

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Friday, October 21, 1983 10:00 a.m.

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence and the courtesy of all members of the House to introduce the guests seated in your gallery. Nineteen eighty-three is the 50th anniversary of the man-made famine in the Ukraine, *Holood Na Ukraine*. The history is tragic. In the course of one year, over 7 million people died of starvation, ironically in the land of *Chornozemlia*, or black soil, in an area better known as the breadbasket of Europe. It is not that the people disbelieve the survivors or eye witness accounts of such as Malcolm Muggeridge or the memoirs of the Soviet leader Nikita Krushchev, where he admitted that a famine occurred due to Stalin's policies — just some of the testimonies and factual records.

This Sunday, October 23, Canadians of Ukrainian descent and friends of the Canadian-Ukrainian community will join Premier Peter Lougheed in the ceremony unveiling the monument in memory of the victims and in participating in the memorial service at City Hall at 1 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank members for their courtesy and, after I have introduced them, I would appreciate the usual welcome by unanimous applause for our guests. Seated in your gallery are the president of the Canadian-Ukrainian Committee of Edmonton, Dr. Melety Snihurowych; a member of the committee, Dr. Dmytro Todosijczuk; Mr. Bohdan Shulakewych, chairman of the committee for Sunday's event; representing the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Bishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Rev. Ostap Flak; and representing Bishop Neil Savaryn of the Ukrainian Catholic Church is Rev. Methodius Nycka, OSBM. They now have risen, and I ask the usual welcome for them.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 73

Department of Tourism and Small Business
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 73, the Department of Tourism and Small Business Amendment Act, 1983.

The main principle of this amendment will be to allow the government to guarantee lease agreements and other obligations in addition to the loans which the Act already permits.

[Leave granted; Bill 73 read a first time]

Bill 80

Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
Special Appropriation Act, 1984-85

Bill 83

Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce two Bills: Bill No. 80, the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Special Appropriation Act, 1984-85, and Bill No. 83, the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act, 1983. Both these Bills being money Bills, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor has been informed of the contents of them and recommends both to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 80, which is traditional in this Assembly with respect to the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, has as its purpose the enabling of a transfer of 15 per cent of resource revenues to the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the fiscal year 1984-85, to finance such programs and projects as the Prince Rupert terminal, senior citizens' lodges, the Opportunity Company, and the Ag. Development Corporation.

Bill No. 83, which is the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act, has as its purpose the increase of the borrowing limit of the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation from its present figure of \$5.8 billion to \$7 billion, so that municipalities and school jurisdictions will be able to continue to borrow funds for capital works.

[Leave granted; Bills 80 and 83 read a first time]

Bill 84

Vencap Equities Alberta Act

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 84, the Vencap Equities Alberta Act.

The purpose of the Bill is to assure that the provisions for the maximum 1 per cent ownership of shares by any one individual are assured.

[Leave granted; Bill 84 read a first time]

Bill 78

Names of Homes Repeal Act

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 78, the Names of Homes Repeal Act.

This Bill will repeal an Act which has become obsolete inasmuch as it does not serve its original purpose, that being to assist postal service in locating property owners and, secondly, a prestige of bringing family home names from other parts of the world to Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 78 read a first time]

Bill 75

Government House Amendment Act, 1983

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 75, the Government House Amendment Act, 1983.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow a corporation named the Government House Foundation to sell, lease, exchange, or otherwise dispose of any work of art acquired by the foundation, subject to any terms of any trust on which it is held. This authority is to be exercised only upon ministerial approval. The proceeds from this disposition of personal property by the foun-

dation shall be used for acquisition of other works of art by the foundation.

[Leave granted; Bill 75 read a first time]

Bill 82
Provincial General Hospitals
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 82, the Provincial General Hospitals Amendment Act, 1983.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend section 2 of the Provincial General Hospitals Act, to change the name of the Glenrose Provincial General hospital in Edmonton to Glenrose Rehabilitation hospital. This name change reflects more accurately the activities pursued by the Glenrose.

[Leave granted; Bill 82 read a first time]

Bill 77
Farm Home Improvements Repeal Act

MR. DROBOT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 77, the Farm Home Improvements Repeal Act.

The general purpose of this Bill is to repeal the Farm Home Improvements Act. Provisions of this Act are already met under the Agricultural Development Act, making the Farm Home Improvements Act redundant.

[Leave granted; Bill 77 read a first time]

Bill 79
Marriage Amendment Act, 1983

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 79, the Marriage Amendment Act, 1983.

Among the principles of this Bill are to replace the word "clergyman" with the word "clergy", in recognition of the growing number of women in the clergy; to streamline and clarify certain administrative aspects of the Marriage Act, such as requiring that a witness to the solemnization of marriage be an adult; and to eliminate unnecessary orders in council by authorizing the minister to appoint marriage commissioners and marriage licence issuers.

[Leave granted; Bill 79 read a first time]

Bill 76
Agricultural Pests Amendment Act, 1983

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 76, the Agricultural Pests Amendment Act, 1983.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide authority to the minister to appoint officers.

[Leave granted; Bill 76 read a first time]

Bill 74
Drayton Valley Townsite Repeal Act

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 74, the Drayton Valley Townsite Repeal Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to repeal Chapter 24 of the 1954 *Statutes of Alberta*. Drayton Valley was incorporated as a new town in 1956, and the Drayton Valley Townsite Act is now

redundant. I want to assure the Assembly, though, that Drayton Valley is still vigorous, healthy, and growing.

[Leave granted; Bill 74 read a first time]

Bill 72
County Amendment Act, 1983

MR. STILES: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 72, the County Amendment Act, 1983.

The purpose of this Bill will be to clarify various portions of the County Act to show the designation of the secretary as the county secretary as opposed to being designated as the municipal secretary; and in addition, to permit a city or a municipality, upon achieving city status, to remain part of the county school organization.

[Leave granted; Bill 72 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move that Bills 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, and 82 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table with the Assembly the most recent annual reports of the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission and the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, 52 grade 6 students from Westbrook elementary school in the Edmonton constituency of Whitemud. These students are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Vivian Pich and Mrs. Crystal Farrar.

I might observe that despite the fact that it's only 10:15 on a Friday morning, these students are not truant; they are here studying the legislative process. They are in the members gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CAMPBELL: It is my privilege to introduce to the Assembly, on behalf of our very competent Speaker, 23 students from Hillcrest junior high school in the exciting constituency of Edmonton Meadowlark. Accompanied by their group leader Fern Schmidt, they are seated in the members gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the House, a visitor from the city of Calgary. She is currently president of the Austrian Canadian Society of Calgary, ladies group. I am particularly pleased to mention to our Premier that she is a past president of the Wildwood Community Association and the first female president of that organization.

I think all members of the House might wish to know that she has been a dedicated and hardworking employee of the provincial Social Services and Community Health Department for 31 years, which means she joined that office when she was the age of eight. I am pleased to report that she has successfully

completed three full days of Oktoberfest in Calgary and is here to tell us about it.

Would you please welcome, sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Terry Ruckenthaler.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to introduce to you and to hon. members of the Assembly some 52 grade 6 students from the Blueberry elementary school, which is in the Stony Plain constituency and located just west of the town of Stony Plain. It's one of the two community schools we have in the area, and I must commend the principal and her staff for the excellent job they have done. Accompanying the students today are teachers Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Erlandson, Ms. Clark, and Ms. Burk; and a parent, Mrs. Cornelius. They are in the public gallery. I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Manpower

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to present an overview of the range of job creation initiatives that will have been implemented by the government of Alberta during the current fiscal year. I believe these programs reflect this government's continued commitment to provide meaningful employment and training opportunities for the citizens of Alberta during the current economic downturn.

Mr. Speaker, this government believes, as I do, that it is the private sector to whom we must look for the long-term solution to Alberta's employment problems. Government's role is to provide the stimuli. In keeping with this philosophy, the job creation initiatives that have been and continue to be implemented by the government of Alberta have a strong private-sector thrust. Businesses throughout the province have enthusiastically supported and welcomed these initiatives and the opportunities they provide to start up or complete projects that might otherwise have had to be postponed or cancelled. In turn, thousands of unemployed Albertans will have found jobs, many of which hold the promise of becoming full-time, permanent positions.

During this fiscal year, the government of Alberta has allocated approximately \$60 million on job creation initiatives, benefiting approximately 33,000 unemployed Albertans.

The 1983-84 priority employment program, commonly known as PEP, has been allocated \$25.9 million and is expected to create jobs for 9,200 Albertans. As you know, a special warrant of \$13.7 million was approved this week to start up that program. Assessment of last year's PEP indicates that almost two-thirds of the participants in the business support element were retained after the program was concluded.

The Canada/Alberta new employment expansion and development program, commonly referred to as NEED, is expected to create jobs for approximately 3,000 Albertans. Alberta's contribution to this federal/provincial program is \$11 million.

The Alberta youth employment program was funded to the tune of \$4,924 million and is anticipated to create at least 2,700 jobs for young Albertans. The summer temporary employment program received more than \$12 million and provided employment for 5,800 Albertans. The hire-a-student program assisted 29,764 Alberta students to find jobs, with the help of \$526,341 of Alberta government funds. The success of the program also reflects the contributions of the chambers of commerce, local community groups, and the federal government. The majority of these positions were in the private sector.

Numerous special needs groups, too, are receiving government funds of significant proportions, to help disadvantaged Albertans obtain jobs, training, and valuable work experience.

In addition to these direct job creation initiatives, the government has allocated almost \$2 billion for capital construction during this fiscal year. This, by itself, will have a major impact on Alberta's employment situation, culminating in 41,000 man-years of employment.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the programs I have just outlined demonstrate clearly that this government is actively and energetically engaged in addressing the issue of employment in this province.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in rising to respond to the ministerial statement given by the minister this morning, I note initially that it was really quite amusing to hear the minister say that the engine of recovery would be the private sector, when his Provincial Treasurer has just announced a 13 per cent increase in personal income tax, which is going to take away purchasing power from consumers. Who will that hurt? That will hurt the small business sector. That will hurt the private sector, which is supposed to be the engine of recovery.

No one is going to deny that there is not some real value in PEP and in NEED, Mr. Speaker, but I would say to you, sir, and to members of the Assembly that with well over 130,000 people out of work, with record unemployment, the kind of announcement we had this morning is woefully inadequate. Coupled with the mismanaged fiscal policy of the government, rather than solving the problem or even beginning to solve the problem it is just a band-aid approach. It is surprising that this government could not come up with a stronger program at this critical time in our province's history.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Cruise Missile Testing

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Premier, and it flows from the question put the other day with respect to cruise missile testing. When he indicated support for cruise missile testing in Alberta, could the Premier advise the Assembly whether the government of Alberta was aware that as opposed to previous thoughts that the route would be over uninhabited areas, in fact it's going to go over northern Alberta communities such as Lac La Biche, Athabasca, and the entire Peace block, and that well over 100,000 people will be in the direct route of the cruise missile?

I will table for you, sir, and other members of the House the route of the proposed cruise missile.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I refer the question to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, in correspondence and discussions with the Department of National Defence, the government of Alberta has been assured that the route which will be undertaken for the testing of the cruise missile will, in large part, take place over uninhabited areas of the province but that in those areas where there may be habitation, full information and briefing sessions will take place by the government of Canada, and the public will be made fully aware of what will be taking place. That assurance has been repeated on several occasions in this House and, of course, in corre-

spondence between this government and the government of Canada.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. What discussions has the minister had with the federal Minister of National Defence with respect to the route? No one questions the uninhabited areas, but when we're looking at the Peace block and the other areas I've identified ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. NOTLEY: My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is: was any representation made to the government of Canada as to shifting the route of the testing north to uninhabited areas as opposed to the areas I've identified?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I've just been supplied with information, the origin of which I gather is the office of the Leader of the Opposition. I intend to have discussions with the Minister of National Defence. In my meetings that I am arranging with him, I will certainly take this matter under consideration. Those discussions will take place in Ottawa during the week of October 31, a week from Monday.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to hon. minister. On [April] 6, some seven months ago, on page 386 of *Hansard*, the minister indicated that he was going to express concerns to the government of Canada with respect to the safety of individual Albertans and their property. Could the minister identify what specific steps the government of Alberta has taken subsequent to that statement?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, a number of items of correspondence have passed between me and the immediate predecessor of the now Minister of National Defence. Since then I have also exchanged correspondence with the Hon. Jean-Jacques Blais, the new Minister of National Defence. Officials have met with officials of our department of government.

As I indicated, we are now making arrangements, during the course of my visit to Ottawa relative to the next ministerial conference on aboriginal rights, which will be taking place during the week of October 31, to have a personal meeting between me and the Minister of National Defence, at which time we will discuss this issue in some considerable detail.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Did any of that correspondence or any of those discussions since April 6 involve the routing of the cruise missile over populated areas of the province as opposed to uninhabited areas?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, that has always been a concern and has been expressed not only in letters from me but indeed from my predecessor to the former Minister of National Defence. It will remain a concern and will be discussed during the week of October 31, when I am next in Ottawa.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. The question is not what will be discussed. The question is, has the minister discussed with his federal counterpart the route over inhabited areas of the province as opposed to uninhabited areas?

MR. HORSMAN: I thought I'd answered that question in saying that that been the subject of correspondence. I have not had personal discussions with the new Minister of National Defence, Mr. Blais. I intend to have those during the week of

October 31, and that subject will certainly be discussed at that time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this.

MR. NOTLEY: Could the minister advise what information he has received from the federal minister with respect to the undertaking he gave on June 2 to check with the Canadian Department of National Defence and U.S. officials concerning a crash? Since there was another crash in Utah the day before yesterday, what assurance has the minister obtained from the Department of National Defence concerning the safety of testing this cruise missile over inhabited areas of the province?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, subsequent to that particular exchange, which I recall, a further letter went forward to the then Minister of National Defence, raising our concerns and requesting that in their discussions with the United States government, the government of Canada make every effort to ensure that such tests could be carried out in safety. That will of course be another item of conversation that I intend to have with the minister when I have an opportunity of meeting with Mr. Blais for the first time, as I said, during the week of October 31 in Ottawa, when I shall be there.

Paddle River Dam

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my second question to the hon. Minister of the Environment and ask if he can advise the House whether there have been serious soil problems with respect to the Paddle River dam.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, in the construction of an earth-fill dam, it is expected that one would monitor very closely the application of soils in the embankment procedures. One of the reasons this is done is to ensure — and as I said, it is expected in earth-fill dams — that there can be movement. We are monitoring that on an ongoing basis, in terms of pore pressures in particular.

In the case of the Paddle River dam specifically, this monitoring has been ongoing. When you add heavier material to the embankment, it is expected that there may be some movement, particularly a build-up of moisture in the foundation. When this was experienced at the Paddle River dam, we halted construction at that point in time as a precautionary measure, because any increased pressure could increase the movement.

I might note that once the postponement was initiated — meaning that no further material was applied to the structure — the movement stopped. It is expected that we will continue construction of the dam this spring, and the interim period will allow for pore pressures in the soil foundations to dissipate.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has any of the information obtained by the department from the project manager indicated that as a result of this problem, there may in fact be increased costs to those costs originally identified?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there is certain additional work which may be required with regard to the conduit structure. This work is being identified and, as I said, it may result in increased expenditure, but not markedly.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Can the Minister of the Environment advise if other work is continuing on other components of the Paddle River dam at this time?

MR. BRADLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The spillway construction is continuing, as is a clean-up of the site and certain stockpiling work.

Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Culture is with respect to the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts. What financial commitments have been made by the three levels of government and other volunteer groups in the community toward covering the capital costs of construction?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, the budget for the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts is \$75 million. The city of Calgary has put in over \$12 million. That's not counting the land cost. The volunteer commitment has stated that it would like to raise \$15 million, and at this time I certainly commend the volunteers for the effort they have taken in raising money for this centre. The major cultural/recreation grant is \$4 million. The government of Alberta has put in \$35 million. The interest on the money will raise the difference, hopefully, to meet the required amount of \$75 million.

Mr. Speaker, I might add at this time that this is a unique business and that there could be some unforeseen circumstances, as this building is two years from completion. But it is my aim and my goal to bring this project in, between \$73 million and \$75 million.

DR. CARTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, for clarification. The minister said that \$35 million was coming from the Alberta government, not the federal government.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Yes I did, Mr. Speaker; the government of Alberta.

DR. CARTER: What participation are we having from the federal people?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, the original suggestion to the federal government was \$6 million. It has been reduced to \$3 million. Hopefully at this time we will have recognition from the federal government; we have not had any commitment whatsoever to date.

DR. CARTER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. With respect to the final construction costs, have you seen any need for you to meet with officials of the Centre for the Performing Arts with respect to altering or deleting some of the original design features?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, there are ongoing meetings with the board of the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts. I would like to say that in 1982, the government had a cost-control committee put into force to monitor costs at that centre.

DR. CARTER: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. When the project is opened, supposedly within the next two years, how are the operating costs supposed to be handled?

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, we are having ongoing discussions right now with the user groups of the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts, the board of the centre, and the city of Calgary.

Alberta Economic Strategy

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could direct a question to the Premier. In his remarks to the House on Wednesday, he noted that he anticipated extensive dialogue with groups across the province to develop a new economic strategy. Could the Premier indicate to the House how that dialogue is going to take place?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, in a variety of ways. First of all, I hope members of the Legislature will respond to the remarks that I made and discuss them with their constituents or groups within the constituency that may be interested. Secondly, naturally we would be discussing it with delegates and representatives of our own political party. Thirdly, I intend to mail copies of my remarks to various groups throughout the province who may have an interest, and ask them to communicate either to myself or to other ministers who may be designated in the communication, depending on the nature of the group receiving the communication.

MR. COOK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I wonder if the Premier could indicate who those ministers might be and what time frame he anticipates for developing a strategy.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I could answer that today. I would like to give some consideration to the nature of the distribution, and it would be fairly widespread. In certain cases, which would be readily apparent, the communication would sometimes come back to the government caucus economic affairs committee and at other times to specified ministers. I simply haven't reached the stage of fully developing that.

As far as the timetable is concerned, I mentioned in my remarks on Wednesday that I would be looking towards the first six months of 1984 for a statement on economic strategy either to the Legislature, if we are sitting, or in another way.

Government Expenditures

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is with regard to the government's policy of living within their means. My question is very direct.

MR. NOTLEY: When will they start?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Has the Premier cut any of his staff since April 1, 1983, in line with that policy?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think we discussed that matter appropriately in the budget. It certainly isn't our intention to do anything other than retain the most effective Premier's office in Canada.

MR. R. SPEAKER: And the most expensive. An audience of half a million dollars ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. R. SPEAKER: ... paid by the taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, my second question to the Premier is in terms of the same idea. Has the Premier issued any directives to cabinet to cut their travel costs?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it absolutely clear that the one area that we do not intend to alter is the

marketing of our products and the communication with people. That is clearly a fundamental responsibility. I think it's very important for the Member for Little Bow and others to look very carefully, in a logical way, at the budget of \$1 billion, to determine what elements are involved on an effective basis in terms of improving the economy of this province, recognizing that the major budgetary problems clearly and directly have to do with health care costs and other large items of public expenditure.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question in light of the answer. Could the Premier confirm that the \$1,200 trip of the Provincial Treasurer, which could have been less than \$400, is part of that marketing of products, and also looking within the policy of living within means?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, on a deficit of \$1 billion dollars in the budget of our size that we have, I'm sure the Provincial Treasurer would be delighted to respond to that question.

MR. HYNDMAN: Yes, I'd be delighted to respond to the question, Mr. Speaker. I think the facts show that this was an efficient and proper use of time and aircraft in the conduct of the public business.

On the day in question, which was Monday, January 17, 1983, I first attended a cabinet committee meeting in the morning. My wife and I had been invited to Calgary that day. At noon, having arrived there, I participated in the opening of a major new office building in Calgary, First Canada Place. In that connection, I was representing the Premier. I then met with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce and conferred with them with regard to recommendations they had on the Alberta economy. I met as well, that afternoon, with the president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta. Then the Bank of Montreal had a reception and dinner. The reception involved leaders of the Calgary business and financial community, with which the government feels it's important to confer regularly. There was then a dinner, and I arrived back in Edmonton at 25 minutes to one in the morning. Accordingly, the departure times not being known, it was not possible to fly commercial aircraft.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, in my view this was an efficient and proper use of time and aircraft in the conduct of the public business of Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Premier. Certainly there was a lot of debate in that answer, and I'm not going to respond ...

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but I must point out to him that the question asked whether the expenditure was within certain parameters. That is of course a matter of opinion. But the question having been asked and my not having objected to it, I had to allow the answer.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is again to the Premier. I wonder if the Premier could reconcile for members of this Legislative Assembly his call for restraint, while spending \$4,500 of taxpayers' money ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. This is clearly debate. There'll be ample opportunity to deal with it for the remainder ...

MR. MARTIN: It's government policy.

MR. SPEAKER: It's asking for argument to justify one thing as compared with another: clearly debate by any definition. If the hon. member wishes to seek information directly, I'd be happy to recognize him for another supplementary.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I raised this question, with another motive in mind, yesterday. [interjections] I want to just ...

MR. SPEAKER: It's not for me to assess the member's motives.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I know that, and I appreciate that. But yesterday the very same worded question asked for a reconciliation between two items; directed to the Premier and accepted in this House. I used exactly the same words in my question. That's why I stuck to my notes. If the Speaker would not have cut me off, I was going to conclude with the same remarks to my question: there appears to be a distinction. The same question accepted by this Legislature — by you, Mr. Speaker — given by the hon. Member for Edmonton White-mud. Now, when I as a member of the opposition raise it and it is a little embarrassing to the Premier, I'm cut off and it's out of order.

That is not consistent, Mr. Speaker. I think that question should be allowed at this time, and the Premier should report to this House why he was able to spend \$4,500 on an after swearing-in luncheon for the Conservative members, to which members of the opposition here were not invited. That's number one. Number two, it was exclusive and not money for all members of the Legislature. I would even think that there's some question as to the morality of that kind of ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'll readily acknowledge that in the reactions or the dealing with questions, there is not, has not been, and will not in the future be, total consistency from the Chair. These decisions in the parry and thrust of the question period have to be made on the spur of the moment. When I perceive that a question is leading directly to debate in the question period and I know that the other members in the House will not be given an opportunity to share in that debate, then it's my duty to intervene. If I occasionally slip up, there is nothing whatsoever to prevent the hon. member, as he could have done yesterday, from raising a point of order. I think the hon. member will have to agree that I have always been very sensitive and open to points of order raised by the hon. members in regard to proprieties in the question period.

Having heard the hon. member's debate on the topic, it would be less than fair if a reply were not permitted. I'm sure that what it really amounts to is asking for an explanation for a certain expenditure.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could raise another point of order before we go on to the answer, and that is with respect to the issue of stirring a debate. I agree that a provocative question from the opposition could be interpreted as stimulating a debate, and from time to time the Speaker will have to rule that a question is not in order because, as you've often said, it's not fair to other members. However, Mr. Speaker, a friendly question from a government backbencher can frequently lead to debate.

With great respect, sir, I think that it will be incumbent upon you in the days ahead to be as strict in censoring some of these obviously friendly questions which allow a cabinet minister to stand up and essentially give us a debate, which we can't

respond to. It seems to me that if a provocative question can stimulate a debate, so can a friendly question,

MR. ALEXANDER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I confess to being a rookie and extremely puzzled. I have been unable to discover any parallel whatsoever between what I said and what the hon. Member for Little Bow has construed that I said. I also question whether the question I asked yesterday was in fact a friendly question. The Conference Board's economic models, which were raised by the Premier in his speech, were inconsistent, as a matter of fact, with some of the things I felt the Premier was saying in his version of our economic forecast. Therefore I'm puzzled as to why that's construed to be a friendly question.

I am also extremely puzzled as to why a \$4,500 expenditure to which the opposition wasn't invited has any relationship whatsoever with the economic model of the Conference Board of Canada versus the economic model seen by the Premier in his speech. Therefore there may be a point of order, but I suggest the examples used are invalid.

MR. NOTLEY: On a point of order. I wouldn't want the member to think that I was making any reference to his question yesterday. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I thought his question yesterday was very well put, a very good question. The point was the larger issue of how one deals with questions that stimulate debate, whether those are provocative from the opposition or friendly from the government. Yesterday's question was not an example. As I look around this room, however, I could cite many examples, and so could everybody else, of questions that frankly allow debate because of their friendly nature.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly if the hon. member were here and heard the question and thought it was too cosy, he could have gotten up and mentioned it, and I would have been glad to deal with whatever objection he might have raised.

Going back to the comparison — I don't know if it's any longer important — between today's question and yesterday's, I of course didn't have an opportunity to check it in Hansard [Blues]. I accepted the version of the hon. Member for Little Bow, and I'm happy to stay with that.

As far as provocative questions are concerned, there's no objection to those. The point is, they must be questions seeking information and not leading to debate; that's the whole concern. That applies equally on both sides of the House. If hon. members will examine the record, I think they will find that I have in fact intervened on questions of that kind. If they think my interventions are not adequate, I respectfully suggest they draw that to my attention when it occurs.

The hon. Member for Edmonton . . . Sorry.

MR. MARTIN: I have a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm not sure we dealt with the question of the hon. Member for Little Bow, in which he asked with regard to a certain expenditure.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any data on the matter. But I'm sure that during the course of those meetings we held together, we had a very significant discussion of public policy.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Premier. Do ministers and their aides travel first class when going across Canada?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it depends on the circumstances. Primarily they do, on the basis that it is very important that it's a working time when one travels, and it is obviously more effective to conduct that working discussion when they are travelling on a first-class basis. It simply isn't effective, as the hon. member should know, to carry out in the economy section discussions involving public business of the nature that is involved.

MR. MARTIN: I've never been in first class, so I don't know. [interjections]

MR. NOTLEY: Neither did Allan Blakeney in 11 years as the Premier of Saskatchewan.

Housing Staff Investigation

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Housing. Can the minister confirm that two senior officials of the co-operative housing action program have resigned due to an RCMP investigation of conflict of interest charges?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, there have been reports in the news media. Two individuals have resigned; their resignation was effective October 7. The investigation is under way. I wouldn't agree with the hon. member as to the conclusions, because it's too early to reach any.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister able to assure the Assembly that he is reviewing the CHAP in particular and the department as a whole, to determine how widespread conflict of interest breaches may be?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I am not reviewing the co-operative housing action program. It's an excellent program and has provided assistance to 3,500 Alberta families building their own homes; it's been very effective. There is some review of the administration of the guidelines within the program, and that's being undertaken right now.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Briefly, what departmental guidelines exist to protect against housing officials or their families benefiting personally from government programs?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the intent of the question. Is the hon. member referring to the co-operative housing action program or to all the programs that are provided by the Department of Housing?

MR. MARTIN: Co-operative housing.

MR. SHABEN: There are clear guidelines provided to employees of the department who are involved in the program, and those are too extensive to detail in the question period. However, I'd be pleased to provide an outline of those guidelines to members of the Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the RCMP inform the department of their investigation, or was the problem discovered by the department and reported to the RCMP?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I was made aware of the complaint on October 3, and the initial complaint was lodged on

September 30. Beyond that, I would prefer not to comment, since the matter is under investigation.

MR. MARTIN: One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister reviewed whether or not there has been any possible — and I'll stress "possible" — loss of public money as a consequence of the activities in Calgary? If so, will action be commenced to try to recover some of the funds?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, there's no evidence whatsoever of loss of public funds. However, I'll have to wait until the investigation is complete to confirm that finally.

Highway Twinning Projects

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question this morning to the Minister of Transportation. A few years ago there was a stated policy that we would twin the Yellowhead Highway over the next 10 years, and there seems to be some deviance from that policy. I wonder if he could answer to his recent statements.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I recently did indicate that we may have to reassess our priorities with respect to the twinning of both the Yellowhead and the Trans-Canada highways over a 10-year period.

I made those comments for two reasons. Firstly, as has been noted by the Provincial Treasurer, it's necessary for us to reduce the degree of increase in both capital and operating expenditures. The budget of the Department of Transportation is a large component of the provincial budget, and it's necessary to assess priorities in that regard. In addition to that, the original decision to twin both those highways over a 10-year period was based on traffic projections that were significantly greater than what has actually occurred. The result is that the requirement for the twinning of those highways over the time frame that we had suggested may well not be there.

I would just conclude by saying this: no decision has yet been made as to any change in the original program as it was outlined, but it is under consideration and has to be a matter of consideration by all members of the House between now and when the budget is brought down for the next fiscal year.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a supplemental question. Could we have assurance from the minister that the straightening and the safety aspects of the Yellowhead will continue even if the twinning does not?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that's a good question. I think it's fair to say that the answer is yes. We're involved in a program not only of twinning but of taking the older, two-lane sections of the Yellowhead, which had poor alignments and were substandard in terms of today's standards, and rebuilding, widening, and straightening those. That's occurring both in the Hinton and Edson areas and in the hon. member's constituency, and that kind of work will obviously continue well ahead of the twinning program. In fact, it would be my desire to perhaps even increase our efforts in that area as opposed to twinning areas where the traffic projections have not materialized.

MR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister if he has communicated directly with the Yellowhead association regarding their concerns and their perceptions about the comments he has made.

MR. M. MOORE: Yes I have, Mr. Speaker. I had an opportunity to meet recently with the Yellowhead Highway associ-

ation and explain to them our concerns with respect to the expenditures that might be incurred on the highway over the next few years. I might add that I believe they were pleased with the discussions we had and with the direction we were going in terms of the priorities we had placed on various sections of the highway in terms of improvement.

White Farm Equipment Ltd.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Would the minister advise the Assembly whether he has had any consultation with his federal counterpart regarding the difficulties and the fate of the White Farm Equipment company?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we followed and watched that issue with deep concern for our producers and dealers within the province. We have had communication with the government in Ottawa and strongly emphasized to them that Alberta supported an orderly takeover of the company. We wanted to see the interests of our farmers protected, and also their parts and service warranty work. As I recall, we made it clear that the issue placed our farmers and dealers in a very unhealthy situation, and we asked them to please make a responsible decision.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise whether he has been getting inquiries and expressions of concern, whether it's individual farmers or farm organizations, in this regard?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't received any direct formal concerns, but a number of farmers with a considerable amount of White equipment have been concerned about the price of their equipment now and the warranty and parts service. I haven't received any direct representation from the dealers.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Economic Development. Could the minister advise whether he's investigated the possibility of consolidation of the parts and services network?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I did talk to my federal counterpart about the issue and expressed our concern about the ongoing availability of parts and dealer service for this equipment. I also indicated that if there was any further federal financial involvement in the farm machinery business, in view of the experience with Massey-Ferguson and the difficulties International Harvester is also having, our preference would be that it might be appropriate to direct their funding towards consolidating and rationalizing a Canadian farm equipment industry that the farmers could depend on when they make a major investment.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister for Recreation and Parks wishes to provide some information that was previously requested.

Kananaskis Park Expenditures

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my absence yesterday, there were two questions posed to the Premier in regard to quality of sand for Kananaskis and the cost of the toilets within Kananaskis Country. I think I should answer those questions for the House.

In 1977 we announced the development of Kananaskis Country and a world-class golf course within that development. We proceeded with this development in co-operation with a designer, Robert Trent Jones, and a golf course committee set up by ourselves, working closely with the designer. During the development of the golf course, we looked at 25 different kinds of sand for the sand traps. The things we wanted to consider were particle size, playability, whether it was dust free, silt free, the color, crusting, and the ability of the supplier to supply and deliver. We had six firms respond to our request, and the successful firm was Mountain Minerals of Lethbridge, Alberta. The successful bid was approximately \$42 per tonne delivered. A firm in Edmonton tendered at \$11.75 a tonne, f.o.b. Edmonton. So when we took the cost of delivering from Edmonton to the golf course, the price would have been around \$40 per tonne.

Mr. Speaker, both these items are not new. I looked back through my records and through *Hansard*, and both these questions were addressed by myself in 1981. As a matter of fact, it started in 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1982. Both these projects are within budget and within the budget requested at that time.

I just want to say that on July 22, when I was there with the hon. Premier at the opening, it was a magnificent day, and the hundreds of Albertans that were there accepted the type ...

MR. SPEAKER: I think perhaps we're getting away from the sand.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the gentleman wanted to know why we did that, and I think it's worthy that Albertans showed their respect and their approval.

MR. NOTLEY: Dressed up in their suits. No blue jeans.

MR. TRYNCHY: We'll get to that, too.

The second question was: why do we build cedar-clad toilets within provincial parks? I might add that that's been a standard procedure over a number of years. I just did some checking. We have cedar-clad toilets being constructed now at Hilliard's Bay, that the hon. member is familiar with, and Carson provincial park and Whitney-Ross. Within Kananaskis Country, we have 79 earth pit toilets at a cost of \$1,250 each. Then we have 107 vault toilets, with plastic vaults because of environmental standards. The vault alone costs \$3,000, and the buildings come in at about \$8,000 in total. These are pump-out toilets, which I understand are necessary. We also have 68 double-vault toilets, with the cost somewhat higher. Of course, they're all constructed to be able to accept wheel chairs, so they have wheel chair accessibility. We also have some 32 comfort stations, which are much more fully serviced with power, showers, and heating.

Mr. Speaker, I think, and I'm sure Albertans will agree with me, that in the long run — I want to pause there for a moment [laughter] — the design of the golf course, the sand, and the cedar-clad buildings which stand up to weather, will prove less costly in the future.

MR. MARTIN: Just one question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Do people feel better after using the cedar-clad toilets?

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we might now go to the next order of business, the House having been made privy to all this information. [laughter]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have received certain messages from His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, which I now transmit to you.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

MR. SPEAKER: His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor transmits an estimate of a certain sum required from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the 12 months ending March 31, 1985, for the purpose of making investments pursuant to section 6(1)(a) of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act in projects which will provide long-term economic or social benefits to the people of Alberta, but which may not necessarily by their nature yield a return to the trust fund, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Please be seated.

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

23. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:
Be it resolved that the messages of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor and the 1984-85 estimates of proposed investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, capital projects division, and all matters connected therewith, be referred to the Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

24. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:
Be it resolved that the Assembly do resolve itself into Committee of Supply, when called, to consider the 1984-85 estimates of proposed investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, capital projects division.

[Motion carried]

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION 1984-85 ESTIMATES OF PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, before we get into discussion of the estimates — and I gather we're going to go to the Minister of Agriculture — I would indicate that even though we are just now having these things distributed, as an opposition we will agree to proceed with the Department of Agriculture this morning. But I would just say to members of the committee ... Could I have order please, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order please.

MR. NOTLEY: I would say to members of the committee that it is a highly questionable procedure to get into something as important as this when members are just now receiving the documentation. We hear a lot from the Speaker and from others about the need for proper notice so that members have an opportunity to prepare themselves for important discussions.

I would simply say that the kind of notice we have this morning is really inadequate. Because we can proceed with Agriculture — it's a case of ongoing programs — my colleague and I have no wish to stop the discussions, but we want to note the situation.

I would also ask the Government House Leader, however, that we should have unanimous consent, since we're now going into this situation, to set aside the rules with respect to the obligation of the Leader of the Opposition to designate estimates. That time in our rules is Thursday. Of course we couldn't do it on Thursday because we didn't get this until this morning. It would be my intention to designate the Department of the Environment for Monday afternoon. Mr. Chairman, if we're now proceeding with discussion of the estimates with almost no notice at all, I would hope that the chivalry of the government would at least be answered by a willingness to accept the designation next Monday afternoon of the Department of the Environment. I put that to the Government House Leader.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to respond. I think it most likely that business for Monday will be Committee of Supply, and on that basis we could surely undertake that the Department of the Environment would be the one called. If the formality of designation is required, I'm sure all members of the committee, if that is sufficient, Mr. Chairman, would give that consent.

I might just make another observation, though, in light of the hon. leader's remarks, and that is that it wasn't clear from his remarks that I did notify his colleague the Member for Edmonton Norwood last evening that the item called today would be the Department of Agriculture estimates. Even so, I acknowledge what the leader has said, that the material itself was not available until this morning.

I think the best way to make use of the House's time is to proceed, hon. members having noted that these are continuing items and the principles and subject matter are to a large extent familiar to hon. members. In addition, members have had the advantage of being on the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee. The issues, of course, have been known at least to the committee during its deliberations, and hon. members of the opposition are represented there.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I might suggest that if the hon. leader would seek a further accommodation, we might discuss the Agriculture estimates without taking the final vote on them, in case there was a matter that members would like to bring back.

MR. MARTIN: Just on another point of clarification to the hon. House leader. We were aware that Agriculture was coming, and the concern was not having the information ahead. I would ask the Government House Leader: is it just Agriculture that we're going to go into today? Because that's all we'd been told yesterday.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, the answer is practical and pragmatic. It will really depend on how rapidly matters go. If the Agriculture estimates, for some reason, are very rapidly concluded, the House may be looking for other things to do for the balance of the morning. We would have a choice at that point of either calling it one o'clock or proceeding with one of the other estimates. But since hon. members would be in the same position for all of the other estimates as what we've just discussed with respect to Agriculture, I had hoped that we wouldn't have to go on to another department today. At the same time, I don't think hon. members want to lose valuable

time and, if the Agriculture Department estimates are quickly over, would probably not want to call it one o'clock right away.

MR. NOTLEY: Might I suggest we call it one o'clock.

MR. MARTIN: Or could I suggest, so we can get on with it, that maybe one of us can have some discussion outside with the hon. House leader to see where we would be going, because we're prepared for Agriculture but not otherwise. I'd want to make up my mind about one o'clock or where we're going then.

MR. CRAWFORD: Maybe the answer, Mr. Chairman, is for all of us to conclude that calling it one o'clock isn't such a bad thing after all and that we won't deal with anything beyond Agriculture today.

MR. NOTLEY: Agreed. That's fine.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, before we continue, have we got unanimous consent of the House that the hon. Leader of the Opposition . . . I guess I was asking for the leader's request that Monday be designated as Environment under the committee.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, if I could comment on that just briefly once more, my thought was that we would make that an undertaking in light of the fact that the designation probably can't be waived in committee.

Department of Agriculture

1 — Farming for the Future

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the minister any opening comments?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I'd like to make just a few brief comments about the Farming for the Future program and refresh members' memories that the program was actually announced in this Legislature on October 24, 1977, and at that time was given a five-year mandate and an allocation of \$10 million. Although formal funding of research projects didn't commence until April 1, 1979, active preparation began a year previous. During the 1980-81 fiscal year, an additional commitment of \$15 million was announced, along with the confirmation of the program mandate until March 31, 1984.

The research program, Mr. Chairman, was implemented to really meet two primary, specific objectives, one of them being to improve the long-term viability of agriculture in Alberta and, second, to improve the income of Alberta producers. The program is administered by the Agricultural Research Council and consists of eight producers, a senior representative of Alberta Agriculture, one from Agriculture Canada, the University of Alberta, the research council, and one Member of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Alberta.

The project proposals are submitted each fall; there's then a review process by the committees that consist of producers and scientists. Recommendations are then forwarded to the Agricultural Research Council, and they review and make a decision on those projects.

The Farming for the Future program supports projects in nine specific areas or components of the agricultural industry in the province. The components are, one, agriculture and entomology; two, cereals and oil seeds; three, forages; four, land use

and engineering; five, non-ruminants; six, processing, transportation, marketing, and socio-economics. Number seven is ruminants, eight is special crops, and the last one, implemented some time after, is irrigation.

During its years of operation, the program has supported 199 projects in these areas at an estimated cost of \$22.1 million. In addition, Mr. Chairman, in January 1982 the on-farm demonstration program was established to intensify and accelerate the transfer of new technology from researchers to producers. The program is intended to enable producers and producer organizations to become involved in regional on-farm testing and demonstration of innovative technology for agriculture today. Applications are submitted by producers or producer organizations and reviewed by regional review committees composed of Alberta Agriculture staff and appointed producers. When the project is completed, the project team submits a report to Farming for the Future so that results can be made available to the public and to anyone who might be interested. In the first year of the program, approximately 50 projects received funding of \$166,000, which indicates the interest of the producer involvement in developing and adopting new technology.

The graduate student research program was also established in January 1982 to provide a one-time grant of \$10,000, the maximum, that would assist graduate students at Alberta universities and at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon to conduct their own research projects. In the first year of this program, 17 graduate students received assistance totalling \$117,350.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that Farming for the Future has really proven to be a great asset to Alberta's agricultural community. The new technology has helped to generate more and more, and it's really repaid in a number of ways, yet I think what we've seen to date is really just a hint of what we're going to see. It's just the beginning of what's going to come about.

One way I think Albertans view Farming for the Future is really an investment in their own future. It's an investment in maintaining agriculture as a cornerstone of Alberta's economy and society. It's also an investment, Mr. Chairman, in making sure that agriculture retains its viability as an industry, and it's expected of us to always work with it because it does support us.

I believe everybody involved in research understands that the investment you make in research has very, very significant returns. Agriculture Canada has estimated that the returns are basically seven to one: for every dollar spent, \$7 is returned. The University of Alberta says that for every dollar spent, \$10 is returned. Others have estimates going as high as \$40 for every dollar spent. So there is a significant return from agricultural research.

While the projects that have been started under this program have just started to mature, the results still require more time to reach the producer level. All of these projects have been approved and are completing their mandate. The mandate for Farming for the Future was to end in 1984, and this allocation of funds will see that it goes on through the '84-85 year.

We have to remember that a lot of the easily accessible technology has already been developed. We're getting into more complex areas of research now, and that's one of the reasons I think the program definitely has to be continued. I think interest in research will again be very, very strong in this next year, and the \$5 million that's being requested is for new and innovative farm and producer technology. It'll benefit all of the agricultural industry and the producers and processors in this province.

Mr. Chairman, I'll be happy to try to answer any questions.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, for once I can be very positive to the government. I think it's an excellent program and the direction we should be going in, in terms of the heritage trust fund.

I was interested in the minister's comments about the 7:1 ratio. I believe that's probably true in most research around. I guess we know generally what Farming for the Future is about, but I'd be interested in hearing the minister speculate, if I can put it, about the programs now in research, some of the things that he sees possible, say, in 20 years. I'm thinking also in terms of diversification of the economy in the agriculture area. What differences will we see? I know we can't hold you to this, but obviously you've thought about this and looked at it. I guess what I'm really interested in is: what will the 7:1 ratio be like in 20 years? What can we look forward to?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, the report of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act will be tabled in the next number of days. I'd just like to advise all members that this matter was discussed in the select committee public hearings, and there was unanimous consent by all members of the committee that they would support further continuation of the Farming for the Future program.

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond to two points. For the Member for Barrhead: I appreciate that unanimous recommendation, because the Farming for the Future program is certainly one area that has shown tremendous benefit.

To the Member for Edmonton Norwood: looking at the future, I see a number of things happening that I think Farming for the Future has had a direct benefit on. If I could just pick some at random, one example would be the canola research to establish canola varieties all across the province. Progress is being made in that area, and in the next 20 years I see canola becoming a crop that is going to have great potential for producers.

Also, looking at bees is one that's a little different — to have a southern bee and a northern bee. What that does for the honey industry is that I think we will see that industry develop much further. We've been involved in leaf cutter bees, which now have tremendous export potential. Many other countries are now looking at our leaf cutter bee as one that has potential for them. I think we can see that happening.

Also, in the area where we are involved in computers, I see far more being done. To a great extent in the last number of years, computer clubs have grown up. Farmers, young farmers particularly, got involved in that.

I see new management techniques. Likely the research area is going to have to work with them to develop that. We're working at trying to transfer technology quicker from the scientist's level and the department level to the actual producers. We can't force it on them; we just make it available to them. They now have to drop in to the district agriculturist's office or to the regional specialist and talk to them about the latest developments. We also have publications we put out that they could read. But with the computer industry, that information will be readily available to them. I think that will change significantly how producers allocate each spring what crops they're going to seed and what direction they're going to take.

One example has created a good deal of excitement. We're working on it and if we get it fully developed ... We have, I think, one area in Westlock where we have been working a pilot project. If you go into the office and take in what kind of crop you have, what stage it's at, what weeds are in the crop, they will feed all that information into the computer and

it will tell you exactly what chemical is on the market today that would be most cost beneficial to do the job that has to be done on that. That's one area where we will see a significant change taking place.

Also, there are new techniques now, because of irrigation rehabilitation and the research that's being done there, in managing our water and soil better. In that area, I think we'll see a great change take place.

What we have to look at is that the farms are becoming larger and more productive. If we go over the numbers for the last number of years, we can see that there was a very significant increase in productivity. Even though the farms got bigger, the productivity also got bigger for each individual acre of land. We have to maximize that production. I think we've just scratched the surface. Even though we've shown a big increase, I think that is really just beginning to happen.

Because of the harsher climate that we live in, there are other areas — greenhouses and that type of operation — where the research that's being done could change the importation of a lot of vegetable products that could be grown here. We have all the resources with which to do it. There are new techniques being developed in that area that I think will change things significantly.

I know that's not much of a crystal ball on what's going to happen, but we have just begun a green revolution, I guess I would call it, on what will happen in the future. We are in a global situation where everyone is so competitive. We're an exporting nation, and we're going to have to become even more competitive and cost-conscious as we do it. One of the ways I see helping our producers is through research.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, thank you to the minister for the answers. I know it's impossible to have a crystal ball. He gave me a good idea. I would just like to follow up, if I could, in two or three areas and put them into perspective. Mr. Kowalski, the chairman of the committee on the heritage trust fund, pointed out that this was unanimous. Everybody feels that this is a good program. I especially liked it for a different reason. In the Official Opposition we are pushing for the need for diversification. That should be the key tool of the heritage trust fund rather than a savings vehicle. I see this as an example of what could lead to diversification. I think we should be doing this much more broadly, across other areas. So that's the main reason I see it as an important program. Research is always important.

Just to follow up on some of your remarks — and the minister and I have discussed this before. To deal with the future, if you like — and I agree that land is becoming more productive, research will have a lot to do with it, and farms are becoming bigger. That brings us to the other problem, though; that is, what are we looking at in terms of the future? Is the research that's coming from Farming for the Future — and I believe you alluded to new types of management and these types of things. Looking 20 years down the line, what kind of rural countryside are we looking at?

Specifically to the minister: is the research looking at farms being bigger, fewer farmers, and the increase, if you like, of sliding away from the rural areas of population, similar to what's happened in the United States, to where we are really into sort of corporation farms? Or is some of the research looking at trying to make the family farm more viable so more people can farm and keep our rural areas and our small towns viable? I know the minister is concerned about what is happening, and I'm certainly concerned, having grown up in a rural area. Some of it is inevitable; nobody could stop it totally.

But I think by these types of programs, we can have an influence.

I would say to the minister that what is happening in Farming for the Future is extremely crucial to the type of rural Alberta we will have and the types of small towns we'll have. I think the research that's going on right now is going to have a very direct bearing on what happens in 15 or 20 years. I was a little concerned. I still believe, and I think the minister does, that the best efficiency, when we compare it around the world, is still the family farm, the smaller unit. I would hate to say that we're going the efficiency route when we're talking about new management, that we will be into corporation farms, and a whole way of life will be gone. Sometimes progress is not better, it's just different. Maybe you could enlarge on that a little bit. There was some confusion there, at least on my part.

One other question. You alluded quickly to the different types of greenery you're looking at. I was going to ask specifically about the climatic zones in this province. What new products, new crops if you like, from northern Alberta and perhaps from southern Alberta are they looking at that might be of some interest in the future?

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Mr. Chairman, the key word the member used was "diversification". I think that's extremely important. The Farming for the Future program is one component of a number of programs. We have the Nutritive Processing Agreement with the federal government, which allows processors to establish in the smaller communities. I think that is helpful, to keep everyone out of the major cities and get that processing going. Also, there are grants to commodity organizations to help them develop, and that works back to the farm level. So there are a number of other areas, and that's only one component.

There is no argument about the family farm being the most productive. The key part of computer technology that I see is that — a number of the corporate farms access themselves to a lot of information that the small family farms don't normally access. I see the computer helping the small family farm far more than the corporate farm, because it will put them on an equal footing.

As far as research, we don't wish to have corporate farms and have a lot of the farmers here being sharecroppers. That's just not acceptable. There is no way you can have a feel for things in your heart, besides having it in your head, unless you have a piece of land of your own that you work from as a base. Big isn't necessarily better; in fact, most of the time small is better. There is more intensive use of that land by smaller operators. Through the Ag. Development Corporation, the beginning farm loan has been one component of establishing a land base for our young farmer. He will likely lease a lot of land besides, but he has to have that land base to work from. There certainly is a recognition that part of the diversification of the province has to be the family farm. That's the key. The family is the key to a healthy society, and I think family farms are the key to a healthy agricultural industry in the province. The research that has been ongoing is in full recognition of who we're targeting for.

I'd like to make the members of the committee aware, Mr. Chairman, that we are also doing a re-evaluation right now in the Department of Agriculture of who we are targeting for, who we are serving. We only have one reason for being, and that's to serve agriculture. There are a number of areas that I think we don't have to be in, and we could use those resources better to help small producers and processors do what they're doing. So at the moment we have that evaluation going on, and that's part of the reorganization and some restructuring that

will take place in the Department of Agriculture in Alberta to meet the challenges of the 1980s and the challenges of our producers today.

As far as the crops, I've identified a couple of them that we're looking at. The canola research was one important component for northern and southern Alberta. Because of the different climatic conditions in the two areas, they have to have a different type of product. Also, winter wheat is a great crop in southern Alberta but doesn't do that well in northern Alberta. There aren't the varieties, and that varietal testing has to take place. Also, because of the heat units and irrigation in southern Alberta, it never did make much economic sense for me to irrigate land for barley when they could go into other specialty crops that had a greater return. There is a pulse growers' organization and new organizations looking at beans and a number of things that can be grown in irrigated areas in southern Alberta.

There is a difference in climate from north to south, and central is a bit different again. We have to recognize in all our research projects that we are identifying where we're going and what we're targeting for. It's been very successful in some of those areas I've just mentioned to you — being able to work on having a southern bee and a northern bee, and a number of areas like that where I think really there has been that recognition.

Also, Farming for the Future works hand in hand with the other ongoing research within the Department of Agriculture itself. Farming for the Future is the shorter term research that will provide an economic benefit quickly for producers. The department research is normally a longer, ongoing type of research.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 1 — Farming for the Future \$5,000,000

2 — Food Processing Development Centre

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the minister any comments on the Food Processing Development Centre?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The food processing centre is at Leduc. The initial planning began about 10 years ago for a product development laboratory and capability to perform basic food processing operations such as canning and freezing. The research centre was originally envisioned as an addition to the present food testing centre or lab at the Alberta Agriculture O.S. Longman Building here in Edmonton. However, recommendations were made by cabinet in late 1980 to consider a free-standing facility with broader capabilities, and it was to be funded as a heritage fund project. The Leduc industrial park was selected because of the good combination of processor interaction, service capabilities, transportation services, and the utilization of existing staff and capabilities.

I'd like to say, Mr. Chairman, that the structure was expected to have been completed by September of 1983. However, there's been a delay in construction and the building won't be occupied until early 1984. As a result of that delay, it's expected that the '83-84 funding of \$4.5 million won't be fully expended during the fiscal year. The reduced expenditure is really reflected in the 1984-85 budget submission. The estimates are compiled in co-operation with Public Works, Supply and Services and show that they're supervising the design, development, and construction of the centre.

In Alberta Agriculture '83-84 budget requests, capital projects division, the total completion cost of the project was

\$8,671,000, and this is an increase of about \$103,000. That number represents a change in building standards that were required to meet federal meat regulations regarding the design of the wet area within the building. The Department of Agriculture, through the budget process, has asked for a one-year extension to accommodate the construction delay and to necessitate deferment of ordering certain equipment that really wasn't going to be needed right away. We didn't want to order it until it was needed.

I'd just like to make members aware, Mr. Chairman, that the goal of the centre is to increase the capability of Alberta food processors in meeting the needs of the market place through innovation and application of new technology and the development of new products and processes. The facility is also expected to strengthen and help our food processors in expansion and the market opportunities they see developing. The centre will really provide a component that's been missing to this point in development and expansion of food processing capabilities within the province. The \$2 million to be voted will allow us to meet all those objectives.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NOTLEY: I think most of us have supported this particular proposal in past years, so there is no change in terms of principle here, but there are a couple of questions I'd like to put to the minister.

I'd like to know what the staff component will be when the food processing centre has been completed. Secondly, I'd like to know what kind of arrangements the government proposes to work out with industry for cost sharing. We have, I guess, the precedent of the Alberta Research Council, where a great deal of research work is done in conjunction with private industry. Also we have the Oil Sands Research and Technology Authority, where there is a joint industry/government approach in almost all the projects under the auspices of AOSTRA. To what extent are we going to be either charging industry or working with industry or sharing development and research costs with industry as far as the operation of this processing development centre is concerned?

Mr. Chairman, I just say this very quickly, because we've discussed the principle before. As I've mentioned, I think all of us agree that as we find new markets, some of those markets are going to be here in the province. That means testing new products and processes, and that's a wise investment; no question about that. But I think it is interesting to at least assess to what extent that will involve co-operating with the private sector and what the nature of that co-operation will be.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is the minister ready to conclude?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The centre staff initially will number somewhere between six and eight. It could later grow to 15. Already there are two approved for that facility. The staff component will be made up of a transfer from Edmonton to the building out there, but it will be a total staff complement of about six to eight to start. When it's in full operation, it could be about 15. That would be the total amount.

As far as the charge for the use of the facilities, this is an extension type facility and is catering to the food processing sector.

We do not plan on charging for bench scale studies, the ones that are just done on the bench. But when we get to the pilot project equipment use, which would be considerably more activity, we're looking at about \$175 a day for the use of the pilot process equipment. The actual cost will be higher than

that, but the \$175 was to act as a deterrent so that we'd only have serious enquirers that would be in there. We wanted to make sure that the centre was utilized properly, and we didn't know how to do it except by having some kind of deterrent fee. So the costs would not be covered in that, but the processors will then be expected to supply the major materials and ingredients they need. If there is extensive use by processors, then there will have to be negotiations with them on the use of the facilities if they intend to use them on an extended basis of any kind, because that would preclude someone else from having that use. So if they're going to have an extended period of time when they're going to be there, some negotiation with them would have to take place.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 2 — Food Processing

Development Centre

\$2,071,000

3 — Irrigation Rehabilitation and Expansion

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the minister any comments?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, the final program is the one on irrigation rehabilitation and expansion. For a few minutes, I would like to go over how the program got to where it is. It was initially announced in 1975 to assist the 13 irrigation districts that were under the purview of the Irrigation Council, to rehabilitate and upgrade their delivery systems and thereby ensure an adequate delivery system of water to farmers. The heritage fund represents 86 per cent of the aggregate cost-sharing fund, with the remaining 14 per cent contributed by the irrigation districts. Both of these contributions are then deposited in a cost-sharing account, from which moneys are drawn when they have been documented — and that's the important part — by the engineering certificate stating that the work has been done. The materials are supplied in accordance with the project reports previously submitted, and they all have to be approved by the Irrigation Council.

In addition to rehabilitation, the Irrigation Council has authorized capital construction of irrigation research projects to evaluate new materials and techniques. They've always been involved in some type of ongoing research, but through Farming for the Future they've been involved in looking at new techniques in irrigation systems. They had particular emphasis on control of seepage from canals, and aerial photography and triangulation. They're all funded through this program.

I'd just like to make a few remarks about the funding levels. When the program was originally announced in 1975, the total commitment at that time was \$90 million, which was to run for a 10-year period until 1985. It was quickly determined that the funding levels to make the necessary improvements were going to be higher than that. The program was revised in 1980 to provide additional improvements, and at that time there was \$100 million put into the program. The program at that time was a joint announcement in Lethbridge by the then Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of the Environment — \$100 million from Agriculture and \$234 million from the Department of the Environment. The \$100 million that was announced at that time was in addition to what had already been spent from 1975, which was a little over \$31 million. When the dollars went in, the whole project was to be reviewed in 1984-85 to look at what funding levels would be ongoing after that. There was also an inflationary number that was worked in with the \$100 million, and we developed that in consultation with the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services, and Alberta Treasury. These were really the same inflationary increases that

were allowed the Department of the Environment in their part of the program.

On March 31, 1983, approximately \$94,472,000 was expended under the program. All 13 irrigation districts have rehabilitated a part of their distribution systems by rebuilding or realigning to a legal boundary, or upgrading through use of buried pipe, concrete, and other lining to control seepage and improve efficiency. During this period, the ongoing rehabilitation work has been instrumental in increasing the irrigated acreage in the 13 districts by approximately 220,000 acres. By this year, that brings the total up to around 1.5 million irrigated acres. Larger irrigation districts have constructed small reservoirs and have improved their main canals and rebuilt various large concrete control structures.

Mr. Chairman, because of the current fiscal restraint policies, we've had to reassess and reevaluate the irrigation and rehabilitation expansion projects and look at what funding levels would be available in the '84-85 fiscal year. I'd like to point out that the current allocation in the estimates today — I guess what isn't in the estimates is a better way to put it. What was in the previous estimates of nearly \$33 million is what the districts had to work with this year. They've been able to take advantage of reduced labor and material costs due to the economic conditions. I've had discussions with each one of the districts in their own offices and have stated to them that if the Legislature approved this funding of \$25 million, that is what they would have to work with for the '84-85 fiscal year.

I'd like to assure members that I'm not going to reduce the overall commitment to irrigation in Alberta, but rather I think the projects will take a little longer period of time until we see what the income levels that flow into the capital projects division really are. Irrigation is really a key to the future of agriculture in many parts of this province. I'll be happy to answer any questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARTIN: Just to come back on the cuts, we've had this discussion before but there still seems to be some concern, as I understand it. Maybe the minister can fill us in so we're clear. There's approximately a \$7 million cutback in what the irrigation districts were expected to get. There's been some flak, if you like, directed toward the government, saying that the previous minister, Mr. Dallas Schmidt, as I understand it, had been encouraging them to spend the government rehabilitation money as quickly as possible. Now they feel that they've spent some \$4.7 million, I believe, and find that they're going to have a \$7 million cutback. They are saying that this is really going to hurt. I suppose if they'd known ahead of time, they could have balanced it off more easily. More than that, as I understand it they're talking about cutting staff and indicating that this will be very severe.

I know it is a time of restraint, but I'm sure the hon. minister knows we've proposed other ways to go about it. Is it as severe as they are saying, or are the people there and the manager, Mr. Brown, exaggerating, or what is the case? I'm just not sure, because we hear varying things.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few remarks on irrigation in general and this program in particular. I think it's been one of the better things for Alberta and agriculture on the whole. If you go back in years before this time, there was a pretty fair irrigation system built up in Alberta. It was built up and then it was used, but it was never really rehabilitated. The government very wisely decided that either they would have an irrigation system or they wouldn't, and they had to do a certain amount of rehabilitation. I know there are many members sitting on the committee who feel that we've

poured millions and millions of dollars into the system. What we were doing was bringing it back on stream and putting it in shape.

Many people also feel that irrigation directly benefits the people that use it, and it does; there's no doubt about that. But it's also almost like a hail and crop insurance system. If you compare Alberta with Saskatchewan in a dry year, we always have, through the irrigation system, a supply of feed on hand that Saskatchewan and Manitoba, for instance, do not have.

For those reasons I think we should really support this program. Sure, there are a few problems with it. We have had to cut back to some degree on the way we were putting it through, but there has been some acceleration in the program over the years too. If you take a period of 10 years, I don't think that we are really behind the anticipated rate of rebuilding that we had projected years ago. Yes, we're cutting back a little bit now, but we have accelerated in the past. So basically I would say that we are pretty well on stream.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Chairman, I should start off by saying that I'm not hindered by any great knowledge of irrigation projects, but one thing does occur to me. I'm not even certain if I should be directing these questions to the hon. Minister of Agriculture; perhaps my questions might be better directed to the hon. Minister of the Environment. It's with regard to the plans being done on the South Saskatchewan River basin project and how those studies are going to impact on irrigation projects. I understand that a river like the Red Deer River has only a 3 per cent consumptive use of its flow. While that is a very low amount, in our analysis of this situation, I think we have to be very careful that there will be a sufficient flow for future uses in the area serviced by the Red Deer River and the industry that may be impacted by any disruption.

I wonder if the minister might just assist me by commenting on how that study — which, my understanding is, is being undertaken by the Alberta Water Resources Commission through the chairmanship of the Member for Chinook — will impact on the irrigation situation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the minister like to respond?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, maybe I could clear up the dollar numbers, so it's clear in everybody's mind what we're talking about. It is not a cutback in funding. If we look back to 1975, there was over \$30 million used. There was a new \$100 million allocation that was an addition to the \$30 million that had already been spent, and that was worked out for inflation. So including all of that, we're looking at about \$152 million that will be spent on irrigation. Looking at the \$100 million commitment and the \$30 million that was used, we've got \$152 million or a little over that — \$154 million — that will actually be expended. So it's not a cutback.

The districts had anticipated having somewhere like \$32 million to work with this coming year, and they had to live with \$25 million. If I ask you for \$3 and you give me \$1, that's not a cutback; I just got a little less than what I asked for. The point is that each irrigation district itself is autonomous. The previous minister told them that they could move at their own pace: they could use the money up quicker, or they could take a longer time to do it.

We have some irrigation districts that are extremely small, and they have to come up with 14 per cent of their funding before they can put a project together and then get enough

money to do a meaningful project. So some of the smaller districts took a longer time to do it, because they had more funding, the larger districts were prepared to start immediately on some projects and went ahead quicker; we advanced money to them so they could do that. Each one of them knew full well the funding levels they would have to live within, and they went ahead themselves, as autonomous bodies, and made those decisions. I've met with each one of those districts and explained the funding level, and there were no dissenters among any of the district boards when I met with them. They realized the fiscal restraints we were under. They understood and felt that they could accomplish just about everything they wanted to accomplish with the funding level that was going, if it is approved by the Legislature. They knew I was going to propose this number, but of course the Legislature has to approve whether or not that's what they get.

In addition to that, each irrigation district is now in the process of analysing what kind of work they wish to do. They have to prioritize their projects, and then they'll submit them to Irrigation Council. I've told them to be realistic, realizing our fiscal restraint, and they all said they would. The Irrigation Council will then review them, and a submission for an ongoing project that I can review will then be made to me.

Irrigation and rehabilitation must go on. You can't do it and stop right now. If you took all the irrigation canals and put them together, they would lie in a line all the way from Vancouver to Halifax. If you had a highway running from Vancouver to Halifax, you couldn't rehabilitate that highway in one year. It's going to take a number of years to do it, and that rehabilitation will be ongoing.

Once we have the opportunity to look at what their project needs are, we'll be able to analyse it even closer. Some of the districts — probably the one the Member for Edmonton Norwood is alluding to — went ahead very quickly on some of theirs, and they got an advance of funds. So this year they don't have very much to work with. But that's a decision they made on their own, realizing the funding levels that were there.

In addition to that, the Member for Cardston says that we have to be realistic about it, that it's been an exciting program and has done a lot of great things. I certainly agree with him. The Member for Red Deer raised the South Saskatchewan study. That study is taking place to catalogue and prioritize what the water needs will be in the future, what each community — we only have so much water. It's a very, very valuable resource. In my mind, I think it's more valuable than oil, because we can't drink oil. We have to make sure that our water is looked at closely within those basins. That's part of the South Saskatchewan study, that is looking at all the numbers — the projected growth patterns for cities and towns and what the requirements will be — so the allocation between different users of water can be recognized.

You might also wish to put that question to the Minister of the Environment when he comes before the committee. I know that he's also worried about sufficient flow in some of our river basins and the steps that we need to take.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I won't take much more of the minister's time on this, but the point that I want to clear up — I recognize that the minister is saying that this is an ongoing project. But the confusion I have with it — and I know he can't answer for the previous minister, but it seems to me that they are saying that they got encouragement to move ahead. There is a difference. If the Minister of Agriculture gives you encouragement, that's precisely what you're going to do: move ahead as quickly as possible. I suppose we can debate the perception of the people involved, and maybe you've talked to

the previous minister, but I think that's the point I was trying to make.

If that was the case, a bit of the problem at St. Mary's was the government's fault. With all due respect to the minister, I would say that when he goes around to see them, he's a very powerful person and he's not going to get much argument, because if they argue, they're going to be worried about getting cut back more. I think it's going to go ahead, and the only concern that I and a number of people there had was that if there was encouragement at the time, then that probably wasn't fair. I expect you've talked to the previous minister. There is probably a difference in perception, and you can't do much about that at this point. That's the point I was making.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I'd like to say that nobody has to be afraid to talk to me; I don't have a mean bone in my body. Their concerns are something that we recognize. Part of the reason — I think we have to recognize that, number one, Environment's program was announced for 15 years and the funding level was there. For Agriculture it was a five-year program and then a review of that program, recognizing that it also had to be ongoing. At the time he encouraged them, the minister said: this is how many dollars are available; in 1984-85 there will be a review for the funding levels beyond that. Then they could prioritize. So they were very much aware of the dollar numbers.

I believe you mentioned Jim Brown; I think his comments were made prior to my meeting with the St. Mary's district board of directors, and I appreciate his concerns. However, the board advised me that they understand the circumstances and are prepared to work with the resources that are available. As far as staff cuts, I understand that this really was a concern they have had, but it doesn't really appear to be a concern now.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, a question to the minister. I would like to ask how the allocation of funds was done between the different irrigation districts and how we determined that it was done fairly. Some of the districts are much larger than others, as he stated, and some of them have been neglected. I just wonder if it was done on an acreage basis or whether it was done through the Irrigation Council itself. I guess the thing I'm worried about — the entire Western Irrigation District is in my constituency, and it's been neglected for many years. The trees grew up on the banks of their canals, and they've spent almost their entire allotment of funds removing these trees, which has been a very expensive project. That's not to say that they haven't been very glad to get it; I think it's been well received by all the irrigation districts.

Just one other question that I think needs some clarifying. Some of the irrigation districts are not in as good financial shape as we may think. It's my understanding that the money that comes in for this upgrading program is kept in an account entirely separate from all their general revenue, so even though they may be in a poor financial state, the money is still there for them. I would like the minister to comment on that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the minister like to respond?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The dollars are put into a separate account. I stated in my opening comments that they're put into a special cost-sharing account, and then the money cannot be withdrawn until they're sure that the engineering reports and everything else have been completed properly.

As far as the allocation within the different districts, that is one area that the Irrigation Council works with them on. It's based on acreage and on the dollars available. The funding is allocated on that basis, so it's very fair.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 3 — Irrigation

Rehabilitation and Expansion \$25,000,000

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the Government House Leader like to make the necessary motion?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I was just in conversation with one of the other members, and now that she is making the necessary motion to return to her place, I will make the necessary motion. Before doing so, I would ask if the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood is in a position to deal with the suggestion I made earlier; that was that perhaps these estimates might not be finally reported today. If the hon. member feels they've been adequately dealt with, they could be finally reported today. But I want to leave my original offer open.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I have no objection if it's reported today.

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

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again:

Resolved that from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund sums not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1985, for the purpose of making investments in the following projects to be administered by the Minister of Agriculture: \$5 million for Farming for the Future, \$2,071 million for the Food Processing Development Centre, \$25 million for irrigation rehabilitation and expansion.

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 afternoon the Assembly will be in Committee of Supply, and the estimates called will be those of the Department of the Environment. The Assembly will not sit on Monday evening.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we call it one o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by hon. Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 12:16 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]