a study of the plant site in order to determine their reclamation plans. They advised me of the preliminary results at that point in time. Those preliminary results showed that there were some heavy metals in high concentration in several areas on the plant site. There were also organic compounds including phthalates, which is a carcinogen. The studies provided no evidence of migration outside the plant area; that is, the contaminants were confined to the plant site area.

They also advised me that they required further sampling to better define the scale of the problem; that they would immediately commence with further studies within the plant site, outside the process area; and that once the plant had been shut down, they required studies within the process area itself and that that would be commenced immediately upon shut down. They also advised me that the final land use of the site would determine the nature of the reclamation options they would take. So that is an important consideration.

They advised me that this information was preliminary and that they would be meeting with the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and they requested permission to meet with senior members of the department to provide more detailed information with regard to the preliminary nature of their results. They said to me that once the report was finalized and complete, they would provide the department with a copy, and that they intended to make this information available to the public immediately upon completion of the report. They advised me of their intention to inform the public in the following order: firstly, their employees; secondly, the town and MD of Pincher Creek; and thirdly, area residents. I agreed with the procedures they laid out.

After completion of verbal briefing by Gulf with my department officials, on Monday this week I was updated by staff of the department with regard to the verbal briefings Gulf had given them and that Gulf was proceeding with public meetings in the Pincher Creek area on Monday, March 21 — which is next Monday — to inform the public.

Yesterday I received from Gulf a copy of the summary document relating to the findings of the report, a sched-

ule of meetings which Gulf would be holding to advise the public, and a copy of a news release which Gulf intended to release to the public. This morning at eight o'clock, a copy of the final report of Gulf's findings was delivered to the department. It is my intention to seek Gulf's approval, and it will be my intention to file these documents in the House on Monday.

I've been advised that the government's monitoring of the effluent surface run-off from the plant has indicated that it has not exceeded our guidelines. As a follow-up to this matter, and because of the nature of Gulf's report, I have directed that an independent evaluation of Gulf's studies be undertaken to determine their validity, also that this independent study be conducted on the soils, ground water and surface water in the plant site area, and the area outside the plant site and downstream of the plant site, to determine the levels of substances and to determine whether any of the substances have migrated off the plant site. These studies will take approximately two to three months to complete. Immediately upon completion of these studies, they will be made available to the public.

As the member of the Legislature for the area and as the Minister of the Environment, I am naturally concerned about this matter and will take every action to ensure that proper reclamation is proceeded with.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. During the course of the discussions the minister held with Gulf officials, or at any time in the last several weeks, did the minister or any official of the department suggest to Gulf officials that they dig up the contaminated material, transfer it to the Calgary dump, and burn it?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. During the course of the discussions with Gulf officials, did either the minister or any official of the Department of the Environment suggest that the release of information be slowed up in order to avert a public outcry?

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the hon. minister outline to the Assembly what specific steps the department took when the minister was alerted two weeks ago, to independently evaluate the preliminary report of the Gulf Oil company?

MR. BRADLEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've only received a report of any nature, in terms of the actual study, this morning.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly when the Snider report on the Pincher Creek situation will be released to the people of Alberta?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we're anticipating the report by the end of the month.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Given the concern about the contamination, and the independent evaluation of the immediate site that the minister announced this morning, has the

department now given any consideration to a broader evaluation such as the one suggested by the Canadian Public Health study?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Board of Health will not be initiating any studies, certainly not until the results of the testing by the Department of the Environment have been completed. In terms of the concerns that were raised in other situations and the long-term study that was recommended by certain groups, the Provincial Board of Health will not be initiating any such studies until the ERCB has completed its hearings.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, followed by a supplementary by the hon. Member for Clover Bar. We have spent a great deal of time on this topic, and I realize the hon. minister prepared himself very thoroughly to deal with it. If there's time, we can come back to it later in the question period.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, then a supplementary question, if I may, to both hon. ministers. In view of the sour gas plant trace elements study detecting traces of cadmium and the possible link with cancer — I say "possible link" because it's not proven — I ask either hon. minister whether any information on any individual case that might link the build-up of these kinds of elements and cancer has come to the attention of the government.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there are no cases. I'd certainly have to double-check to see if that is the case.

Certainly over the years there have been studies in the Pincher Creek area relating to health effects, going back to about 1962. The Snider study referred to earlier is one of the later ones. As I said with respect to that, we expect the results of that study by the end of the month.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. NOTLEY: I put the question to the Minister of the Environment as well. I put that to both of them.

MR. SPEAKER: Possibly we could come back to that if there's further time in the question period.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplementary question, but first I'd like to raise a point of order. Is it becoming habit that we're going to be allowed just five supplementaries? There's a major issue in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. I sort of have the feeling that you, sir, in some unwritten rules, seem to think five supplementaries are adequate. I have a great difference of opinion on that. I just want to know if you can give us an indication that this is the way things are going to happen.

MR. SPEAKER: I certainly respect the hon. member's concern. The fact of the matter is that as far as I know, the only rule that is recorded in regard to the number of supplementaries is that it's at the discretion of the Speaker. Of course that only begs the question, because the hon. member is now asking: how's the Speaker going to exercise his discretion?

The thing is that I go according to the number of members who indicate to me that they wish to ask questions. It may well be that in regard to any question, the member asking it thinks it's more important than any other member's question, and he's entitled to that view. But five supplementaries — as a matter of fact, there have been six on this one so far. I didn't suggest that the hon. Member for Clover Bar would have only one supplementary; I simply suggested that it was his turn to ask supplementaries. But we do have to cut it off, because we have five more members who want to ask questions and a minister who wishes to add to information requested by an hon. member in a previous question period.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, if I may. I really suggest to the Speaker that when the House has given leave, by unanimous consent, for a minister to give quite an extensive answer, with a great deal of detail, that raises a number of questions on an issue of considerable importance — during the years I have been in this House, I recall that there have been occasions when question periods have centred around a single question because of the importance. Where the opposition members have granted leave for a minister to give an answer which is quite beyond the normal rules of this House, in my judgment it is not unreasonable that questions relating to that answer be allowed.

MR. SPEAKER: As I said, we have had six. There are a number of Houses where you wouldn't get past two, regardless of how important the question was. It is really not a bad number of supplementaries, and of course there is nothing to prevent an hon. member from coming back to the topic. But in fairness I have to have regard to the members who are waiting for their turn. And the way the time is running now, it is extremely doubtful whether they are going to get a chance at six supplementaries.

Might the hon. Member for Clover Bar please proceed with his supplementary.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, if I might just make another point of order. I say to you in all humility and honesty, and as objectively as I can [interjections] that it is very simple, on a major issue, to cut the boys off at the pass — if you wish to use that expression — by putting down a long list of government members wanting to ask questions. Then in your wisdom, sir, you say: I have all the hon. members who want to ask questions. Therefore the government can get off unscathed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I want you to give serious consideration to that.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, is that we gave the hon. Minister of the Environment unanimous consent to read his statement. There is a section in the [Orders] called ministerial announcements. The hon. minister should have given it under that and not wasted time in the question period.

MR. NOTLEY: Exactly, so we could have responded.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, those are the two points I would like you to give consideration to.

MR. SPEAKER: There have been at least two. With regard to the statement, I realize that it did go beyond the

scope of the original question. As a matter of fact, there were two questions in one. One was, when did the government become aware? The second was, when did something else happen after that? I realize that. As the minister was reading, it seemed to me to be in the nature of a ministerial statement. However, since the House had unanimously approved the minister making a fairly lengthy statement, I felt it would be disrespectful to the House, on my part, to intervene.

Now, with regard to government members collusively lengthening the list . . .

DR. BUCK: They would never do that.

MR. SPEAKER: . . . so as to prevent supplementaries or getting back to the subject matter later on in the question period, may I suggest that the list I have for today is shorter than it's been for any day this week, as far as I know.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few remarks with respect to the points raised by hon. members in the opposition. Firstly, there has been a well-enough established course in the Assembly with respect to supplementaries, and it is one that most hon. members have been familiar with over a number years and have seen you apply, Mr. Speaker. The point has frequently been made that the supplementaries permitted at the discretion of the Chair are at least as many and perhaps twice or three times as many as would be allowed in Parliament or in other assemblies. Mr. Speaker, I think all hon. members respect the observations that you made in that regard.

On the matter today, Mr. Speaker, I may be mistaken but I heard no request for unanimous consent. There was, as I thought it was, a general concurrence that the answer would be given in a very full way. I may be mistaken in that, and *Hansard* will show the record. But I think the result of whatever form the consent was given in is that the minister then proceeded, quite properly, to do as hon. members obviously agreed he should do. The suggestion that it be made the subject of a statement is surely one that is purely discretionary on the part of the minister who has material to present to the House. I don't think hon. members of the opposition are in a position to require a minister to deal with the matter in a statement.

Mr. Speaker, surely the essence of what is being said in the remarks of [members] of the opposition — in the words of the Member for Clover Bar and apparently, by what I can see, concurred in by the others — is that for some reason, hon. members who do not happen to occupy the four seats represented by the opposition have no rights in the Assembly with regard to questions. [interjections] That was implied in what the hon. Member for Clover Bar said.

DR. BUCK: You slept through that part.

MR. CRAWFORD: He indicated that it was his view that members would manufacture reasons to ask questions.

DR. BUCK: I said they could. Don't you listen?

MR. CRAWFORD: I heard it well.

DR. BUCK: A bunch of puppets.

MR. CRAWFORD: I heard it well, Mr. Speaker. It is an unacceptable suggestion to make in an assembly, that hon. members who represent their constituents are not fully entitled to take time in the question period to put those questions. I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that some of the government members' questions this year have been a lot better than the opposition's. [interjections]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, might I just say that some of the government members' questions have been a lot better than the answers they've got from the chaps on their side. [interjections]

The Government House Leader can foam and froth all he likes on this issue. The question very clearly is that this Legislature agreed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I wasn't aware that the hon. Government House Leader was speaking rabidly. [laughter]

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think that is a subject of debate. [laughter]

The facts of the matter are that this Assembly agreed to a very lengthy answer by the Minister of the Environment. If the Government House Leader were really serious about this Legislature, an answer like that would have come in, in the normal ministerial statements, so there could be a reply from members of the opposition, because obviously it's a controversial issue.

Mr. Speaker, it may just be that members of the Opposition don't agree with the minister's position. Had he done so in the normal place, where a ministerial statement is made, I would have had an opportunity to reply on behalf of my colleague and myself, and the hon. Member for Little Bow would have had an opportunity to reply. The government chose not to take that course. Instead they asked, and in the normal course of events they can receive from the opposition the reasonable approach: fine, we will accept a lengthy answer in question period; it doesn't meet the strict rules of the Legislature but, because of our agreement, fair enough.

Surely the trade-off, Mr. Speaker, is that where you have an issue of some controversy, it is not unreasonable that questions be put to that minister. I again say that over the years I've been in this House and you've been in the Chair, sir, in my judgment you have exercised reasonable discretion where there have been issues of major consequence.

Hon. members on the government side have the right to ask questions. No one is denying that. But on occasions when we've had major issues, we have had full supplementaries, including from members on the government side. Surely the Government House Leader is not suggesting that on an issue of this kind, hon. government members would not raise supplementaries as well. We would not want to cut the government members off from the right to raise supplementaries on this kind of question. So I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that on this particular issue it is not unreasonable that we have more supplementaries than would normally be the case.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, not wanting to prolong the debate on this point of order unduly, I do feel it incumbent on me as a private member to endorse the position the hon. House leader has indicated. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there are issues of importance that have to be discussed and that people shouldn't be inhibited from pursuing in this Assembly. However, how does one judge the importance of a given

issue if members are not given the opportunity to investigate all those alternatives through the questions they have designated as necessary on your particular list?

Mr. Speaker, I agree with your original statement that if indeed this topic is perceived to be one of importance to the House — one of more importance than other members might raise through other questions — then certainly the provisions are there to allow individual members either to raise questions concerning this or to come back to it near the end of the question period. But of course this debate has taken away some of that time to begin with. I feel it's indeed a very firm parliamentary principle that the constituents of Calgary Currie wouldn't want me to give up: that we all have equal rights and opportunity in the Assembly, regardless of one individual member's perception — or in fact a group of individual members' perceptions — of the importance of a particular topic.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: May I ask the hon. member to be very brief.

MR. MARTIN: I will make it quick.

The minister has made it an important issue, not the opposition. He made the lengthy statement. He is the one who has made this a major issue today, by taking that time to make a statement. It's not the opposition or the other members who have made that.

MR. SPEAKER: No points of order were raised while the hon. minister was making his statement.

I don't want to prolong this discussion on a point of order, because now we're defeating the very purpose for which I was limiting supplementaries, so that as many members as possible — which I think includes three members of the opposition — can ask their questions. On at least one of the occasions, as I recall it, when the Assembly unanimously agreed to put aside other questions and deal with one topic in the whole question period, I think it involved the matter of an energy agreement. It was a very substantial question with regard to the field of energy, which if . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Also PWA.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't recall that one.

Certainly if any topic is important to the province of Alberta, that's one. I didn't see that the issue with regard to a single gas plant of the many in the province was of the same consequence, nor did I ask the Assembly for leave to confine the question period to that one topic.

Now in view of the elapse of time, I wonder if we might get back as quickly as possible to the hon. Member for Clover Bar with his supplementary.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege. I take offence at the hon. House leader, when he said that I said the members did do such and such. I said that the members on the government side could do this if they so chose. I would never, ever think that the government members would ever do that, Mr. Speaker. But I did not say that they did.

MR. SPEAKER: May I suggest that an hon. member who refers to the government members as puppets doesn't have a strong case in raising that objection.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that. I guess Charlie McCarthys may be parliamentary procedure.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would ask just two very short supplementary questions. First, to the Minister responsible for Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation: can the minister indicate to the Assembly what mechanism is in place in the Gulf plant to ensure that the workers in that plant have not been harmfully affected?

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, all mechanisms that are in place in every worksite are there. Whenever required, the officials of the occupational health and safety division respond.

For the record, the involvement by the officials of occupational health and safety is not very extensive over the last three years. Whenever requested — the last visit to the plant by several people from the hygiene branch and others was May 1982. The information I have been provided with is that the record of Gulf Resources in Alberta is excellent, in my opinion. The losses are less than 1 per cent of their assessment paid out in claims.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my short, final supplementary is to the hon. Minister of the Environment. Can the minister indicate to this Assembly what procedures are in place to study the situation with the wild blowout well in the Drayton Valley area? What direct action is the minister or his department taking to make sure that the long-term effects are studied right now and that the situation which has occurred in the Pincher Creek area will not occur in the Drayton Valley area?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think the nature of the question asked by the hon. member is with regard to separate types of incidents. The question was with reference to the AMOCO blowout at Lodgepole. The hon. member may be aware that the Energy Resources Conservation Board is going to conduct an inquiry into the matter, which will look into a number of areas with regard to that incident, and will report back on their findings.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question was, what is the minister's department doing — never mind the Energy Resources Conservation Board — to make sure that we do not have a repeat situation of what we're having in Pincher Creek now?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the drilling industry is the responsibility of the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Similarly, in terms of gas processing plants the licensing requirements are through the Energy Resources Conservation Board.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The protection of the environment is the hon. minister's responsibility. The question was: what is the minister's department, not the ERCB, doing to monitor the situation?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, this morning I advised that we were going to make a thorough, independent evaluation of the findings at Gulf Pincher Creek, and that we were going to conduct an independent study into that matter to determine the exact nature of the substances identified within the plant site area and if there are any substances outside the plant site area.

Sour Gas Development

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I may ask the second question. I would like to direct this question to the hon. Premier. It deals with not only the Pincher Creek situation but the concerns of Peace River farmers with sour gas development there and the impact on the soil, and the AMOCO blowout: the whole issue of sour gas development. Will the government — I forget whether it's the Department of the Environment or the Department of Energy and Natural Resources — commit itself to a major study on the sour gas development in this province, with respect to providing proper environmental safeguards for the people of Alberta? Will that study be undertaken this year?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the short answer is that if evidence to indicate a concern of that nature is presented to Executive Council, which to date it has not, the concern would be responded to.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of the Environment, with respect to the need for an overall policy. In view of the fact that the Gulf plant in Pincher Creek was being decommissioned — I gather the first decommissioning of a major gas plant in the province of Alberta — is the minister able to advise the Assembly why no environmental impact study was required as a condition of that decommissioning?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to that matter, I've already stated that the ministerial approvals necessary have not been signed at this point in time, subject to reviewing the information Gulf is providing to us.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Hearings were held on a decommissioning. Why would no environmental impact assessment be made mandatory as the basis of decommissioning a gas plant?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, that is not the current policy of the government with regard to those types of incidents.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, that's why we need an overall investigation into sour gas plants.

I ask the hon. minister what action the Department of the Environment is taking with respect to the Shell plant and other gas giants in this province that do not have concrete settling ponds, as some of the new plants do, to avert the possible contamination we've seen as a result of the decommissioning of the Gulf plant in the Pincher Creek area.

MR. BRADLEY: It's my understanding that at this time most plants in the province use deep-well injection as a method to handle this type of waste from their processes. After evaluating our independent study and the findings of Gulf, it's my intention to determine the need to look at other gas plants in the province of a similar vintage and operating process as Gulf.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question to the Premier. Given the hundreds of people who've expressed concern over many of these projects, whether it be in the Peace River country, the Quirk Creek

plant west of Calgary, the Pincher Creek situation, the position of the Environment Council of Alberta, what evidence does Executive Council consider necessary in order for this government to undertake a comprehensive study of the sour gas industry and its environmental and health implications in this province?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think that's a very obvious question and a very obvious answer. If we feel there is a substantive concern that is backed up by these analyses, inquiries, and reports referred to by the Minister of the Environment, and a broader analysis in terms of gas processing in the province is required, we'll respond to it.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. leader did say it was his final supplementary. If he hadn't, I should have. The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, followed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

Lottery Proceeds

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. With regard to lotteries and lottery proceeds, could the minister advise the House if it is the intention of the government to continue the contract with the Calgary and Edmonton exhibition associations being the exclusive agent for the Alberta division of the Western Canada Lottery?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Lethbridge West, the Calgary and Edmonton exhibitions have a contract that will expire March 31, 1984. This summer it's my intention to become involved in a hearing process, both in terms of the operation of the lotteries and the distribution of lottery proceeds, that hopefully will either confirm our intention of carrying on with the method we've been using or, alternatively, change the allocation of the dollars.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to see the minister is considering reviewing the allocation of proceeds. Could the minister advise the House if one of the groups being considered as receiving proceeds would be amateur sport, a very worthwhile organization in Alberta.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, a lot of the funds presently allocated are for amateur sport and for culture. At the end of this session, I'll publicly be inviting any organization wishing to make a submission. Certainly every organization will have consideration.

MR. GOGO: Amateur sport may receive some funds, but they certainly don't receive them directly from lottery proceeds. I ask the minister if she would consider a recommendation to give them directly to amateur sport instead of through some other system.

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. It's come to my attention that since 1979, when the government of Canada decided to allocate Loto Canada proceeds to Alberta — I understand Loto Canada or the federal authorities are now starting some gaming pool. I ask the minister if she has had the opportunity to assess the federal action on the lottery proceeds that will be reaching Alberta through its own lottery process?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, we haven't done a formal assessment of the proposal put forward by the federal government. I believe there is presently before the House a Bill that has to do with setting up a sports pool. The hon. member may or may not know that a sports pool is presently being run in Quebec. The federal government attempted to have an injunction placed against that pool, and they were unsuccessful. The information that came from Quebec led us to conclude that there may well be a breach of the 1979 agreement if the federal government were getting into the sports pool field, but we do not have a firm conclusion on that.

MR. GOGO: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If in the minister's examination of the situation she's of the view that it's going to affect Alberta adversely, could she assure the House she will make pretty strong representation to Ottawa not to proceed with that?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has made a representation in the form of a hypothetical question, so perhaps that will suffice.

MRS. EMBURY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Followed by a final supplementary by the hon. Member for Calgary North Hill.

MRS. EMBURY: I wonder if the minister would please comment on the agreement that has been intact between Calgary, Edmonton, and the lottery association: that it has been working well over the last few years and serving all Albertans.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the agreement that was put in place was altered slightly in late June last year, I believe. To my knowledge, information coming from both the Edmonton and Calgary exhibition [associations] — the three people from each of those associations that serve on the Alberta lotteries division board indicate that it's been very successful.

MR. OMAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The federal sports pool has very serious implications for the funding of the 1988 Winter Olympics. Do I understand the minister to indicate that Alberta is opposed to that?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's for me to comment on how the federal government will meet their \$200 million commitment to the 1988 Olympics. For the information of the House, in 1980 the federal government received close to \$25 million, a contribution from the provinces in lieu of their participation in lotteries. Each year that sum has escalated through indexing. This year it will come close to \$32 million. While I can't suggest what the federal government should be doing with those funds, certainly they are now indirectly receiving funds from lotteries in Canada. I would think the federal government will be meeting their commitment to the 1988 Olympics. I don't believe that commitment was contingent on any particular method of raising those funds.

Youth Development Centre — Strathmore

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services is with

regard to the youth development centre at Strathmore, where the construction has proceeded but does not meet the standards necessary to house juvenile offenders. I wonder if the minister could indicate why that type of thing occurred, and what changes have been made to adjust to the program for the Department of Social Services and Community Health?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, my colleague may wish to supplement my answer. As I understand it, the construction on the building is nearly complete. Of course, it's built to certain programming specifications.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Could the minister indicate whether the necessary renovations are now being put on stream, and what some of those renovations are?

MR. CHAMBERS: To the best of my knowledge — and I'd be quite happy to check into this further and respond to the Member for Little Bow — as I recollect it, the building is nearing completion with regard to original construction specifications.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of other projects of this kind, where the department is servicing other departments or proceeding with construction, could the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services indicate that in the early planning stage the related department has adequate input to prevent this type of misplanning occurring?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, that is always the case. The client department has requested a building for a certain need and is always actively involved in the programming. It's possible that program requirements may change and therefore dictate a different requirement in the way of the structure, but the client department is always heavily involved in the programming for any public building.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. In terms of this project at Strathmore, could the minister indicate why the building does not meet adequate standards? What occurred within the department, in terms of making recommendations that led to this miscalculation in construction?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the concerns related to the Strathmore youth development centre were brought to my attention early in February, I believe. They were brought to my attention by some individuals in Calgary who are involved in providing similar services for severely disturbed teenagers, and they had some concerns about the structural design in accommodating these kinds of individuals. Since that time, I asked the department to give me a report on what has transpired over the years. It is a fact that there has been correspondence or meetings back and forth between the two departments. I don't have any further information on it at this time, but I'd be happy to report it when I do.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the minister be prepared to table the report that he receives, either in summary or in total, so that the Assembly is aware of the renovations that do take place; also possibly in that report an indication that departmen-

tal procedures have been updated so that it doesn't happen again?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I don't think I should table any report from the department to myself; however, I'd be happy to give a report, giving a full explanation of what has transpired over the years.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. I wonder if the design for the youth development centre in Strathmore was submitted to your department before beginning construction?

DR. WEBBER: I'm sorry, I didn't hear the first part of the hon. member's question.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I was asking if the designs and the plans for the youth development centre building in Strathmore were submitted to the Department of Social Services and Community Health for approval before the beginning of construction.

DR. WEBBER: Certainly the Department of Social Services and Community Health worked very closely with the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services in terms of the design, and certainly there was approval of the design before construction started.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for the question period elapsed about a minute ago; however, I did recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood. If the Assembly agrees, perhaps we might deal briefly with his question.

I express regret to the hon. Member for Calgary Millikan and the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health, who wishes to deal further with a previous question period topic.

I hesitate to make it a custom or a habit to ask the House to extend the question period time. It's 45 minutes, and that's five minutes longer for 79 members than they have in the House of Commons, which has 40 minutes for 282 members. But if the House agrees, perhaps we might hear the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

TV Convention — Cannes

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Economic Development. In this time of restraint and cutbacks, can the minister indicate whether or not the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation is paying to send between six and 10 board members and advisory committee members to the upcoming Cannes TV convention, which comes after the Cannes film festival at the end of May?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of that. I'll take it as notice.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. At the same time, will you also come back and tell the House the cost of this?

MR. SPEAKER: That definitely is a very proper question for the Order Paper, and as a matter of fact the first one would be as well.

MR. MARTIN: I will rephrase that.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the supplementaries might now await the minister's answer to see whether in fact supplementaries are necessary.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to section 51 of the *Standing Orders* of the Legislative Assembly to request unanimous consent to waive the oral notice contained in subsection (4), with respect to the designation of heritage fund estimates.

The reason I request unanimous consent is that we were not advised until 5:15 yesterday that we would be dealing with heritage trust fund estimates this afternoon. I should just point out for new hon. members that subsection (4) allows the Leader of the Opposition to designate estimates of both the trust fund and the normal estimates of the province of Alberta, providing notice is given to the Clerk of the Assembly at four o'clock on Thursday. That was not possible, of course. Should the House agree to this — and I presume the House will — at the completion of today's session, when we know how far we've got with the estimates, I would then notify the Clerk, the Government House Leader, and the leader of the Independent caucus.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. leader is saying that later on today he is going to ask for leave to waive the requirement for notice that might otherwise have been given yesterday afternoon. If that's the case, I suppose we don't have to deal with it now, and we can wait until the hon. leader decides to ask for that leave.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, we could do it that way or, in terms of procedure, the notice required was four o'clock yesterday afternoon. I'm simply asking for leave to waive that notice requirement today. Perhaps the best time to do it would be now, because we'll be in committee stage.

The only reason I would not designate right now is that I'm not sure how far we will proceed during committee stage, and there's no point designating something if we've already dealt with it. But just in terms of deference to the House, I simply request the permission now. Then I'll advise the Clerk when we're in a position to know what we wish to designate. We may in fact, in a happy mood, get through all the estimates — who's to say? — not that that's likely. But I'm not really in a position to say until we know what happens this morning.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, in agreeing to what hon. leader has raised, I think it's entirely reasonable in the circumstances he's outlined. I just note that the hon. leader is taking advantage, in a very appropriate way, of one of the amendments made to the rules last year, which was done at the time in order better to serve the interests of the opposition in this Assembly.

MR. NOTLEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I take it I do have unanimous leave from the Assembly to waive the provisions.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly give the unanimous leave requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any dissent? . . .
It is so ordered.

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. Welcome to the first sitting of the Committee of Supply in the 20th Legislature. Just a couple of comments before we start proceedings, for the benefit of those who have not participated in supply proceedings before. The rules of debate are the same as they are in the Assembly except for the number of times a member may comment on a particular issue. All remarks should be addressed through the Chair, and no discussion should be on a one-to-one basis with anybody within the Assembly. Your rules are in the *Standing Orders*. Some who are not familiar with them may wish to refer to them and make sure they have a complete understanding of how proceedings will be carried on.

This morning we'll be dealing first with the capital projects division of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, 1983-84 estimates of proposed investments. These are done through various departments. The first department this morning will be the Department of Agriculture. Vote I is for Farming for the Future, total amount to be voted \$7,500,000.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could move to the Department of Transportation first. The hon. Minister of Transportation has to leave the Assembly shortly. That would be the latter vote for \$2,505,000, on page 23, if it's convenient to the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the committee agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very well then.

ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION 1983-84 ESTIMATES OF PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

Department of Transportation

1 — Airport Terminal Buildings

MR. CHAIRMAN: The amount to be voted here is \$2,505,000. Does the minister wish to comment?

MR. M. MOORE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Briefly, the amounts involved here are largely for the completion of the Peace River airport terminal. That building is expected to be completed by the end of August 1983. The total cost will be just in excess of \$4.5 million, with \$2.1 million coming from the amount to be voted here. The balance was funded in the previous fiscal year. In addition, there will be about \$30,000 involved from this vote for the upgrading of the water supply in the existing Lloydminster airport terminal building, which was built from Heritage Savings Trust Fund dollars as well. Finally, the one new program in this amount this year is a new

airport terminal at Wetaskiwin airport, which will be constructed at a cost of about \$375,000 and is expected to be completed by the end of November 1983.

Mr. Chairman, those are the projects we intend to utilize these funds for during the course of the new fiscal year. The previous projects that have been completed under this vote are listed in the document that is before all members.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I recall that in 1981 the Legislature spent a good deal of time on the estimates of the Minister of Transportation with respect to terminal buildings. The minister has outlined the allotment of \$2,100,000 this year to Peace River and has given us two other figures, \$30,000 for Lloydminster and \$375,000 for Wetaskiwin. I would presume, then, that no other projects are being considered for the current year.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the minister that the priority should surely be where you have scheduled air service. I took a group of people — including the mayor and council members from the MD of Fairview — from my own community of Fairview to see the then Minister of Transportation, who very properly said that if there is a scheduled air service, priority would be given to construction of a terminal where you have a service. That makes a good deal of sense. I don't think it makes a lot of sense to have an expensive terminal building in a community where there can never really be an air service. I realize there are a lot of private pilots who fly in and out of Wetaskiwin. I don't want to get into a dispute with my hon. friend the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc and the constituency. I'm sure that all kinds of arguments can be made for a terminal in Wetaskiwin. But I say to the minister that where we have a scheduled service, it seems to me the priority must go to terminal buildings where those services are in place.

I know we can't expect any change this year. I simply serve notice to the minister that should the Wapiti service succeed, as I trust it will, he is going to have a delegation from Fairview and the MD of Fairview and ID 21 on his doorstep again — on his doorstep as opposed to his predecessor's. Rightly so, because we should be providing terminals where there is a scheduled service. For the smaller carrier, such as Wapiti, this is one type of public investment which, I think, makes some sense. When I go on Wapiti to Grande Prairie and we stop at Grande Cache, the terminal building there is a plus for that little airline.

It's not easy in this particular day for small carriers to maintain service. But as has been very clearly evident, especially to us in the Peace River country, the major carriers are drastically cutting back their service. We know what has happened to CP. CP has worse service to the Peace River country now than they did 11 years ago, when I was first elected to the Legislature. They're cutting back. So we're going to have to look at our third-level carriers if we're going to have a co-ordinated air service in this province. Part of that is the smaller terminals.

I would ask the minister if he would perhaps outline to the committee where things are in this program, not this year — we know where they are this year: \$2,100,000 for Peace River, \$30,000 for Lloydminster, and \$375,000 for Wetaskiwin — but what the planning process is with respect to future terminal buildings, especially in those areas where there is an operative air service.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, two things. First of all, the decision as to where a new terminal building

might be built under this particular program doesn't necessarily relate to whether or not an area has regular scheduled service. That indeed is one of the criteria. But the major criterion is the usage of the airport and, hence, the requirement for a terminal building.

In the case of Wetaskiwin, it is my information from the department that it rates in the top half dozen in the province in terms of actual usage, and well above some that very recently may have been placed on a route that received scheduled service. So it's not necessary that every project that's being undertaken under this vote would have scheduled service.

The member might be aware as well that in years past, when we've in fact built terminals at places like Pincher Creek, Hinton, Jasper, and High Prairie, the scheduled service left before we got the terminal built. One has to consider that too. Simply because Time Air or somebody has a route, doesn't mean they're going to serve it. So there are some problems there.

The only thing I can say to the hon. member is that certainly a point like Fairview, which he's referring to, is one that in my view rates fairly high with respect to providing a good terminal building. The other thing we have to take into consideration too is what's there now. Some communities have a terminal building of some sort that's presently operating, while others have nothing. The other criterion we take into consideration is the isolation of the community. Some may not have as many take-offs and landings — there are not as many people involved — but depend a great deal more on air services than do some others. Those are all factors that go into it.

The final question I need to address is: what about the future of this program? I'm afraid I can't answer that today, because I don't know whether we're going to have a capital projects vote for airport terminals in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund in the next fiscal year. It depends upon discussions we have over the course of this year with regard to the total amount of the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund and whether or not some new airport terminal buildings can be accommodated within the program.

If the situation is that a decision is made not to continue with the airport terminal program from Heritage Savings Trust Fund dollars, then it would be my intention to see if we can't work the provision of terminal buildings into the regular budget of the department, which the hon. member will see within the next week. As hon. members know, the department budget this year is in the order of \$10 million for building community and provincial airstrips, in terms of land acquisition, grade construction, paving, et cetera. To this point in time, we haven't utilized those regular funds of the department for terminal buildings. If we were not to continue here, it would be my intention to look at the possibility of utilizing some of those funds, probably for terminal buildings of a less expensive nature in smaller communities than what we've been doing under this particular program. By that, I mean that I think there is some room in a lot of communities for us to develop some kind of standard modular building we can purchase, perhaps move to the site, and have the communities involved provide services to it, such as water, sewer, electricity, and whatever.

Mr. Chairman, that's about as far as I can go in terms of the future. Whether or not this program continues is an open question — as I think it should be every year — because we don't have any carry-overs. We will have completed the Peace River terminal and built a new one

in Wetaskiwin, and there are no projects that are half completed, so to speak.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could briefly make a representation to the minister. Frankly, I think the program is outstanding, and I've had occasion to use those airports frequently. I just can't imagine what it must have been like before those facilities were in place.

I wonder, though, if in each of those it would be possible for the minister to arrange a meeting room, perhaps in the basement. The key could be left with the caretaker. From time to time when people need a facility where 10 or 12 people could sit around a table for meetings with some degree of privacy, I think it might be a very useful addition. I look forward to him commenting on whether or not that would be possible.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I thought I would give the Department of Transportation a bouquet on their airport program in this province. I had occasion to be in Winnipeg and met with an MLA from another province and, I believe, another party. He had nothing but good things to say about our airport facilities in this province. I think we've got some dandies.

In a more personal way, I would also like to thank the Transportation Department and the former minister for upgrading the Drumheller airport in my district and lengthening its runway. It's made it much safer. Now I believe if the minister could inform us when we're going to get a road out to it, I would be ... On the whole, we have a very good airport system, and I think the department has a lot of credit coming.

Thank you.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to add my comments to the hon. Member for Drumheller's with respect to air terminal buildings. The one in Red Deer is an excellent facility. The runway has been extended recently. In my view, the building is a fine example of the kinds of facilities central Alberta needs and deserves. I'm particularly pleased that, as a result of the upgraded facility, Red Deer has received approval, I guess would be the word, through the Department of Tourism and Small Business to sponsor a major air show in 1984. I'm most encouraged by that. This will be a major air show. The committee has been struck. There's a steering committee involved in it, in which I've taken some part, and it's going to be an excellent economic stimulus to the central Alberta region. So I would like to add my compliments to the minister and the Department of Transportation with respect to airport terminal buildings.

Thank you.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Chairman, I can't let the opportunity go by to put in a number of good words about the program itself because in my constituency, which is fairly large and to some degree considered to be isolated by some, we have the terminal facility at Rainbow Lake. I might point out at this point that Rainbow Lake is one of the communities that provides one of the largest sums of moneys to the coffers of Alberta. [interjection] I think I heard something over there. It was garbled. If you'd take the worms out of your mouth ...

DR. BUCK: You heard.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Chairman, the Manning and Fort Vermilion airport facilities are also on track and, of

course, the long-awaited one at the Peace River air terminal has been in the process for almost 11 years. I think it's important, not only as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for that area but as a minister responsible for the northern development branch and the council as well, along with my colleague the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, that this government has recognized the need for improved services in the north. That relates to air evacs, forest firefighting facilities, and the likes of that. Having said that, I would just commend the minister and indicate to him that anything we can do to ensure that where that need is in fact in place, we would be able to determine the dollars available within budgetary means to continue some type of that program.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I have two or three questions. They go into the whole area of transportation. I'm sure the minister has some rationalization. How do you determine when you build roads, when you build LRT, when you build airport terminals? I would like to know what the rationalization of that is. The other thing I'm curious about — because I look across the province, knowing it fairly well, and I see some names and wonder why some other names aren't there. How do you decide when a new airport is going to be built; for example, Peace River being the most recent one, compared to Vegreville or some other town? I was just through the area, and I'm curious what happened in Hanna, Drumheller, and Medicine Hat. What was done there?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I hesitate to get too far into the department budget, which will be announced by the hon. Provincial Treasurer next Thursday night. This vote only deals with the buildings. But I will say this: the whole area of airport development is a subject I would be more than pleased to discuss at length when the portion of the budget of the department that deals with airport construction, which during the current year is about \$10 million, comes in. It covers everything. This particular vote in the capital projects division covers airport terminals only.

I'll repeat the criteria we use with respect to where they're located. First of all, we look to see whether the need is there. There are airports with a fairly high level of take-offs and landings and usage, where there is already a pretty good terminal that was built with some other funds, so they may not be included here. We look at places where there is a real need, and then simply look at the level of activity. Expectations come into it as well, in terms of the level of activity: whether or not there's going to be regular service into the area, that sort of thing. Insofar as the nature of the buildings in the three areas the hon. member mentioned, I don't have details with me today. Those projects were done in the past. I don't have details with me as to the costs of those, but I would be pleased to get them.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I realize that we're discussing air terminal buildings but, to the hon. minister, we don't have air terminals until we have the landing strips in place. So it's pretty difficult to get into discussion of terminal buildings without discussing airports. There's one bit of information the minister can possibly give us or indicate to us where it is available, and that is a table of airplane movements at each of these airstrips and airports. If the minister could get that information for me, I'd much appreciate it.

In light of the fact that I said you can't discuss terminals without airports, maybe the minister could just indicate very, very briefly — or as briefly or as long as the minister thinks he needs to — what involvement the minister's department has in these ordinary little private strips on some farmer's land that are designated by the Department of Transport as sites where you can come down. I have one just across the road from my farm. I just want to know what control the provincial government has over those strips, and what the mechanism is to change those from sort of semi-permanent to permanent strips. It might be worth while to inform the new members just exactly what the policy is if a community wants to go into building a strip in their town and then put a terminal on it after they've got the strip in place.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I'm going from memory now. First of all, the government of the province of Alberta had no program of airport development or building, except through the forest service until — I believe 1973 was when we brought in this program. At that time, there were very close to 800 unlicensed farm-type strips throughout Alberta. One of the reasons we brought this program in was to try to set up a situation where we would have a number of airstrips strategically located throughout the province that could be utilized by communities, by farmers for spraying operations, regular scheduled service, and the Alberta Forest Service when required, that would be of a sufficient nature that we could expand the length of them so they would accommodate larger planes, and we could build terminal buildings and, over the years, they would serve us well.

So we're in the situation now where we don't build any airstrips unless we have room for 3,500-foot runways. We even like to have a full mile of runway so we can expand it as far as 5,000 feet, if need be. The result of that has been that we've presently got airstrips identified as provincial or local airstrips in 87 locations — which we've been assisting on financially — either built, partly built, or identified and probably land purchased for them. Of those 87, I believe there are only 15 that we haven't done some work on. Again, to the hon. member, during my estimates I'd be pleased to provide information with regard to the exact locations and how every one of those is sitting today. So the result of that has been to reduce the unlicensed airstrips in the province by a substantial amount. When I said there were close to 800 nine years ago, there are now just over 500. That's simply because, in some communities, as many as four or five unlicensed airstrips were serving various needs, and now we've replaced them with one good one.

The criterion we use in terms of locations is that we try not to look at an airport if it's within 25 miles of another one. In other words, we think there ought to be some reasonable distance. In some cases, we couldn't avoid that because you've got two communities 15 miles apart, each had an airport, and they wanted to keep it. So we've assisted in building new ones, but generally we try to stay 25 miles apart.

As far as we're concerned at the present time, the program is not going to expand over the next two or three years. We have 87 sites; those are provincial and local airports. We want to keep working on those sites before we identify any new ones, and it will take a few years to complete them. Insofar as the landings and take-offs are concerned, the hon. member will note that there is a question, No. 147, put on the Order Paper by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood, and it certain-

ly would be my intention to provide information before the estimates of the department come up with respect to airports. In fact, I presently have staff in the department looking at whether or not we are able to meet that particular order. I can say that we will, except that I will have to make some slight amendments to say, the weekly take-off totals on record, because there are some areas where we don't have any records. I'll be providing that within the next week or two.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to go back to a statement you made, and I appreciate this may be difficult. You said you determined across the province who's going to get an airport, a new one or upgrading, by the level of activity. I think you would agree that sometimes there may be some cynicism there because many towns feel that their lobby group was better, and that's why they got the airport. So I'm just curious about how you determine that level of activity.

MR. M. MOORE: The level of activity is related to actual take-offs and landings in cases where we know that. There are obviously a great number of these locations where records are not kept, and we don't know. We have to go by what the local chamber of commerce and the local MLA say. In that case, if you can consider that lobbying, if it's done effectively enough, we might make a decision to locate an airport or a terminal somewhere we wouldn't if there wasn't any lobbying. In my view, Mr. Chairman, that's the kind of work that MLAs carry out from time to time, as they well should. If anybody has any lobbying to do, go ahead and do it. It'll help.

MR. MARTIN: Is there a caucus committee that you work with?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd remind the hon. member to address remarks through the Chair and use the third person as far as the minister is concerned.

MR. M. MOORE: There was, previous to this Legislature, a caucus committee on airport development that assisted the minister in locating new sites and so on. No new committee was named in that regard, largely because we were not anxious to name any new sites. We want to complete the ones that have already been named. So there is presently no caucus committee involved.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of questions. The objective is to upgrade air transportation systems; to construct new air terminal buildings. As I recollect most of our discussion, we've been talking about terminal buildings. That's the sort of visible sign of success or not, I suppose, from the lobbying point of view. But what other aspects have been funded from this appropriation that ... I'm trying to get an idea of where the demarcation line would be between capital projects from the department; let us say, for example, a beacon or extending a runway. Conceivably that would come under upgrading air transportation systems. Would that be funded under this program traditionally, or would that come out of the normal capital works budget of the department?

If so, I guess I would ask the minister if ... The minister has indicated that we're not sure where the air terminal program is going, whether it will continue to be a capital works project or be shifted into the capital works area of the department budget itself. I would be

interested in hearing from the minister what the government's intentions are with respect to upgrading the runways in some of the smaller airports.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, while the objective of the particular vote may suggest it's to upgrade air transportation systems, according to my information, all we have ever done with the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund in this area is build terminal buildings, things immediately associated with them such as water supplies or something, which is occurring this year in the Lloydminster area. Insofar as runway extensions, beacons, and other services, that has been provided out of the regular budget of the department. The hon. member can see listed there the number of terminal buildings that have either been built or upgraded under this program.

I just want to make one final comment, Mr. Chairman, and that is with regard to the future of the program. I said I didn't know the future. I know one thing: it can end this year, in terms of projects that are under construction being completed at the end of this coming fiscal year. Obviously it couldn't have ended this year because we are half done with the Peace River airport, and we had to finish it.

I would be delighted if the hon. Provincial Treasurer could see his way clear for us to continue this program for a number of years so we could build terminal buildings in a good number of other places. I suspect there are a lot of communities yet where we could utilize these funds. If there is any overwhelming degree of support from the Legislative Assembly, it may well be that the Provincial Treasurer might put this on the top of his list in 1984-85.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions or comments?

DR. BUCK: Just one short question to the hon. minister. Do all the airports that we have in the province have beacons, or are some at a different standard than others? Is there a breakdown? Is the minister aware, or does he know?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I don't have that information. I'd be pleased to get it with respect to the provincial and local airports. The federal airports, of course, all do have. I can provide it during the estimates of the department that deal with the airport vote.

DR. BUCK: Just one other comment I would like to make to the minister. When we were talking about lobbying groups, I remembered the old days when we had ferries that went across the North Saskatchewan. When the little town that I grew up in, Heinsburg, was lobbying for a bridge, if you took one car across of course that automatically became five. You could go across like this and put a zap across. So it's very interesting to know how easy it is to fool the bureaucrats. The local people figure that out pretty quickly.

I want to make one other representation. I am sure the hon. Minister of Tourism and Small Business has lobbied for an airstrip at La Crete. I go up there every summer to make sure the minister is doing his job, and he is. The roads are improving, and the water and sewer are in. They are having a little trouble with the drainage, because some engineer, in his brilliance, tried to get water to run uphill. We farmers know that water doesn't run uphill,

but sometimes the Department of the Environment has a little problem understanding that it doesn't.

I would just like to know if the minister is in a position to indicate if there has been representation made by the community of La Crete to either upgrade their old airstrip or put a new one in. If the minister doesn't know, maybe the MLA for the area would know.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member will be pleased to know that representation has been made. While there are presently no plans for any improvements to the airport, in fact it is listed as the 87th local airstrip on our overall program. That was only recently done at the request of the MLA for the area, because he understood they were having trouble getting a dentist. [interjections]

MR. MARTIN: I would like to ask another question of the minister. I notice that back in 1981 there seemed to be some trouble with the federal government, if I was picking up from *Hansard*. There are different departments, and there seemed to be a holdup in Peace River. That was the main reason the Peace River airport didn't go ahead. I wonder if that problem has been sorted out now. I guess the more recent one would be with Wetaskiwin. Are the same problems still there?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, as far as I'm aware, the problems with respect to the development of the terminal in Peace River have been sorted out with the federal government. The federal government has no jurisdiction with respect to the Wetaskiwin one. That's a provincial airport.

The only other area where we were involved fairly extensively in discussions with respect to a terminal building was Fort McMurray. That is a federal airport, and there are still some ongoing discussions with the federal government in that regard.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary on that. What I was going by is *Hansard*, dealing with what Mr. Kroeger said in 1981, and it was not Peace River. I will just read here:

The program started . . . in 1977. During that period the funding was not coming from the heritage trust fund. But since that procedure of funding was brought in, 14 have been developed, and we're proceeding with three more that I can identify . . . We've had some [trouble] getting the Peace River terminal building, one of the major ones, under way. The major difficulty there has been getting permission from the federal government to proceed. Even though they aren't involved in the funding, it had to filter through 14 different departments in the federal government before we finally got the approvals to proceed.

That's what I was alluding to.

Agreed to:

1 — Airport Terminal Buildings \$2,505,000

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

[Motion carried]

Department of Agriculture

1 — Farming for the Future

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did the minister wish to make some comments?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As members will be aware, Farming for the Future was announced in October 1977. At that time it was given a mandate and a \$10 million allocation to put the program into effect. The formal funding of the project started in April 1979. During the 1980-81 fiscal year, an additional commitment of \$15 million was announced and the confirmation of the program's mandate was extended to March 31, 1984. The program has worked extremely well. One of the new, exciting areas that is really proving to be as exciting as we thought it would be to begin with, is the on-farm demonstration area. Nearly all the research that's been accomplished in agriculture has normally been on someone's farm. Farmers out in their shops and in their fields have come up with a lot of research. We have come out with some projects that are extremely exciting. To date, about 60 projects have been funded.

I would be pleased, Mr. Chairman, to try to answer any questions that members might have.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. I would like to ask his comments on two or three different issues. The first one is relating to my understanding of Farming for the Future. When it was started, it was to be a program that would complement the agricultural research that was being carried out by the federal government, not only in Lethbridge and Beaverlodge but other stations, to allow smaller projects to be carried on either by the people involved there or private people. We look at the amounts in Farming for the Future now. I don't know what percentage we are greater than the initial announcement, but I believe the initial announcement that was supposed to be for five years was passed in less than two years or something like that. It seems like everything we do relating to agricultural research, the federal government pulls out of. We heard an announcement some time ago of 26 or 25, whatever, jobs being pulled out of western Canada, the majority of them coming from the Lethbridge research station. I think that is going to set research back a hundred years in this country.

I'd like the minister to comment on that, and also the plant breeding programs that are being carried out. There's one that is, I believe, a joint program between winter wheat and soft white wheat. To my understanding, one breeder is breeding both. I think both those crops are important enough that, if possible, we should have two breeders, one doing each one of them. Both those crops have an important impact in southern Alberta and maybe the winter wheat in south-central Alberta. I think that it is time in our history that we spend the time to develop our own varieties.

I use soft white wheat for an example. We're taking the American varieties and trying to adapt them to our situation. Maybe we should be starting out and developing a variety here for our situation, not doing things to try to shorten the life of the plant, et cetera. Rather we should be developing it here, because we've got a multimillion dollar industry depending on one variety of wheat alone. If we have a serious disease strain in that wheat, Mr. Chairman, we could be in substantial trouble.

I think this is where Farming for the Future could get

into it, and this is where the federal government has abdicated their responsibilities in moving these people out. If you're going to develop production, as the feds say these people are supposed to, production and selling of a product doesn't do you a whole damned lot of good when you've got no product to sell. Something that may work in eastern Canada will not work on the prairies because of the weather. To think that you can transfer people from one part of Canada to the other and transfer the research, besides being asinine — it's worse than that. I'd like the minister to comment on those items, please.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate the hon. Member for Cypress' concern. If I could take the latter one first, and that's on plant breeding. Being from the soft white area — and I'm sure the hon. member knows more about soft white than even I do, and his concerns are certainly understandably legitimate. I will be raising those concerns about the scientists who are working on breeding of soft white wheat with them. I understand there is a concern that they may be spending too much time on winter wheat and not getting enough done on soft white. That's one of the new, developing markets. Members should be aware, Mr. Chairman, that we are also active in canola research, not only for new varieties but also for varieties that would be adaptable to northern Alberta.

The concern he mentioned about the federal government's cutbacks in research: when you're in a budget problem, that's always the easiest place to cut back because it's not one that's that visible. We have a real concern in Alberta about the cutbacks in research funding. I have written to the federal Minister of Agriculture, Eugene Whelan, expressing my concerns. I was fairly critical of cutbacks in agricultural research in Alberta if they cut back and we have to move in and pick up those areas of slack. Research, as we see it, is one area that should not have any cutbacks, because it's one area that really has a multiplier factor that really works. Not only is it very helpful to producers in these difficult economic times — that's one area — it's also very helpful to agricultural processors in the province, right down to the consumer, so that the consumer has new and better products grown in Alberta. We have that concern about the federal cutbacks in research. I intend to be as vocal as I possibly can to see that those cutbacks don't continue and that research gets the priority it should, not only there but also here. I think it's important that I be vocal enough — we have difficult economic times here — that the research area is not one that gets those cutbacks.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I forgot one item. I wonder if the minister could comment on some research that may be going on regarding — I'm not sure of the wording, rhizomes, or something like that, anyway, nitrogen fixation — transferring that from alfalfa, et cetera, to crops such as wheat, barley, and things like this. I wonder if he knows any projects involving that and what Farming for the Future would think of that? I'm sorry I don't know the right name for it. I'm just a farm boy. I understand the principle, but I can't pronounce those big names.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I didn't even understand the principle until about last year. That research is, I believe, being done on alfalfa at the Lethbridge research station, where they inoculate the seed. It reduces significantly the amount of fertilizer that's needed

to produce a crop. When I discussed it with them at that time, they didn't know how they could take it and apply it to an annual crop like wheat. They could do it with a crop like alfalfa or some other forage crop, but they didn't know how they'd adapt that to an annual crop. Farming for the Future is definitely most interested in that. Any projects that come forward, I'm sure they would look at with interest.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to have the minister indicate — and we're looking at the preamble here — the implementation. It says, "Research projects can be in any of the following categories", and then it itemizes them. What I'd like to know from the minister is: never mind what they "can" be, what are we doing? Which areas are we doing the research in?

I would just like to follow that up by saying that I've seen a report someplace and have been down in southern California, where I believe most of our lettuce and those things come from. Can the minister indicate what research is being done in that part of the agricultural sector? I think the day is not that far away when southern Alberta could be raising a large percentage of the leafy vegetables, and so on, that we could be using in this part of the country. So I'd just like to know: where it says "can be in any of the following categories", which areas are we actively involved in? Secondly, what are the research people doing in the area of leafy vegetables?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, that's an excellent question. It's one that I know the hon. member is certainly concerned about. I am, too, because we have a number of areas in California where we're getting our vegetables from now where urban encroachment or something like that is taking a lot of those acres out of production. Here, the greenhouse industry is one that I think has a bright future. There was an industry task force report that I've received but haven't had an opportunity to study at any length. As soon as I have had an opportunity to look over it, it will, of course, be a public document. That is one area that the hon. member raises that I think is vital.

If you look at the back of the Farming for the Future booklet, you'll find the special crops. One is the establishment of leaf tissue analysis standards for greenhouse crops in Alberta, some on potatoes, and a number of other areas. That is one that is going to receive more emphasis in the future, because we recognize the concern that we should be growing those vegetables here in the province rather than importing them.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

DR. BUCK: On that point, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. There's an interesting project right in this area — the Hole vegetable farm just outside St. Albert — where they really started it almost as a hobby. I don't know how many employees they now have, but they're doing a terrific job of it. I'd just like to indicate how we in the northern climes seem to think that we just have to let Mother Nature take its course, and that's all you have to do.

I'd like to recall a little incident to the members of the committee. When we were down in California, it was about the first of March and the temperature would go up to about 80 Fahrenheit in the afternoon and then go down to about 40 above in the evening. We were going along the freeway, and there were thousands of acres of cultivation with little white things. And I thought: num-

ber one, it can't be snowballs; number two, awfully large mushrooms? What are they? The bus driver said, heat caps. I said, heat caps when it goes up to 80 above during the day? He said, well, if we use heat caps to get the seedlings started, we can have two, three or, four crops — I forget how many he said. I thought, here I am, practically in the Arctic Circle — for all intents and purposes, according to the Americans, we are in the Arctic Circle — and here I am trying to grow vegetables in my garden just depending on the natural heat from the sun.

So last year, being a good Ukrainian farm boy, I thought I'll give it a little go. You know, anybody can grow zucchini. So what I did for experimental purposes was hilled six zucchini plants, covered them with two by two pieces of plastic, and pulled them up into a heat cap. Those crazy zucchini — and I left two of them for control — were two and a half to three weeks ahead of the zucchini plants that weren't covered. I thought that must be telling me something, and I remembered the little story about the heat caps in southern California. So I think it's time the Department of Agriculture really went after people in this part of the country and said, look, we can produce these things. All you have to do is just produce a lot of them under a little bit of plastic.

It won't grow hair, Larry. You can take female hormones, but a few other little things will grow as well as hair.

As well as using some of the hothouse techniques that we have been using, this is an area we should really try to do a public education program on, after the experimental work is done. I think a lot of people are doing many of these things on their own. After fooling around with the zucchini plants last year, I know I'm going to start practically all of my vegetables under plastic. In this part of the country, it's that critical period from about the middle of May until the 1st or 5th of June, when you are over the frost damage area. If you can give those plants that three-week head start, you will be almost three to four weeks ahead at the end of the season.

Many people recognize that we're used to just going down to the local store and buying seeds. We've been doing this on the prairies for 75 years. No one questions if they are 52- or 72-day germination plants? You just pick some. A friend of mine who is doing market gardening as a hobby said, when you order your seeds, first of all make sure they are northern hardy, and then find out what growing season you've got and adjust accordingly. So we can be much more scientific than we are. But I think this is exactly what we are talking about in Farming for the Future. This is an area in which we could certainly do more than we are doing.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to respond to that, because I think the comments are right on the issue. If you look at the number of areas — and I'm pleased that the hon. member brought up zucchini, because my wife does the same thing, and I have zucchini cake, zucchini pie, zucchini everything before the summer is over. Those are areas where we could certainly do something. One of the concerns that we've had in Farming for the Future is that we don't duplicate research that's done somewhere else. What's always been a concern is that you have research done in a number of areas, like greenhouses. It's done somewhere in the world, put on a shelf, and nothing happens with it. Then we have duplication of research and the money is not properly spent. What we're trying to do is find out what research is being done and to co-ordinate that, because there are a

lot of areas where we can make new moves. There are areas in which research has been done in British Columbia on new types of greenhouses that are a lot cheaper to grow food in. It takes a lot of energy in the northern climate to keep those greenhouses in the wintertime, and we should be looking at adapting here some of the new moves they've made there. These are areas we can certainly be involved in.

I didn't answer the second [part] of the member's last question, and that was, how do we decide what money goes into the areas? Basically, when it was set up it was looked at on the income generated in the province from a particular area. Then it was kind of split up on a percentage basis. Each project that comes in is looked at on its own merit to see what benefit it will have. What we are trying to do is increase the net incomes of Alberta producers and trying to do a number of other things. From the program committees, those projects go to the research council, and they try to work them into the budget. I don't think it's perfect. There are areas we can't fund that we should, but I think that significant strides are being made.

The last comment I'd like to make is that part of those heat caps and everything are ones that work on on-farm demonstration projects and for market gardeners. There are a number of things. We have some tremendous people who are in business in this province, either as a business or as a sideline, who have new techniques and approaches that can do a lot of things for the industry. I'd like to see some of those make application for on-farm demonstrations too.

DR. BUCK: There's just one area I'd like to touch on, Mr. Chairman. Like I say, we get into ruts; the son farms practically the same way his father and grandfather did. You just put it in, in the spring, and take it off in the fall. In fooling around trying to raise things in this part of the province, the limiting factor is still water. It's water as much as heat and sunlight. Having grown up in this part of the province, we seem to think that irrigation is just something they do in southern Alberta. But if you want to have a terrific raspberry crop, John, or strawberry crop or anything at all, you irrigate it. It's just that simple. I've got a patch of raspberries about the size of that table; you can feed half of Fort Saskatchewan from it. But you pour the water and fertilizer to it.

Again, that's an area where we should get information out to people in the northern part of the province. If you go into market gardening, pick yourself a spot where you've got lots of water. It's just that simple. Like I say, we have the long days and sufficient heat, and the limiting factor is still water. So that's a matter the minister can give consideration to: maybe put on small irrigation demonstrations, or how you can do it on a small scale in the northern part of the province. Many people here think irrigation is something you just do in the south, and it could be applicable here.

MR. KOWALSKI: I've several questions that I'd like to raise with the minister with respect to this program. I think it has proven to be of considerable benefit to the people of Alberta since its inception several years ago.

My first question really deals with some statistics contained in the 1982 progress report of the Farming for the Future program. It deals with the question of the distribution of projects by the institutions. During that time frame, 1979 through to 1983, there were something like 150 projects awarded under the Farming for the Future

program. Earlier one of my colleagues in the House raised a concern with respect to the number of projects we're funding that are being initiated by Agriculture Canada. If you look at those figures, they indicate that some 37 projects were awarded to Agriculture Canada. I share the concern the minister talked about: the federal government reducing its involvement in that in the province of Alberta, and really looking to the province of Alberta to undertake a new responsibility area that might more legitimately fall within the federal government.

But the one area that bothers me, because I simply don't know the answer, is with respect to the number of research projects that have been either awarded to or initiated by private industry. Of that figure of 150, only 13 projects seem to have been initiated by the agricultural private sector in the province. Earlier this week, I made comments on the very important role that agriculture does play in the province of Alberta. Can the minister give me a reason why the private sector has come forward with so very few initiation projects for research? It seems to me that the vast, vast majority of these projects is really in the academic world at the universities: 37 from Agriculture Canada, 52 from the University of Alberta, but only 13 out of 150 from the private sector. Can the minister suggest some reasons behind that?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, that's an excellent question. The private-sector applications for research projects have been a concern in the Agricultural Research Council too. You can only deal with what you get. We just haven't received that many from the private sector. In the projects we look at, if there is a concern out there that research might solve, we try to pick the best place to do it. It doesn't necessarily have to be in Alberta. If it's in Manitoba, fine. If it's in Saskatchewan, fine, or wherever it is, to get the biggest bang for the buck we're spending to get the answers we need.

One of the reasons for coming up with the on-farm demonstration project was not only to take the research off the shelves and put it out on the farm, so they could see if it would really work under farm conditions, but to take those projects, get more private-sector involvement, more individuals coming in with projects they want to do. The hon. member might also be interested in knowing that we are funding vegetable garden culturing practices at Fort McMurray. Some people might be surprised at why we're getting into vegetable production in Fort McMurray, but that is one of the areas that the private sector is getting involved in, doing cultural practice research at Fort McMurray, specifically for vegetable gardens in that type of soil and those climatic conditions. But we have an ongoing concern about the number of applications that come from the private sector.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, just a further question on this particular area. We're asking to look at some \$7.5 million of expenditure in the upcoming fiscal year. Several years ago, I recall one of the concerns was the fact that there were not enough applications forthcoming from the research sector and those involved in research. We were greatly troubled by the fact that we were quite willing and ready to allocate significant amounts of public money, yet the applications appeared to be short of the amount that was being allocated. Are we still in that kind of situation today? Do we have more money than we have projects, or is the number of projects coming in almost meeting the amount of dollars we are providing?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, we don't really have a problem with the number of projects. I'm sure that each one on each program committee, when they get the bundle they have to review for each committee meeting, would agree there's not a shortage of projects. Sometimes the quality of those projects is down because we have researchers that really don't have any work, so they put in a project hoping to get funding so it continues — areas where maybe you get projects coming in that really aren't applicable or areas you want to get into. But the short answer to your question is yes, I think we are getting enough. But how much is enough? How high is high and how low is low? I think we could use more.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, if I can continue, I've got several more. With respect to the actual research projects that are funded, are they made available to the public? Is there a bibliography of research projects so any individual in the country who wishes to access it or receive the whole concept can simply contact the Farming for the Future people, and they'll be provided to them without cost?

Mr. Chairman, my next question [not recorded] projects. I think that was a very, very significant move and it's already been talked about. The minister indicated there were some 60 projects being made available in the current fiscal year. Can he outline the average cost and funding for this type of project? It's my understanding that they're right on the farm. These projects can be initiated by an individual farmer. We're not really demanding the sophisticated type of application form that might be forthcoming from one in the academic world who would be requesting rather substantial amounts of dollars for funding. Can he give me just an average as to what the amount of the project might be?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I'm not able to do that. I don't have the numbers with me. Some of them are very, very small, in the \$1,000 or \$2,000 area, and some are larger. To give you some idea of what kind of projects there are, there's one in Stettler on solonchik soil improvement. Another one at Stettler is on a combination of deep tillage and lime applications. There's one in Airdrie on pre-immunization of feeder cattle, to demonstrate the value of pre-immunizing calves prior to sale. There's one in Nampa in the Peace River on hog barn heat exchangers, using heat exchangers to reduce the cost of heating hog barns. So they vary considerably. But I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I can't give an accurate number.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I think that gives me a fairly good idea.

One of the concerns raised a little earlier was the fact that perhaps not enough people in the province were really aware of the Farming for the Future program. Certainly my colleague the Member for Clover Bar indicated that perhaps we have to do a bit more in allowing the people of Alberta to be aware of these projects. Are you giving any thought to having one of the very excellent heritage trust fund signs perhaps located at the farm site where many of these on-farm demonstration projects are going on, to alert other members in the community that there is some activity, and a program that would be available to them, should they wish to pursue the idea?

AN HON. MEMBER: With the minister's name on them.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, the minister's name is not on them and won't be, but the heritage fund emblem is on all the projects, and signs are up to show that it is the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund funding those projects. It is a concern about how you communicate what is really happening. We try to put publications out in different ways, but I have a question in my mind: who reads them?

DR. BUCK: The successful farmer.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Successful farmers read them, but maybe the people that really need that research aren't taking advantage of it. One of the things I have in my mind is that I don't think decisions about which projects to fund or which ones to continue funding, should be made sitting in an office. I'd like everyone on those committees to get out to the locations where the research is taking place, to see if they've made the right decision or if modifications should be made. Also I think the agricultural caucus, in fact all members of the Assembly — I'm going to try to arrange something this summer so they can get out and see some of these projects taking place and get some idea of what's happening.

I'm also going to try to work the media into it somehow, not particularly to get publicity but to make them aware that this is going on. When you talk agriculture in the Legislature, the press gallery is normally empty. You can't get the information out this way. If you put it in the newspapers, it doesn't seem to get out. But I think direct contact with those projects is important. I don't suggest we go out of the province to look at all these projects, but within the province I think we should have more of a high profile of members from the Assembly and also constituents. We can have field days or do something where they can see some of these ongoing projects.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, one last question. The Member for Clover Bar has a fascination with zucchini. I have a concern over a pest that seems to cover most of Alberta in the late spring and the early summer. It's the Bertha army worm. It's just incredible to me that our scientists have not been able to find a solution to that little bug. It's a real problem.

Can the minister advise whether or not he's initiating anybody in the academic world to take a look at that problem and to see if there is a solution? I can think of nothing more disagreeable to most of my constituents in the May-June and early July time frame than that little bug that seems to be crawling everywhere. It seems to do nothing but eat and destroy and leave devastation in its wake.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: That's an excellent question. I wish I had as good an answer, because I don't know. But I'll be happy to check and make sure. I agree with the member that it is a problem, but I can't tell you whether Farming for the Future is funding a project like that at the moment.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, just some questions to the hon. minister. Representing an inner city in Edmonton Norwood, of course I'm an expert in all these areas, but I'll ask just a couple of technical questions. First of all, when did this come, in what year, and have concrete things been brought about because of some of the projects that are now in use? Let me preface that. Generally

looking at it quickly, I think the whole idea is a good one, and I'd like to compliment the government. It's not often I'll do that, but when we're looking into alternate sources, whether it be energy or food for the future, I think this is never wasted money. Maybe I'll just stop there, and I'll add some specific things if I could get those.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: It started in October 1977. It was given a five-year mandate, and at that time it was given a \$10 million allocation in order to fund the project. Because of the number of requests that came in, and good proposals that should have been looked at for funding, there was another \$15 million announced in the '80-81 fiscal year, that would continue the mandate of the program on to March 31, 1984. Over the next year I intend to pull together the information on what the effectiveness has been for Farming for the Future, so I can prove that the projects that have been ongoing have indeed increased the income of Alberta producers.

There are areas, for example, in irrigation, with the lining of canals and areas like that where new techniques have been arrived at. Also there is considerable progress on the black-fly problem in the north, and there are areas like that that have been relatively specific. I'm putting that together right now in order to use it to lobby my colleagues to try to get additional funding, and I'll be happy to provide that to you as soon as I have it.

MR. MARTIN: You said that 60 projects had been approved. Correct? There are 60 projects that have been approved over the length of time? [interjection] I see. My hon. colleague the Member for Clover Bar, in talking about new ideas for the north, wondered about truck gardening in the Peace, if that's something you're looking into specifically.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I can't say if we're looking at that particularly. We certainly are looking at vegetable gardening of all kinds, whether it be greenhouse or whatever, in the north. I haven't seen this year's projects because we changed some areas that we were focussing our attention on. Number one, the projects that were funded shouldn't be ongoing forever. There should be some end to them, and there should be a filing of the results so we don't have ongoing research — and also to put an emphasis on the different areas we want to see more research proposals on. If I had an opportunity to review this year's, I could give you a better answer on the truck gardening one. I don't know if there is one this year, but we certainly do have an emphasis on the market gardening aspect.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you. If it wasn't, I take it that it's certainly the type of thing you would look into if a proposal was made. One that made the news a lot in the past was the alfalfa pelleting industry. I'll ask a couple of specific questions, if you have this material with you. How many have gone broke in the recent past and, secondly, do you think there is a future for this industry in Alberta?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I don't have the one on the alfalfa industry with me this morning. But yes, it does have a future. It does have a future in the pelleting aspect for export, and there are many areas of the province where, you know, alfalfa is what they grow the best, and we have a concern. That concern has been evident in having the Agricultural Development Corporation assist those plants

to stay in operation, not only for the plants themselves — that wasn't the main aspect — but for the producers in the area that were providing produce to those plants. I know there is one coming on stream in the Medicine Hat area, that is being looked at at the moment, and that one is private-sector involvement to build a plant. What they're looking at is being able to grow three or four crops a year on irrigation rather than one, one and a half, or two crops in some other areas. There seems to be a market really opening up in the Pacific Rim and other areas. Yes, I have to say the alfalfa industry does have a future in Alberta.

MR. MARTIN: Just one last question. You may have answered this. Are the projects that come to your department public knowledge, and could the members look at what is coming in?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I'm sure it is — certainly the ones that were approved by the Research Council for funding for this year. That's no problem. I'll be happy to provide that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to have to apologize. I'm going to ask some questions, then unfortunately I have to catch a plane. They have not convinced the air lines to wait for the hon. members of the Legislature at this stage, so ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Not even the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NOTLEY: Not even the Leader of the Opposition. Otherwise I have to drive that car all the way home. That's too far to drive. I'm getting old and lazy in my ...

Mr. Chairman, first of all, just in respect for members of the committee, I'd like to advise that pursuant to the rule that I raised today in the House, I've advised the Clerk of the Assembly that at 3:30, or when we go into Committee of Supply on Monday, we'll be dealing with the Environment estimates. I'd like to make that information available for all members of the committee, so that if they wish to prepare, they can. I've advised the minister, the Government House Leader, and the Independent leader, and we can go from there.

The questions I'd like to raise are just a bit of a follow-up to the questions my colleague raised concerning the future of irrigation in the north. When people talk about irrigation, they think exclusively about southern Alberta. Frankly, when you look at the vastness of the Peace River, the tremendous potential of the Peace River, I believe there is in fact potential for irrigation in the north. I've talked to the minister's regional officials about this. When we look at the future of agriculture in this province, the emphasis we should place on the development of the north, in my view, is extremely important, Mr. Minister, and there are many facets of it. There is the additional grain that could be grown. Much of the Peace River valley has extremely rich soil. There is a truck gardening aspect that my colleague mentioned. We have some excellent vegetables that are grown along the valley of the Peace River at the moment, and I think there is potential for significant expansion there. This is the sort of thing that the capital works budget, in my view, should encourage.

The second area that I want to touch upon is the types of agricultural processing which become viable. We have talked for a long time in this House about the need for

agricultural processing, but that's a theoretical question until we get down to looking at the practical application of that approach. My colleague raised the issue of alfalfa pelleting plants. I recall vividly the enthusiasm we had in the early '70s about the pelleting business. We had pelleting plants develop all over the province; then we had a large number of them go under.

I agree with the minister. I think there is a very considerable potential for the pelleting business in the province. There are certain regions of Alberta where that just makes a good deal of sense because of the particular soil. I might add that one example — this is not to make formal representation or attempt to lobby the minister — is with respect to the Wanham area. We've had a good example of how a pelleting plant could fit into a community — the gray-wooded soil, the growth of legumes. The pelleting plant just made a tremendous amount of sense.

I would say to the government that any information they can obtain in terms of marketing surveys, feasibility studies, changes that might be necessary in the structure of the Agricultural Development Corporation — all those aspects would be a useful study, but beyond that a study which could be effectively utilized by people in the business to pick up the pieces where we've had plants that have gone under. I think that's the point I'd like to leave with the minister. We've had a number of plants that have gone under; let's see to what extent it's going to be possible to revive the pelleting business in Alberta.

The minister and I may disagree on quite a number of things, but there's no question that we have to move into value-added. It has to be an objective. We may differ about how we do that, particularly as it applies to something called the Crow rate, but we'll set that aside. I think the kinds of initiatives in market development that can be taken by the province of Alberta are, for example, in the kind of capital that might be made available, in sitting down with people where we've had a plant go broke and, before that plant is dismantled, saying, what can we do to salvage that operation? Because if we sell a plant — Wanham is a good case in point. I don't want to belabor the issue, but if we get into a situation where you dismantle a plant, we're going to lose money. The ADC's going to lose money. We're not going to be able to get anything for this machinery sold individually, but if we could keep it going as an operation — and I say to the minister that I know of at least several examples in this province beyond Wanham — then it would be a useful addition to the economy of Alberta.

I know that this particular appropriation does not fund the sort of "how we get the show on the road" aspect, but it does make it possible to do an in-depth survey of markets and research what in fact is possible in the alfalfa industry. I would just urge the minister to take what I've said as gentle representation from, on this particular day anyway, a friendly source.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I think your first comment was with respect to irrigation in the north. I couldn't agree with you more. I spent some time ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I wonder if the hon. minister would use parliamentary language.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member raised the concern about irrigation, and I'm happy to say I was in his constituency and was also

lobbied considerably about research, the irrigation potential in the north, and how irrigation is now a technically advanced process and there has to be some research and some demonstration of how irrigation could be done. I couldn't agree with him more.

We always think the north gets lots of rain. Last year proved that we don't get lots of rain all the time, and it's that assured supply of water going onto crops that's important. You don't want to get it all at once and then not have anything for a couple of months. So that representation is well taken.

As far as value-added is concerned, we don't disagree. Nobody has the absolute, right answer on how it should be done. Individuals out there are coming up with new processes and new ways of value-adding products so that we're not shipping all kinds of raw products out of here and they're processed somewhere else. It only makes good sense to process that product here in the province of Alberta, and we have the people and resources with which to do it. We don't disagree on that at all, because there are a number of ways that can be handled. As far as the alfalfa industry is concerned, Mr. Chairman, I'll be happy to sit down with the hon. member and spend some time on that particular one.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, my question is addressed to the Minister of Agriculture as well. I've had a number of constituents in Edmonton Kingsway ask me about the rising prices for eggs and fowl in this province. My questions relate to the Alberta Egg and Fowl Marketing Board. First of all, I'd like to know how long it has been in existence. Secondly, what are some of its roles and functions, and thirdly, has this organization done anything to attempt to bring down the price of eggs and fowl in this province? For example, the discrepancy between prices in this province and the United States is so wide. I would like to ask you to answer those, please.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I don't have the numbers the hon. member is referring to because it really doesn't fall under this vote. However, I would say in answer to that that eggs and chickens are under a marketing board, and the way that marketing board is administered relates to the prices that are charged.

I might say that really I don't think our research is looking at ways to make food that much cheaper for consumers, even though that is a target for everyone, because of the fact that if you look at the number of actual food products in your grocery cart when you wheel it out of a supermarket, there is a small percentage of that grocery cart that's actual food. The more research we can go into to find new types of products and new processes will, of course, relate to cheaper products for consumers. But the area of chickens and eggs that he's talking about is one I'll be happy to discuss under my department estimates.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, a second question dealing with a different topic. It pertains to nitrites in food. There has been much said about nitrites and their impact as a possible carcinogen. I'm just wondering if there has been any additional research with respect to nitrites in food?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, not that I'm aware of, and I don't believe it would be under this

particular one that anything has been done. I would stand to be corrected. I'd have to check that. That would be one area the Department of Agriculture research itself would be looking into, and I'll be happy to check what research has been done on that particular issue and provide it to the hon. member.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Minister, I'd like to pick up on something that the Member for Barrhead mentioned briefly. It's about private enterprise and government combining in research programs. I know that we have a small example of this in our area — in my area and I think especially in your own constituency. In the last couple of years, farmers have kind of joined together under an association. I think it's called the farmers' soil protection association. It used to be what they called the no-till association, which was a very poor name for it. The association is growing rapidly in our area, with the new types of machinery and everything that's coming out. I know that the government funds this to a very limited degree through your department. I'm wondering if there's any chance of any increased funding for this association, as the members are certainly looking forward to finding another way of trying new machinery and new methods in what they call the no-till situation, which really preserves our topsoil from wind and water erosion.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, I'll take the hon. member's representation and lobby into consideration. There are projects now funded by Agriculture Canada at Lacombe, Lethbridge, and through Farming for the Future on zero tillage and cropping practices, and there's another one on conservation of land productivity in Alberta. That study is into the erosion process and losses of organic matter nutrients in the tith in Alberta. Those are areas that we are focussing attention on, because land and water are our two important things. The Good Lord isn't making any more land. What we've got is what we have, and we have to take care of it, preserve it, and try to utilize it in better ways to prevent erosion. That is an ongoing part of the research, not only in the Department of Agriculture but in specific areas through Farming for the Future.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Chairman, my comments and question could partly be directed to Environment, but there have been some suggestions that the effluent from the Calgary sewer system could be used for sprinkler irrigation. Now the researchers I talked to in Calgary said that it would take 200 sections of land to use the effluent of the city of Calgary on sprinkle irrigation. The city of Medicine Hat uses its effluent for sprinkler irrigation. The city of Calgary has approximately 12 times the population of the city of Medicine Hat. The area necessary for sprinkler irrigation is insignificant compared to 200 sections of land. I question whether that was accurate or not. I certainly believe that this would be a viable way of solving several problems.

One problem it would solve is the need to remove the nitrates and phosphates from the effluent, because nitrates and phosphates are applied to agricultural land artificially. So they would not need to be taken out. I wonder if there's been any research done on this, and I certainly hope we could have a good look at this. It would not only improve the quality of water in the Bow River for downriver users; it would save the city of Calgary quite a few dollars in the cost of removing nitrates and phosphates, and it certainly would be a boost

to agriculture, providing it was used properly. Combining those three in one, I hope we can justify the cost in handling this.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, that's an excellent comment, because there are many areas across the province now that are using effluent for irrigation purposes with the farmers in the area. I'm not aware of any projects funded through Farming for the Future on that particular one, but I'm sure there is some work being done through the Department of Agriculture. I think that issue is so important to all members right across the province that I'll be happy to dig up the research material available on that and circulate it to all members.

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Chairman, this has to do with the agricultural processing industry. We have a new \$9 million canola oil refining plant proposed by Canada Packers down our way. Apparently there is some more money going into Lethbridge. Have you any more up-to-date news on what is happening with that? It would be quite a boost for our agriculture right across the province, helping put in our new Crow rate adjustment at the same time. It would kind of show that maybe something like that would be working, if it is going to be working. Could you give me a comment on that, please?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, the further refining of product in the province is vital to the growth of the industry. Not only do we need our crushing plants that are here but, in order to help that crushing industry and thereby help the producers, the further refining of that oil in Alberta is important. Through the Nutritive Processing Agreement between the federal government and the province of Alberta, there was an allocation of money given to Canbra Foods in Lethbridge to update — because it's one of the older plants — their refining capacities so they could further refine the oil.

The hon. member is correct: there is another plant being looked at for the province of Alberta. We're very supportive of that, because further refining of that product here is so vital. I'm not aware of anything in particular that's done in Farming for the Future with respect to that further refining. A lot of that is being done by the companies themselves that are looking at what they can use the product for. However, we are doing a lot with canola varieties as the base for altering the levels of fatty acids and everything in the canola product. But I'm not aware of anything that's been done on further refining of canola oil through this particular vote.

Agreed to:

1 - Farming for the Future \$7,500,000

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

[Motion carried]

2 — Food Processing Development Centre

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did the minister wish to comment?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, this project on the Food Processing Development Centre was approved by the Legislature in the '81-82 budget and provides a research and development facility at the Leduc industrial park, serving all Alberta's food processors. Upon comple-

tion, Mr. Chairman, the centre will provide the food industry with a facility which can be used in the creation and testing of new products and processes, and really is in preparation for small-lot testing for marketing. We feel the plant will be used by the meat, dairy, oilseed, cereal, and prepared food processors who really, individually, couldn't justify within their own plants the technical and complex equipment that would be necessary to further process those products.

To give you some idea of where we are with it, Mr. Chairman, it's expected that by the end of this month the interior cement will be poured, the interior block walls will be constructed, and the installation of the mechanical services will have begun. The electrical panels right now are nearing completion. The requested funds should enable the facility to be operational in late 1983, and six staff members of the agricultural processing branch in Edmonton will be moved there. Then I understand that two additional staff will be required once the performance testing and operator training really begins.

The additional staffing in future years, Mr. Chairman, will depend on what the activities are in the food-processing industry. We don't have a feel for that right at the moment, so any additional staffing that'll be looked at will depend on the amount of use it has. I'll be happy to try to answer any questions, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to congratulate the minister on the development of this facility. I think there are a lot of good ideas out there for processing, and certainly the agricultural industry and the small producer need the availability of such a research centre.

I'd just like to ask the minister what kind of mechanism has been set up for producers who are interested in developing a new product to outline their needs to the research centre, and how this is going to be facilitated in conjunction with the private sector.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, as far as I understand, anyone who wishes to try out a new process of some type, whether it be packaging or a process, will just make an application to them. They will establish a time that the facilities can be used, if they are used by somebody else at that particular time, and it will be arranged with industry or individuals that have a new type of process they want to try.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. minister. In the previous vote, the minister said we want to make sure we don't have duplication of things that are already in place. I so well remember the former Minister of Agriculture, the hon. Dr. Hugh Horner, telling us at great length all the great and wonderful new things that were going to happen in the province when he became the minister, from bog cranberries to bog blueberries to raising rainbow trout. The whole province was just going to be turned upside down with all these great and wonderful things that were going to happen. Well we had a few pellet plants go into receivership, and we've still got the famous sheep processing plant in Innisfail.

Basically what I'm trying to get across is that the minister still hasn't indicated, to me at least, exactly what the food processing development centre is going to do. I guess I can't really blame the minister, because he seemed to have a little trouble understanding what this thing was supposed to do. Maybe he has had a chance to look at his notes a little more closely and can tell us exactly what this thing is supposed to do. Are we going to be processing

food for, say, air lines? Or are we going to be using quick-freeze techniques? Just what in the dickens are we going to be doing out there? I've been in this business long enough to know that when you start with a vote of \$4.5 million, that's just for the foundations. Then we add the bureaucracy and everybody else to that, and pretty soon we've got another department that's going to be coming back here for several million dollars every year *ad infinitum*. I remember that there was such great backslapping when we made this announcement, and it managed to carry on into the last election and they backslapped a little bit more. I want to know exactly what we're going to do before we vote \$4.5 million. What is this facility going to do in Leduc?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: That's an excellent question, Mr. Chairman, because as far as the products are concerned, I think there is no end to the different areas that could be looked at. For example, in packaging, they say that if you use packages instead of cans, the product inside stays a lot better. There are a number of areas. I don't know whether the air line industry — if there's a market for something and some private-enterprise operator wants to come up with a process for a new product, I suppose he'll go there and look at it.

There are a number of things we're doing in the province right now. When I looked it up, I was pleased. In the export business, that was assisted by Alberta Agriculture, to give you some idea, in 1981 it was \$270 million and in 1982 — the stats aren't complete yet — it looks like it will be over \$300 million. As far as new business is concerned, just in January and February, \$5 million worth of agricultural and food products left Alberta. That's new business, over and above the other. We have a new market for hides in China. It's been open to us for about six months and led to \$2 million in sales. We had 23,000 head of cattle sent to Korea in the last 18 months. Forty containers of beef have gone to England since August of '82. Now I asked, how much is in a container? It could be a small can. How big is it? They say it's roughly 40,000 pounds. So we've had 40 of those containers go to England. There are good volumes of high-quality beef that we're starting to move into the U.S. and Japan, and there might be new cuts or new types of products needed to serve that market. The testing can be worked on in the lab.

There has been a 40 per cent increase in the movement of Alberta seed potatoes that has occurred in the last six to nine months. Sales are over \$1 million and likely to hit \$2 million by 1984. There are sales out of Alberta by the Safeway export division. It has been successful in moving grocery products and processed meats under the Canadian Pride label into Hawaii, Seattle, Spokane, and Denver. They are also moving other products from operators here in the province of Alberta that include crumpets, cookies, pyrogies, honey, croutons, headcheese, Polish sausage, thick-sliced bacon, and a number of others. In fact if you look at it, one-third of the Alberta manufacturing industry is in agricultural processing — one-third.

So if we can increase that by processing products here and look at the dollar numbers, that can be an improvement not only to consumers here in the province for new products and new processes but throughout the world. The export value of Alberta products is about \$3.5 billion and finds markets in over 60 countries. Now there are a lot of markets out there. In order to do that and to find them, there is just no way a small operator that wants to

get into making croutons, for example — he might have a new approach to do it. He has the availability of this food processing centre and can come in to run a test or something on his product to see if it will fit.

You never know how something is going to work until it gets started. I think it's an excellent idea; I think it's got a lot of merit. But a lot is going to depend on how many agricultural processors in this province or individuals that have new ideas, are going to be prepared to use it. From indications that we have so far, it looks very positive.

The original question of the member was, what kind of processes will it be doing? I think there is no limit to what it will do. I am not saying it will make — when it isn't even built yet, it's hard to be specific on what kinds of things will be done there until I see the equipment and have some idea of what's going to be there. A lot is going to depend on the demands that are placed on it by industry.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, just a couple of points. The \$804,000 spent already, is that basically on target in terms of the bid? Would you say that's on target; we're not overrun?

The other thing I just want to do is a little different from the last one, Farming for the Future, because you always have a handle project-by-project on the money. Of course to go to what the Member for Clover Bar was talking about, it's all right to build the thing, but we don't seem to have a handle on what that's going to cost in the future. You and I both know this is where governments all over North America have run into problems: having nice capital projects with no clear handle on what they're going to cost in the future. I would just say to the minister that I think you would have to watch this program very closely, because we will be putting \$4 million into it and it's the type of thing that could end up being a bamboozle if it isn't watched very closely.

Agreed to:

2 — Food Processing Development Centre \$4,511,000

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

[Motion carried]

3 — Irrigation Rehabilitation and Expansion

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, to give the hon. members some background on this, the program was announced in 1975 to assist 13 irrigation districts under the purview of the Irrigation Council in rehabilitating and upgrading their irrigation delivery system. By doing that, they would ensure an adequate and efficient supply of water. The project was then increased. The total commitment was \$90 million in the 10-year program. Because it was determined that that amount was not really adequate to carry out the necessary improvements, there was an announcement made in 1980 and it was revised to \$100 million. That was to include some \$31 million that was already in the funding. So it was an additional \$100 million on top of what had already been spent, so it came to \$131 million. That is going on very well.

I would be pleased to try to answer any questions.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I just thought that due to the great importance of irrigation in Alberta, and in my constituency especially, I should say a few words on the

subject. We in Alberta seem to be right on the verge of being limited only by the capacity we have to get water in certain areas of this province. I think Alberta is very fortunate in that it has available water. It just happens to be in the wrong position. I would say that if it was any other area, say in the United States, there would be a great push to bring water to some 7 million acres in southern Alberta that could be potentially used for irrigation.

I must compliment our government and the minister on the programs they have out because of the great amount of support they've given to irrigation through the Department of Agriculture in upgrading their irrigation canals and the capital works in the Eastern and Western Irrigation Districts. It's been a great benefit to those districts. Also the Department of the Environment has had a very large project going on upgrading irrigation.

My question, Mr. Minister, would be: if the Department of Agriculture is going to be funding, there seems to be a lack of water for on-stream storage and they may be a little slow in coming. Some of the on-stream storage basins that are funded by the Department of the Environment may be a little longer and further down the road. Is the Department of Agriculture going to be funding the off-stream storage, or reservoirs, and is it the irrigation districts that will be setting the priorities on these? Because in some areas they're very important in our country. I'm thinking of Crawling Valley, that at one time connected the Red Deer River to the Bow River. They have a main irrigation district line across the canal. They're thinking of building a dam and flooding that entire valley. I think that would be very beneficial. I'm not positive whether that would come under your department or the Department of the Environment, seeing as it is a fairly large project. I know that there has been some money allotted to it in the past. The question is: is it under your department or the Department of the Environment?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, sometimes I have some questions in my mind too, about which department it falls under. The first comment the member made was about the on-stream storage. That would certainly be under the Department of the Environment. But I'd like to say, while I have the opportunity, that I totally agree with storage facilities for water. We might consider oil to be very important, but I think water is far more important. We have to look at trying to control the flows on some of our major rivers, and even smaller streams that small communities look at for their domestic water supply. I think there are a number of areas that have to be worked on there.

If I can take a few minutes, I can say that some of the major projects that have been completed have been the enlargement of the Newell reservoir, the construction of the new Kitsim reservoir in the Eastern Irrigation District, the reconstruction and enlargement of the Sodder reservoir, the construction of the Stafford dam and headgates, and the enlargement and upgrading of the main canal in the SMIRD. In addition, the larger districts, the Western Irrigation District and the Lethbridge Northern, have rehabilitated sections of their main canals, including large concrete control structures. The funds are going in there now.

We're doing a lot in buried pipe and concrete and plastic lining. In this regard, approximately 141 kilometres of concrete lining, 64 kilometres of plastic lining, and 125 kilometres of buried pipeline, plus an undeter-

mined amount of earth and canal upgrading, have already taken place. Some of the major projects — the reconstruction of some of the main canal structures — have been nearly completed. We expect the progress in '83-84 would be the main canal in the Bow River Irrigation District, the Eastern Irrigation District, and the Lethbridge Northern. Continuing progress on upgrading the distribution system in all of the districts will continue. I think — if I understand right, from the projects I've seen — that they're going to increase the amount of buried pipe and concrete lining that they're looking at. Water has a problem: it leaks. Trying to upgrade some of those systems by putting in buried pipe and a number of other areas just shows good conservation practices and gets rid of salinity in soil because of the seepage that takes place. I just have some problem wondering who funds what in some of the reservoirs. I think the ones the member is talking about would fall under the Department of the Environment.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I don't wish to hold up the proceedings of the House, but I did want to make some comments relative to this particular vote. I think it's a clear example of where we take funds from non-renewable resources and pledge them, really, to future Albertans and their use. The minister has been very eloquent with regard to this vote. I simply want to add that the members for Cypress and Cardston, and certainly the Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Macleod, all worked very hard to see that there was some equitable treatment throughout the province. Certainly the irrigation capital is southern Alberta.

A word of caution, though, that I'd like to point out. I've heard the eloquence of the Minister of Economic Development, who says so often that there's really not much point in producing products if we can't consume them and export them to other people. That of course raises the question of the transportation system, as well as the development of markets. I wonder if the minister could indicate, along with this vote, that there are indeed some steps being taken commensurate with the position, for example, that he's announced with regard to the Crownsnest freight rates; i.e., to improve the transportation system so that indeed, if and when this expansion takes place and we've produced more crop, we'll have the ability to both transport a product to a market and, hopefully, encourage development of that market, whether it be the Pacific Rim countries or other parts of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: That's an excellent comment, Mr. Chairman, because you're right. If you grow it and you can't move it, what are you going to do with it? That's part of the problem when we look not only at irrigation expansion in the south but at irrigation in the north and also some drainage: there will be more lands put into production, but also rehabilitate lands already there that we can increase production on. I'm happy to say that through the aggressive policy of the Alberta government through the ministers of Economic Development and International Trade with respect to export development, the markets are certainly going to be there. In fact, at times the federal government follows around and, after Alberta leaves, says that's how we operate in Canada. But the ongoing concern, and why we have such a concern about the western transportation initiative, is moving that product.

MR. MARTIN: I'll be brief. Just a couple of things. I'll just throw them out to you. In view of what we talked about earlier, the impact of the Pincher Creek Gulf plant on the St. Mary project, I'm sure you'll be monitoring that very closely for possible contamination there. Just one question that my colleague, before he flew off, asked me to ask. In my understanding, the funding is 86 per cent and 14 per cent on irrigation projects. We were wondering if the minister could answer why it was 75:25 on water resource projects in the north.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: That's an excellent question. I wish I had as good an answer for your question, because 86:14 have been the percentage terms used. And you're right. On drainage projects in the north, it is 75:25. The whole area of cost sharing is being looked at right now, and will be over the next couple of years. Those concerns have been raised, not only to the Irrigation Council but to the government as a whole. We certainly will be looking at them.

MR. MARTIN: One final supplementary then. You would look into this funding arrangement and get back to us on it?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I'd be pleased to.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Chairman, just a few comments on the irrigation project funding. It is a benefit not only to irrigation but to the people that use water down the river. In southern Alberta in particular, the main flow of our rivers is generally through two short periods of the year: during the spring thaw and when the water is melting in the mountains in June.

With our off-river storage and an improved canal system, we are able to get almost enough of that water for our irrigation needs during irrigation season. At one time we had some problems with that because of our canal systems. So this money in the eastern irrigation district has been used to improve the headworks to the point now where we generally don't draw from the river flow during the low-flow season. Certainly the optimum thing we could do with this would be to have on-river storage. Of course that would probably do more for agriculture in southern Alberta than anything I could think of right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time for the committee to rise and report has expired already. Perhaps he could continue his remarks when we meet again.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move that 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 certain resolutions and reports as follows:

Resolved that from the Alberta Heritage Savings and Trust Fund, sums not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1984, for the purpose of making investments in the following projects to be administered by the Minister of Transportation: \$2,505,000 for airport terminal buildings; and by the Minister of Agriculture: \$7,500,000 for Farming for the Future, \$4,511,000 for food processing development centre.

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

MR. SPEAKER: I assume the Assembly unanimously agrees that the clock stopped at one o'clock?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, on Monday we propose to try to do some of the capital estimates that the Assembly has just been considering, but also to return to the throne speech. Therefore we'll be sitting in both the afternoon and evening. I hope it doesn't make too much difference to hon. members precisely which business will be called following question period and which will be called at eight o'clock. The designation has been made by the Leader of the Opposition in respect to one of the sets of estimates, and that will certainly be on Monday. I'm not aware of any difficulty should it happen to be in the evening, but I think it will more likely be in the afternoon. I should indicate that we'll be proposing to proceed with second reading of certain Bills on Monday, in particular Bills 18 and 23. At the present time there is no intention to proceed with other than those two.

[At 1:03 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

