

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, July 11, 1986 10:00 a.m.**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. RUSSELL: Visiting the Legislature today, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery is His Excellency U Ba Thwin, the Burmese Ambassador to Canada. He is making a familiarization tour. He is accompanied by his Third Secretary, U Than Tun. I would ask our distinguished visitors to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 16****Special Waste Management
Corporation Amendment Act, 1986**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 16, the Special Waste Management Corporation Amendment Act, 1986.

The Bill will change some of the current responsibilities of the chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

[Leave granted; Bill 16 read a first time]

Bill 10**Department of Technology,
Research and Telecommunications Act**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 10, the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications Act. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill establishes the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

[Leave granted; Bill 10 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 1**Alberta Synod of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in Canada Act**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 1, Alberta Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Act.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to incorporate the Alberta Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and to provide for its constitution.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 1 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 2**Northwest Bible College Act**

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 2, Northwest Bible College Act.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to incorporate the college and to empower it to grant degrees in divinity.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 2 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 3**Oxford Trust Company Ltd. Act**

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, Oxford Trust Company Ltd. Act.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to incorporate a trust company. The Bill follows the form specified in the regulations to the Trust Companies Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 3 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 6**Timothy Z. Marshall Bar Admission Act**

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I have another private Bill. I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 6, the Timothy Z. Marshall Bar Admission Act.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to provide for the admission of Timothy Z. Marshall, who is a British subject, to the Alberta Bar, so that he may practise in Bermuda. The Attorney General of Bermuda has requested support of this Bill.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 6 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 4**Canada Olympic Park
Property Tax Exemption Act**

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 4, the Canada Olympic Park Property Tax Exemption Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to exempt the ski jumps and luge and bobsled runs constructed at the Canada Olympic Park from municipal taxation. The petition is presented by the Municipal District of Rocky View No. 44, the taxing authority.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 4 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a reply to Question 139.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you four distinguished guests from my constituency: first, the mayor of the town of Fairview, Jim Reynolds; secondly, Karen Paul and Tom Baldwin from the Mackenzie Regional Planning Commission; and Ian Macdonald, a farmer in our area and past chairman of the

board of governors of Fairview College. I ask them to rise now and receive the applause from this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, I draw your attention to the Speaker's gallery to introduce three persons seated there. I would ask that they rise as I mention their names: Mr. Donald Salmon, the Auditor General of the province of Alberta; Mr. Larry Dennis, the Auditor for Bermuda; and one who has served the province with distinction, Mr. Douglas Rogers, who was provincial Auditor from 1973 to 1978 and Auditor General from 1978 to 1986.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Government Employment Guidelines

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the minister responsible for personnel administration. First of all, is he aware if there are any special guidelines for employees of the Social Services department, over and above the general code of conduct for provincial employees? Specifically, I'm wondering if he is aware of this, and if he recognizes that they significantly restrict the right to freedom of association.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any specifics of that nature. They have not been brought to my attention.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to file four copies, because they are around. They are from the deputy minister of the Social Services department. Mr. Speaker, the guidelines specifically prohibit employee membership in associations or community groups if that membership conflicts with the philosophy of the department. They also state that no employee may publicly criticize departmental policy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. MARTIN: Do you want to ask it? Go ahead. My question is: will the minister be asking that these guidelines be withdrawn, given their obvious conflict with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, until I've read them very thoroughly and see whether or not they are indeed reasonable, I'm not prepared to make that commitment.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary. Maybe the courts will, Mr. Speaker. It's one thing to prevent conflicts of interest and insubordination, but it's quite another to prevent departmental clerical workers or truck drivers from attending political meetings on their off hours. My question to the minister is this: what steps will he be taking to ensure that guidelines for personnel in each department are consistent and do not violate basic human rights?

DR. REID: I've already said, Mr. Speaker, I'm not prepared to give a commitment that I will have these rescinded until I've read and studied them very carefully. Obviously, this government believes in the freedom of people to do reasonable things, but like most employers, they expect some reasonable restrictions on what people may do if it affects their work or the function of the department they work for.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question then in a more general vein. Maybe the minister can answer this question. In a landmark ruling in Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court struck down a provincial law prohibiting government employees from engaging in partisan activity. My question to the minister is: in view of this, will he be recommending changes to the overall code of conduct and ethics so as to ensure that it complies with the Charter?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it is well known this government has a good record of being reasonable in its relations with its employees, and that principle will continue. Matters such as the code of conduct are under ongoing review any time anything is brought up from any other province. We will, of course, make sure that our treatment of our employees continues to be as it has been in the past, reasonable, and it will be within the Charter.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question in a broader sense to the Premier relative to this question. Since the inception of the Charter of rights, could the Premier indicate whether the government of Alberta has a person or persons in place to review the consistency of government practices, government legislation, and various actions to see that they are in accord with that Charter?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that's a question I would like to delve into in some detail and report back to the hon. member. Since the inception of the Charter of rights, there has been some period of time when I haven't been here, but I would like to see what happened during that period of time and report back.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour. Will he undertake to report to the House if any personnel have been disciplined under these regulations?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, that's a difficult commitment to make, as it involves individuals, and I don't think the treatment of individuals should necessarily be brought back to the House. It would depend upon the circumstances.

Energy and Fiscal Policies

MR. SPEAKER: The main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: I don't know if this is the main one or the other one. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Premier. During Executive Council estimates last night the Premier admitted, "it's getting dangerously late to be still trying to establish" a base for an oil policy and program. The fact that lease sales are at their lowest level since 1977 confirms that it is dangerously late. My question to the Premier is this: has he determined when it will be too late, and does he have some plan to try and miss that deadline?

MR. GETTY: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, it's a judgment, and judgments are matters that you make as time goes on, as I tried to explain to the hon. member last night. There are a variety of factors involved in that judgment: working with the industry, working with the federal government, and watching the way energy matters develop. It will just be something that we'll have to do from day to day in making that decision.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. When the Premier says, "it's dangerously late," it would seem to us that there should be some action occurring. But to go into the sales themselves, the number of sales are at their lowest level in nine years, and the average price per hectare is at the lowest rate since 1977. Given this slump, has the Premier asked for an assessment of the Treasurer's revenue projections? Is the government now doing any sort of rewrite of the budget figures?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, sales for a short period of time — and we're only very shortly into our current fiscal year — do not indicate the full fiscal year nor, as indicated yesterday, would the world price, given any particular price per day, necessarily impact on the full budget of the government. It's quite possible there could be a turnaround in both sales and the price of oil and gas between now and April '87, which is the fiscal year. However, Mr. Speaker, such things as low sales are in the budget. That is in the figuring in the budget in the Provincial Treasurer's estimates of what the deficit would be. He was counting on lower sales. The sales are lower, but I don't think it requires a new budget estimate now.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It seems to be that the action is wishful thinking from the government, but let me direct this question to the Minister of Energy. He has said that take-up has been slow on his incentive packages because people must do the work first and then apply. But these lease sales indicate there's not much work going on. My question is: does the minister then have other information to indicate that there is exploration activity happening despite the drop in lease sales?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I indicated yesterday the information I have with respect to take-up on the incentive programs I've announced since last April. Part of that information is, as the hon. member indicated, that applications would be made after the contractors have been paid.

Additional information: I indicated yesterday that there has been a large number of people who have indicated they would be attending workshops in Calgary with respect to how to go about applying for these particular programs and more information on the qualifications for those programs. Some 400 to 500 people have indicated they would be attending those seminars. I have also been having ongoing discussions with people in the industry and will do so again this afternoon and over the weekend. All this information indicates that we expect the developmental drilling and well servicing programs to be taken up by the end of September, and there will be a further take-up on the exploration and geophysical programs in the fall.

MR. MARTIN: It's nice that we're having workshops and seminars, but I wish there was some indication that the minister's words were in fact going to come about. Mr. Speaker, it seems that if exploration is not occurring, we will not be finding new supplies of oil, and so our reserves will be depleted. My question to the minister is simply this: can he assure the Assembly that the reserves are being replaced at a satisfactory rate at this time?

DR. WEBBER: How can one possibly do that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. What, if any, creative cost-cutting initiatives is the government

employing to bring down the deficit, or are we just drifting and wishing?

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, hon. member. That's completely off the topic. We're dealing with energy at this stage.

MR. TAYLOR: We're talking about revenue and the deficit, Mr. Speaker. His supplementary might have been off the topic. I'm trying to get it back on.

To the Premier, if I may repeat: in view of the rather doomsday scenario that's coming up, what initiatives is the government employing to bring down the deficit, or are we just drifting, wishing, and hoping?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we aren't drifting, wishing, and hoping. Maybe the hon. member is. We are doing everything possible to run an efficient operation and yet deliver the services the people of Alberta request and need.

It's interesting that we are right in the middle of our estimates. We've been going for hours and hours, and I haven't heard the hon. member stand up one time and suggest one new idea. That is the process of the House. In a few minutes we will again be in estimates, which is exactly the place and the way this was developed over the years in elected Legislatures in the parliamentary system, in which all members can then participate. The government does its job and presents the budget, and then the members can participate. As a matter of fact, what I have heard over the past number of days is not less expenditures, but rather recommendations from the opposition that there be many, many more dollars spent and income taxes cut. Therefore, the deficit would only be bigger, if we followed their suggestions.

Grain Prices

MR. TAYLOR: This is a question to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. On August 1, '86, wheat prices are estimated to be dropping \$130 a tonne, about 80 cents a bushel. This drop in prices will cost the average farmer possibly \$10,000 in income, larger farmers more. What program or plans does the government have to help Alberta farmers to overcome this drop in grain prices?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to underscore again for the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon the number of excellent programs we have in existence in the province of Alberta, starting with our feed grain market adjustment program and the reduction in farm fuel costs. One could go on for quite some period of time. Rather than abuse the time of the Chamber, let me indicate to the hon. member that from the tone of his questions, it would appear that he should run for the by-election in Pembina so that he might have the opportunity to serve in the federal House, because all his questions are of a federal nature.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I can understand his trying to shift blame onto the federal government, because he's had nobody answer the phone calls. The supplementary is to the Premier. Is he still reluctant to support a \$1 billion federal deficiency payment fund to help prairie farmers compete in the export markets?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that was a matter that was dealt with and recommended to the federal government from the Western Premiers' Conference.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the point was he didn't want to support it. Let's go back to the Premier again with a second supplementary, a question on the philosophy of acreage payments. What is the government's position regarding acreage payments to Alberta farmers, in light of the Premier's frequent speeches on free-market ideology?

MR. GETTY: Boy, you have to get someone new writing those questions for you, Nick.

As four western Premiers, Mr. Speaker, we suggested the large deficiency payment from the federal government to assist farmers. So that's opposite what the hon. member suggested. In terms of acreage payments, it's certainly always one option that must be considered when you're trying to help farmers in difficult times. Of course, it is a heavy drain on any government's budget, and we know the problems the federal government has.

Nevertheless, our government feels that our farmers do need help. While we can't control their selling prices, we have put our emphasis on their input costs, because they sell in world markets and we're unable to control those prices. We put the emphasis on the input costs. Therefore, we have provided some \$135 million in support of lowering their energy costs, because that's natural to this province; this is the energy province. They therefore get a 64 cent a gallon rebate on their energy costs. That's the largest support in energy costs in Canada.

We also support them on their input costs by reducing the cost of fertilizer to them to remove the impact of royalties and taxes that go into the production of fertilizer. Thirdly, we assist them with their insurance and stabilization program to give them low input costs on stabilization and insurance. Fourthly, we are now providing them with the fixed rate, long-term cost of money at 9 percent, perhaps lower if we can. Therefore, in these four essential ways, Mr. Speaker, we have lowered the input costs to our farmers, giving them the lowest input costs in Canada.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. I guess those are wonderful answers to somebody else's question. I haven't heard anything on acreage payments.

In light of the economic disaster facing Alberta grain farmers and the fact that the Saskatchewan government is pushing for \$10 an acre acreage payments, is this government prepared to lobby the federal government to increase last year's \$5.35 an acre acreage payment to something much higher?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it is early to know whether that would be necessary because, as I've said, we have made a dramatic impact on input costs. It appears that farmers in Alberta may be entering into a very exceptional crop year, albeit some problems in the north with a lack of rain. However, if additional measures are necessary, we will certainly assess them. The one the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon has just suggested is one option, and we will give it consideration.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. It's with regards to the commitment the minister made in the Legislature the other day to extend the date of delivery for quotas. Could the minister indicate whether action has been taken at this point with regards to that statement, and have inquiries been made by farmers for that extension because of the flood at the elevators?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Little Bow, let me indicate to him my commitment at that time was not to extend it, because it doesn't fall under our jurisdiction, but to make representation to the appropriate federal minister who is responsible. We have made those representations. We also received the assurance from the Canadian Wheat Board at that time that in the event a farmer was facing difficulty in meeting his delivery time, if he would contact the Canadian Wheat Board, they would be happy to extend the time period in which he could deliver it.

MR. FOX: A supplementary to the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing the historic reluctance of the federal government to do much to aid the western grain industry, will the minister outline what contingency plans, other than the input cost reduction programs, you have in place to deal with this dramatic drop in grain producers' income in the absence of meaningful federal action?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Member for Vegreville should know, just recently the United States and the European Economic Community reached an agreement whereby they have set aside their differences for a period of time so there would not be this drastic impact on the grain producer. We're delighted they have taken that action. In addition, our federal minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Mayer, has gathered together the major grain producers of the world in the hope they reach some type of consensus whereby we will not have the United States and the European Economic Community fighting, because these are external forces which have a direct bearing on the grain producer in Canada. We're hopeful that some resolution will be reached in that area.

Toxic Waste Dump Sites

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. In light of the discovery of the old toxic waste dump at Dow Chemical at Fort Saskatchewan, can the Environment minister indicate whether the province of Alberta has an inventory or a registry of old dumping sites relative to various kinds of industries that could produce toxic wastes?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, an inventory has been worked on for the last several years, but in terms of the briefings I've had with respect to this matter, I'm not convinced we are as vigilant as we need to be in that particular area. That's one of the agenda items I have addressed for myself for the remaining part of 1986, to see what we have to do to ensure we have a complete inventory of all past sites.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment. I appreciate that. In terms of the inventory that will take place, will it be the intent of the minister to put in place a field team that would do that rather quickly and bring the information back to the minister?

MR. KOWALSKI: That would be part of it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Would he be prepared or would it be his

intent to bring legislation into the Assembly, such as a Bill that's going to be introduced by my colleague, whereby a registry of all toxic wastes by various companies and processors would be compulsory in the province of Alberta from this date forward or registering any types of old dumps that may be in place as well?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I tend to think that under the new legislation and the mandate of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, the first part of the question will be covered. The second part is the one that troubles me: what has happened in the past, so we can get a complete inventory of these materials that have been stored here, there, and everywhere in the province of Alberta over past decades. I feel rather comfortable that from this day forward, at least with the mandate we have for the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation and the designation and registration of chemicals, insecticides, pesticides, and other materials in Alberta, that we're being quite vigilant about that. It's this past, historic material that bothers me.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. It's with regards to the actual find at Dow Chemical. Has the minister given directions to staff or other personnel to assure us that all wastes will be found and properly dealt with?

MR. KOWALSKI: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if the members of the Assembly would like a little additional information with respect to that, but they should be very, very much assured that the Minister of the Environment has directed absolute, total vigilance with respect to this matter.

We were first informed on June 27, 1986, that three crushed barrels were uncovered along with some residual, tarry, and odorous substances. Work was stopped. Further investigation, including drilling on the site, was conducted. Massive amounts of crushed barrels were uncovered between July 3 and July 8: some 1,022 essentially crushed barrels. Officials of Alberta Environment have been on the scene on a day-to-day basis. We are conducting a sophisticated test to determine what type of chemical may have been contained in the barrels that were crushed. The materials have all been unearthed, covered and, pending the test results, will be disposed of in a new waste disposal site Dow Chemical currently has under contract. That will include liners in it and leachate materials attached to it.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of the Environment. Talking about cleaning up waste sites, is he prepared to give the House the cost of cleaning up the Kinetic energy site just south of town?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I would have been delighted to have had an opportunity to have done that on Wednesday last of this week. Unfortunately, I didn't have an opportunity to get that particular matter. Undoubtedly, in the ensuing weeks and months of this session, we'll have an opportunity to get involved in that matter in considerable detail.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, would the minister guarantee that at long last the Environment department will bring forth a comprehensive policy that will govern the conditions of reclamation of industrial sites of the future, which are also of concern, especially in the area where it would require

guarantees and deposits of companies to ensure that they can clean up?

MR. KOWALSKI: That is currently under way, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member was in the House Wednesday last when I identified to all members what the three basic objectives were of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. A review of *Hansard* of Wednesday last will clearly indicate that I indicated that the legislation written to govern the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation contained three major objectives. A review of *Hansard* of Wednesday last — if they wanted to point out objective three, part of the legislation will clearly cover that matter.

Government Contracts

MR. FISCHER: To the economic development minister, Mr. Speaker, concerning the construction of our Provost provincial building. Why does an Alberta project contract a gravel supplier and trucker from Saskatchewan when Alberta suppliers are available, especially when the same opportunity to compete on equal footing in Saskatchewan is not available to our Alberta suppliers?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not familiar with the specifics of the contract, but within Alberta we have policies that we adhere to with respect to the awarding of contracts. The essence of the policy is that where all things are equal in terms of price and experience and the availability of Alberta manpower is assured, the contracts are awarded to Alberta contractors. That is, where all things are equal. Unfortunately, most of the provinces have procurement policies that provide provincial protection.

MR. FISCHER: A supplementary then. How are we making sure that Alberta firms are getting equal access to our major projects?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, in the fall of 1984 when public forums were held on the white paper, one of the proposals contained in the white paper that was referred to earlier by the Member for Little Bow was with respect to provincial preference. As we held these public forums throughout the province, in participating in that discussion the citizens of Alberta indicated to the government that they did not want us to implement provincial preference policies. Instead, they wanted us to work very diligently toward reducing the barriers that exist with other provinces.

As a result of that, my predecessor undertook that extensive effort to work with other provinces. At an earlier meeting of ministers of economic development in June of this year, all the provinces agreed that they would not add any elements to their existing provincial preferences and would work towards reducing those preferences that presently exist. And that's been Alberta's desire, because the spirit and the intent of the Constitution is to allow for the free movement of goods and services across this country. So we are pleased with the progress that was made in Belleville, and we'll continue that. There will be a follow-up meeting in the fall to determine the specific reductions and preferences that might take place.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I'm wondering how the first ministers or the ministers of economic development will be monitoring the steps to ensure

to take this opportunity to thank our staff for an excellent job well done over the past years. This year we have a reduction by 16 in permanent positions, but the man-year authorization has increased due to the addition of a fire fighting budget, and we'll be talking about it in a few minutes. We've been able to reorganize to provide effective and efficient administration with no reduction in people services. Overall the amount requested to be voted on is \$187,744,778, an approximate 16 percent increase over last year.

This increase to the budget is basically due to the addition of our fire fighting requirements of \$17 million, which in other years was usually done by special warrant. Special warrants were the mechanism used because the fire hazards were unpredictable from year to year. This year we're placing a large amount of it in our permanent budgeting process.

The overall increases — I mentioned the fire fighting at \$17 million. The Canada-Alberta forest agreement is another major increase for \$2.2 million, a negotiated salary increase of about \$4 million, and a new forestry industry development program of \$3.5 million, for a total of about \$26.7 million. Otherwise, for other than those four major items, the budget would be close to a zero increase, and that includes the absorption of all inflation. Again, I think we have to congratulate our staff for a job well done. The objective of the staff over the past four years has been to try and maintain a zero growth in total dollars. They've accomplished this in those years, and credit must be given to each and every one of them.

I would like to now turn to each vote and briefly explain some of the changes, Mr. Chairman, and highlight each particular division. Vote 2, resource evaluation and planning, has a total budget of over \$12 million, an increase of about 0.9 percent, about 139 employees, and no increase or decrease in those employees. There are no major changes to the budget, but this division co-ordinates the development of plans for the use of public lands and resources. Planning teams include government agencies and public groups. This is likely the most interesting and challenging facet of the department and my overall responsibilities. The resource evaluation and planning division, under the professional guidance of our officials, oversees the most complete public planning process of public land in Canada. Our goal is to properly manage our lands for future generations.

To date two regional integrated resource plans, along with 10 subregional plans, four local plans, and 10 grazing reserves, have been completed. There are four regional plans under way, and another 11 subregional plans and eight local plans are ongoing. The development of a plan, whether it is local, subregional, or regional, involves up to 10 different departments of government and has meaningful public input. For example, the concerns of environmentalists and conservationists are heard and integrated into the plans, as they are considered to be part of the planning team. A good example would be the recently approved Castle River plan. We increased zone 2, critical wildlife, by over 600 percent and the prime protection area by over 10 percent from the original Eastern Slopes policy, while general recreation dropped almost 50 percent to give more long-term protection to that area. Thorough, detailed planning on a local basis is very important.

We in Alberta have some 68,000 square kilometres or 10.4 percent of the land of the province protected under legislation. This includes national and provincial parks, bird and wildlife sanctuaries, natural areas, wilderness areas, and

on and on. That's not all. There is another 3.7 percent or 24,000 square kilometres under productive reservations like ecological reserves, natural areas, prime protection areas, and wildlife areas. We also have a very active program of enhancing 32,700 acres of land in 1986 just for wildlife habitat alone.

Mr. Chairman, all of this means that 14.1 percent of our province is extremely protected for wildlife and the ecology for future generations to enjoy. This represents almost 20 percent of our Crown lands. In order to properly manage this, we must have a plan. We are actively working on those plans throughout the province. We have the most extensive planning process in Canada, and all Albertans should be proud of it.

In vote 3, forestry, the total budget is \$104 million, Mr. Chairman. There is an increase of approximately 31 percent on that particular vote. There are 725 permanent positions. In some countries they treat a forest like a mine. In Alberta we treat a forest like a crop. It must be replanted for future harvests. We have changes, and I'd like to go through the major ones in the department. A new program, 3.7, forest industry development, has been established to promote forest industry development and the management and harvest of forests in a way that protects the long-term use of our resource.

The new thrust for forestry, as stated in the throne speech, will create job opportunities by investment in Alberta's forest sector. Hopefully, this new department of forestry will strengthen the contribution of this sector to the provincial economy by investment in many areas, including hardwood resources, expansion of our pulp and paper industry, modernization of our existing sawmill and panelboard plants, marketing assistance for small-scale forestry producers, and major projects and research activities in reforestation. We have invited all Albertans and the forestry industry to come forward with proposals. To date some six capital projects involving forestry manufacturing facilities and enhancements are planned or under construction.

Alberta Energy's medium-density fibreboard plant is scheduled to start production this summer in Blue Ridge, and the capital cost of that project was approximately \$32 million. By December 1986 Pelican Spruce Mills will complete its second oriented strandboard plant, with a capital cost of \$50 million. It's located at Drayton Valley. In the fall of '86 Millar Western Industries will begin construction on a \$185-million pulp plant at Whitecourt. That will include the use of both softwood and hardwood. Weldwood of Canada Limited has begun an \$8.6 million enhancement of its waferboard plant at Slave Lake. Procter & Gamble has undertaken an \$8 million enhancement of its Grande Prairie bleached kraft pulp mill. They, too, will be able to change to looking at the use of aspen after that. Champion Forest Products at Hinton have announced a \$3 million feasibility study for expansion of their Hinton pulp and sawmill. If it proceeds past the feasibility study, it could result in a \$350 million capital expenditure, which would create about 450 long-term, permanent jobs. The initiatives I've just listed, if they go ahead, would create approximately 2,000 direct or indirect construction jobs over the next two and a half years. Once those projects are complete, approximately 1,200 permanent jobs would have been created.

I'd like to move to subprogram 3.3, reforestation and reclamation. We show a 23 percent increase in spending, primarily due to the new federal/provincial agreement, which is a \$23 million shared funding agreement. This increase represents our contribution for the first five-year program.

The program basically covers reforestation, applied research, and public information. I suppose the Alberta agreement is considered unique because it is the only provincial agreement that places such a strong emphasis on forest products research.

Moving to subprogram 3.5, forest protection, this shows an increase of 61.2 percent, or \$17 million. Over the past five years we've spent some \$200 million on fire fighting costs protecting our forests. In '81-83, during the two most disastrous fire seasons, we spent \$140 million, an average of \$70 million a year. In '84-86 we spent \$32 million, an average of \$16 million.

This year the estimated cost is less than one-third of that five-year average, and this is due to the modernization of our fire fighting systems, the excellent training of our personnel, the quick response capability of our crews, and the changes that our department has made toward protecting the forest. In fact, money spent on fire suppression is money invested in the future, regardless of how we account for it in the budget.

We are proud of the record and achievement of this area of fire suppression. In fact, next week at this time we will be inviting all the members of this Assembly, their staffs, the media, and government officials to an open house at the forest protection branch and fire prevention centre, near the government hangar. It will give you an opportunity to see for yourselves how efficient our professional staff is when it comes to protecting the trees, the wildlife, and the ecosystems of our forests.

Over the past four years the province has made significant improvements in its forest fire prevention and preparedness programs. As an example, the time that forestry staff is given to respond and be on site for a new fire has reduced from one hour to 15 minutes. Improvement and upgrading of Alberta's fire management capabilities will take place that will further reduce the risk of large losses and expenditures like those in '80, '81, and '82.

To give you an example of a comparison, in '81-82 we lost 1.4 million hectares in 1,500 fires; this year to date, we've only lost 1,700 hectares in 338 fires. Our staff has put in an excellent protection measure by modernizing the system. The Alberta Forest Service staff is to be congratulated for their dedication to the tasks that over the last several years have reduced the provincial losses to forest fires.

In public lands, vote 4, we have an increase of approximately 2.5 percent or approximately \$493,000. There are no staff increases. The majority of that increase is basically salary settlements, although we do have increases in range development planning and enhancement of our land surveys. It's a very modest increase, and there's no increase in the manpower element.

I think the grazing reserve program is worth mentioning, Mr. Chairman. Over the years it's been operating at a deficit. In '83 there was a \$6.69 deficit per animal unit month; in 1983 we brought that down to \$1.50 per animal unit month. Some reserves are actually breaking even and showing a surplus. There are various ones that bring that average up.

To give you a comparison of grazing associations to grazing reserves, if the grazing reserves were given the value of the surface disposition rentals and the payment for seismic activity that takes place on their area, there would be an overall surplus of about \$1.48 per animal unit month, so they would be making money in comparison to a grazing association. Again, this has been done by our excellent

staff, and I'd like to thank them for all their work over the last three years on it.

There are numerous new policies under the farm development and homestead regulations: rentals paid for a development lease with option will be credited to the purchase price, an extension of up to five years can be granted, and a second appraisal can be granted upon request.

I'd like to talk about the grazing lease conversion policy for a minute, Mr. Chairman. It's a sound and positive policy for the utilization of our existing agricultural land base. Because of the distortions and problems that basically were created by a few extremists, I would say, this policy has been widely misunderstood by many Albertans. It may also be that the government and I did not communicate that policy well enough. In order to clear the misunderstandings, in the Speech from the Throne we've committed ourselves to conducting public information sessions in the central and southern areas of the province this fall and will be accepting public input to the policy. The policy will stay on hold in central and southern Alberta until these concerns are addressed.

Let's simply state the objective of the grazing lease conversion policy. The policy is intended to put potentially arable grazing lease lands into production by allowing an existing leaseholder to convert them to a farm development lease, with or without an option to purchase. It must be stated that the government's objective is not to have a major sale of lands, and I think we should point out the benefits of the program.

Everyone benefits from the arrangements: the leaseholder develops the land with a yield that has a much higher return to him; the local municipality acquires increased tax assessment; and the provincial government receives higher lease fees or income from the land sales.

I'd like to move to vote 5, Mr. Chairman. There we have an increase of about 1.6 percent, again basically negotiated salary increases. There will actually be a net decrease except for the salary increases. There's a net reduction of four positions.

There has been no reduction, though, Mr. Chairman, in field services or officer services. In fact, because of the more streamlined and efficient management in head office, five more officer positions will be made available in the field. Increasing our officers in the field is the one area that we continuously get requests for, and we will be doing it.

I'd like to talk for a minute about the positive programs that the Fish and Wildlife division are undertaking. The outdoor observer program has been expanded since last year; it was started in October 1985. There's a free hotline that you can call. The results have been very encouraging. Since last fall we've had 351 calls relating to illegal hunting or fishing activities: violations in progress right now number 95; general information regarding the violators, about 150; and occurrences still under investigation, 103. Of these calls, 33 have resulted in 55 charges.

The program is working. We're expanding it and adding it to our Use Respect program in signage throughout the province. We will also be expanding it by promotion of bumper stickers, badges, and when you buy your hunting licence this year, you might have an outdoor observer sign right on it. We have to increase the awareness of Albertans to respect the rules and regulations and privileges of hunting, and that program is aimed at leaving us all more conscious about why we're out there and what we're doing: make sure your buddy follows the rules.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to talk about the importance of our fish and wildlife resources. A recent study showed that the economic benefit of recreational/commercial activities in wildlife viewing and hunting is about \$893 million a year. That should be looked at. It's terrific. The most rapidly growing industry we have is the viewing of wildlife. That activity can create and assist our tourist industry.

Our Buck for Wildlife program was basically the first of the regulations to be put under the new Act. It has three components: Buck for Wildlife, the wildlife support and compensation fund, and a humane trapping fund. The expansion in this program has been well received. In '85-'86 we spent \$2 million in programs: about 850 in fisheries and \$1.3 million in wildlife projects. The number of projects we've completed is 180.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the fish and game clubs throughout the province. Some 123 fish and game clubs have completed or are working on 142 projects. We'd like to see each and every one of these projects be sponsored at the local level by some local group, company, or individual, if it has to be, to look at the long-term maintenance aspects of these projects and to keep our costs under control in the future.

Another program that's worth mentioning, Mr. Chairman, is the acquisition of the Ward Ranches in southern Alberta as a joint venture by the Alberta Fish & Game club, Ducks Unlimited, Habitat Canada, and our department. It's about 5,500 acres of ranch near Brooks and it will be developed jointly by that group and the irrigation district adjoining.

A massive increase in our Use Respect program is taking place this year, Mr. Chairman. This program again is co-sponsored by the Fish & Game Association, the Western Stock Growers' Association, Unifarm, and the Fish and Wildlife division. The 4-H clubs throughout the province are delivering the program. This year we hope to have 250 4-H clubs visiting 25,000 farms delivering the Use Respect signs and doing a survey at the same time. It's a very positive program, and we encourage everyone to use respect when entering upon private or leased lands.

Another very good program the department is carrying on is Wetlands for Tomorrow, in co-operation with Ducks Unlimited. They have some 20 projects throughout the province. It's proceeding well and we're trying to accelerate it to accommodate Ducks Unlimited. It started off being a 10-year agreement and they want to accelerate it to a five-year agreement.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Council is worth mentioning. It's a good example of government consulting with public organizations. Some 25 organizations sit on this advisory council. They review wildlife legislation, regulations, hunting and fishing seasons, policies, and on and on. It's one of the groups that we'll be looking to in the future for public input.

Vote 6 is foreign ownership of land, with a total budget of \$447,000. There are nine permanent positions, a decrease. It's doing a very good job of regulating the acquisition of privately-owned, non-urban land by foreign individuals and foreign-controlled companies. Basically, there has been one position reduced in that department.

Under vote 7, Mr. Chairman, the Alberta Bureau of Surveying and Mapping has a total budget of over \$10 million. It's an increase of about 5 percent. It has about 112 permanent positions. The basic changes are, again, negotiated salary settlements, and it also includes an addition of one permanent position from the resource evaluation planning division.

One of the positives worth mentioning that has happened and is taking place is the Maps Alberta program, with an emphasis on the privatization of map retailing. Activities are being promoted through the map dealers. It provides central access to federal and provincial government maps for the public and has been received very well. The one to 20,000 digital-based mapping program has established a high quality computerized map base for the entire province and is available. Through this division we're basically establishing a world-class digital mapping expertise in the private sector, and they are using that expertise throughout the country.

The land-related information systems network has been almost completed. It is the development of computerized inventories of land-related data for improved administration and more cost-effective delivery of services to our public.

Mr. Chairman, we're also looking into some future initiatives in the whole division that you should be aware of. Increased reliance on the ministerial advisory committees I've mentioned will definitely take place, as a form of reviewing legislation and program changes. We're looking at and support the need for re-examining the level of compensation offered to landowners for wildlife damage and the means of its delivery through the new crop insurance plan. The department will be looking at an angler education program to complement the internationally acclaimed hunter training program. With the passage of the regulations this fall, we're looking at the first-time hunter tests being implemented.

It's worthy to note that the North American Waterfowl Management Plan has been adopted by Canada and the United States. It lays the groundwork for a potential infusion of some \$750 million in western Canada over the next 15 years and should be supported. We're also working with groups on the ecological reserve program to create the 14 reserves that have been under discussion for many years. We're looking at developing management plans for the almost 100 natural areas presently in the province, and the continuation of the public integrated resource planning process will be enhanced.

We're looking at continuing to encourage the private sector to develop our forest industries and come forward to create jobs for Albertans, as we've talked about. We are going to continue to listen to the public in order to provide the best management possible for our province's renewable resources.

Mr. Chairman, we care about our natural resources, and we will continue to manage them for all Albertans, present and future. I would be pleased to accept any constructive input and will answer any realistic questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is not in a position to judge realistic questions.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, the system you've suggested works well. The hand-waving this morning obviously does work. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I feel privileged to discuss the estimates of this department today for a special reason. My father and mother live in the constituency represented by the Hon. Les Young. For some years my father provided assistance to Albertans throughout Alberta as the forestry education conservation officer. He was sometimes referred to as Smokey the Bear and, eventually, Bertie Beaver. So I assume

that I'm probably known as the son of Smokey or the son of Bertie.

I'd like to compliment this minister and his predecessor, with whom I've worked, but especially his officials — the deputy minister, the assistant deputy ministers, and his executive assistant; a number of them are here today in the members' gallery — for the work which they provide to all Albertans and to each of us as MLAs. Whenever constituents raise concerns about public lands, wildlife, or forestry, they usually deal with their livelihood or the fact that they have encountered problems on a visit to an area that may be in the greenbelt, or some failure on their part to understand why the policies of the government for game management are in place. I have found that the department always tries its best to respond to those questions in a very, very understanding way and in a way that welcomes input. I also compliment the minister and his officials for establishing the committees the minister mentioned in his remarks, which give him and his officials a cross section of opinion from competing interest groups.

In the Assembly earlier in this sitting, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton Calder, whom I see is here today, in her initial address kindly invited each member to visit her riding at some time and to meet with her and her constituents. I'd like to take this opportunity to extend to her and to any other member of the Assembly the opportunity to visit Banff-Cochrane and to see an area that is very much like Alberta itself, not only a tourism and business services community area but an area of oil and gas exploration and development, national and provincial parks, provincial recreation areas such as Kananaskis Country, and ranching, farming, and small developments, such as shared by the Member for Stony Plain. These constituents — provincial employees, federal employees, and the private sector — live and work together. They live and work in harmony. They know firsthand what it is like to live in an area visited by thousands and in fact millions of visitors a year. Again, Mr. Minister, I compliment your officials for helping us through these times of change.

The minister brought out the concerns that have been expressed about the sale of Crown leases. What I'd like to do in these moments, Mr. Chairman, is not only talk about the benefits of this policy announced last year by the minister to the constituency of Banff-Cochrane and indeed to the entire province and the agricultural community but counter the distortions — and I'm sad to say they are distortions — which have been promulgated by some executive members and one of my own constituents, who happens to be the president of the Alberta Wilderness Association. I'm sad to say that these distortions have in fact been augmented by members of the New Democratic Party. I have an Official Opposition news release, issued in December of 1985, that I will refer to which picked up on the distortions provided to Albertans in various ways by the Alberta Wilderness Association. I would like instead to encourage MLAs and the farming and ranching community to understand and help communicate this policy, particularly in urban Alberta.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like in these few moments to give the minister a suggestion. I'd like to suggest that he look very carefully at a matter he did not raise in his remarks this morning, and that is the Alberta forestry lands and wildlife revolving fund. Mr. Chairman and members, about two-thirds or 62 percent of our entire land base is under Crown ownership, but less than 5 percent of that amount is administered by our government for agricultural purposes, and that is predominantly grazing.

The minister's policies, in press releases beginning as far back as August 1, 1985, clearly announced benefits to Alberta agriculture which would provide greater flexibility for people who want to buy or lease public land for farming in Alberta. These changes weren't something new. They weren't secretly developed. They weren't announced at midnight. They were developed after a great deal of input from the agricultural community, representatives of the organization I just mentioned, and other organizations in the fish and game community throughout Alberta. These new provisions make it possible for farmers or prospective farmers to credit toward the purchase price 100 percent of their rental payments on a lease with option to purchase.

To give the members of the Assembly an idea of how important this policy is, some of my constituents are cow/calf operators who have a number of cattle. One ranch alone will provide enough beef for the town of Cochrane for an entire year, and there are thousands of ranchers in Banff-Cochrane working to help this province and help Albertans. These changes will be a benefit to all Albertans.

Under the guidelines the minister announced, the lessee must have had a lease for a minimum of five years. This is not some flamboyant or spur-of-the-moment decision. This is a policy that's intended for Albertans who have been developing and farming and in the agricultural community for a minimum of five years. The maximum amount of land that could be converted would be six quarter sections. Further, any sales would have to reflect the market value of the land. The minister clearly announced that all environmentally sensitive lands would be retained under provincial ownership. He and his officials went on to say that lands that provided access to recreational opportunities would not be made available for sale, that lands that had wildlife or other habitat potential would not be sold. He further said that lands in the Eastern Slopes would not be available for conversion unless identified as agricultural lands in the program he described earlier this morning, the integrated resource plan, which would only be developed after public input. Those lands could then be converted.

That information was provided widely throughout Alberta. It was communicated to the leaseholders so they would have an understanding of what the changes were. The changes simply said that the leaseholder would no longer have to post his or her lands but could apply. The purpose of that was to encourage land to be used for its greatest potential, in agriculture. It was indicated again by the minister, his officials, and the MLA for Banff-Cochrane, to his constituents, that that would be in keeping with the Environment Council of Alberta recommendations.

Instead, what happened as a result of that first release — those of us who had the unfortunate opportunity saw an ad appear in the major dailies throughout Alberta. It was a map of Alberta with a "for sale" sign. The photograph within the boundaries of Alberta was of a mountain stream. The advertisement said to help us save our public lands, that moneys contributed to the save Alberta fund would be used to help bring this critical issue to the attention of Albertans, and that tax deductible receipts would be sent from the Alberta Wilderness Association. The material that the organization provided then went on to state a number of "facts" on the sale of our public lands. This was then abetted by an Official Opposition newsletter dated December 3, 1985, saying:

Despite the claims of [the] minister, it is clear the government has opted for wholesale development and privatization of our Crown land heritage.

The information in this newsletter is totally misleading. Again, only land suitable for cultivation would be sold or converted to a lease that permits cultivation.

The information that this was contrary to the Environment Conservation Authority recommendations is misleading; in fact, it's false. On Friday, March 14, 1986, a presentation was made by the chief executive officer of the Environment Council of Alberta to the co-ordinating committee of the public advisory committees of that council. It's an extensive statement. It's been given public exposure, but I would just like to quote one brief sentence from this statement by Mr. Alistair Crerar:

I am now convinced that the land to be converted from a grazing lease to either a farm development lease, or a farm development sale, will be carefully and appropriately selected, that my principal and subsidiary concerns are being met and that the final result will be improved use and management of the agricultural lands of Alberta.

Still, in correspondence from the AWA that I received, it is indicated that the policy announced by the minister is in variation with the Environment Council of Alberta. Clearly, that is a distortion and, in fact, an outright falsehood.

I communicated my concerns to the president of the Alberta Wilderness Association. I pointed out clearly to her that there are no lands in the Eastern Slopes and no leases in the green zone that would be affected by this policy change. Indeed, in the constituency of Banff-Cochrane, as the minister is aware, we held a public meeting and widely advertised that meeting. We invited representatives of the various associations to come forward and make their viewpoints known. We had a representative from the Alberta Wilderness Association, we had a representative from the ranching community, and we had a representative from the minister's department speak to the issues. Again, Mr. Minister, I extend the appreciation of our constituency for the good presentation and the well-documented package that was presented by your official at that meeting.

The Wilderness Association's president stated in her letter to me that she was concerned that there might be a quick flip of these lands, that they would be purchased for speculation purposes. As if a rancher with thousands of cattle, hundreds of dollars and a livelihood at stake, leasing lands from the provincial government to provide for pasture or grazing or to assist the department in its management of the forests would quick-flip these lands — it's almost next to impossible, Mr. Chairman. Those of us in this House who, perhaps on behalf of our constituents, have had to deal with a regional planning commission or a rural municipal council will know that all lands with cropping capability must be utilized for agriculture. This is a directive from the Alberta Planning Board. There is very little, if any, flexibility to this policy. Therefore, subdivision of good agricultural lands for the purposes that have been publicly stated by this organization is not possible. Only grazing leases with cultivation capability are available for sale.

The president also raised a concern regarding a lessee purchasing property under the policy and not being required to improve it. That's true, Mr. Chairman and members. There's no requirement to improve the land after purchase, but I'll tell you that it would be very silly not to expect it. The land must be sold at market value based on private-sector comparables in the region. Now for a farmer or rancher to put up that kind of money for cultivatable land and then continue to use it as grazing doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Chairman, everyone in Alberta must be concerned about the environment. I am as concerned about the environment as any member in this Assembly. I am watching this policy — and the minister is aware that I am watching — very carefully, because I have a great deal of interest on behalf of my constituents to ensure that the guidelines are followed. I think it's very important, Mr. Chairman, that an organization like this or its executive or some of its members understand the policy and that they not continue to distort the policy for the settled agricultural areas of our province. The Eastern Slopes are not for open sale; they never have been. Integrated planning will continue. I have asked the president that she support or, at the very least, not object to or continue to distort a policy which is good for agriculture and which does not adversely affect the environment or wildlife.

Mr. Chairman, the minister indicated that the Speech from the Throne put on hold the central and southern areas of the province as far as the implementation of this policy is concerned, that it would continue in the northern part of the province, and that this would provide him and the officials of his department with the opportunity to encourage input and foster communication and understanding.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome that opportunity. I hope that the minister will consider extending an invitation to members of the Assembly from all parts of the province to participate in this program. I do not know his timetable; perhaps he might indicate that, Mr. Chairman. But I see a great deal of benefit if members of the Assembly from northern, central, and southern Alberta and from communities in urban Alberta had the opportunity to visit and meet with the farming and ranching communities, with urban colleagues, and with representatives of the organization, to not only explain the policy but, as the minister has indicated, hear their concerns.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to leave this suggestion with the minister. The minister mentioned in his estimates the mapping vote: vote 7, surveying and mapping services. Behind that in our books is the Alberta forestry, lands and wildlife revolving fund. That revolving fund appears to provide for the surveying and mapping enterprise and provides the amount of \$124,000 for something called public lands enterprise. Perhaps in his remarks the minister could expand on the public lands enterprise and its purpose.

Further, I would like to suggest to him that at some future date he seek the appropriate amendments — perhaps these might flow from the public process that the minister has indicated he will be considering — in such a way that we would have a revolving fund. As public lands were disposed of either by lease or sale with income coming to the Crown, all or a portion of that income would be set aside in a revolving fund, so that as lands were identified — as the minister indicated earlier today, Ward Ranches is one example — for wildlife, habitat, recreation, or public land management purposes, funds would be there in the revolving fund to either acquire or lease those lands for the benefit of all Albertans. It's not an original concept, Mr. Chairman and members. I will say that the idea was given to me by the president of the Alberta Wilderness Association when I met her. If it's possible to accommodate that, perhaps in some future year as revenues recover, I think that's something I would like the minister to give consideration to. I would support his preparing some necessary amendments for that.

Mr. Chairman, in closing I again want to say that I'm pleased to hear the minister say that we will be undertaking

a communication exercise. It is very difficult for government to make major announcements or to indicate changes in administration policies and to have Albertans understand those fully. He indicated that a better communication plan was required at the time and that he would like to see that start now. I compliment him and his officials for doing so.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make some comments and answer the questions that were asked.

I apologize for not elaborating on the revolving fund that is in the estimates books. A revolving fund is basically used for funds coming from grazing reserves, and expenses that the department pays on behalf of the participants of grazing reserves are expected to be charged back to the individual grazing patrons. Also, all our mapping is handled under that revolving fund. The costs recovered from the sale of maps are put into the fund, and the costs of producing those maps throughout Alberta are placed into it, so it's a revolving fund. It should be self-containing if the department is making sure they have their prices of sales accurate.

Very definitely, Mr. Chairman, we are looking forward to having more discussions in this House and throughout the province. I will take under consideration the comments about participation and having more of us travel throughout the province in the discussions of the public land grazing lease policy. I am presently working with staff on the timetable for the program, and we'll be announcing later during this session how it's going to happen and where we're going to go. We were thinking of inviting several colleagues to travel throughout the province to listen and give me some advice on any changes they feel necessary that could take place.

I support the final suggestion that the Member for Banff-Cochrane made with reference to looking at creating a revolving fund concept for the long-term purchase and acquisition of lands and putting into that revolving fund the proceeds from the sale of lands. Mine is basically the only department of government that sells lands. We may average \$4 million or \$5 million a year. Throughout government, though, our acquisitions are considerably higher year by year — well over the \$20 million bracket in purchases — and that's for all departments. But there is definitely a need to acquire recreation and habitat lands throughout the province, and this could address and be a solution to the ongoing problem of the need for public grants.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to address this department and perhaps even comment on some of the points made so far. I'm sure the minister will understand that seeing as first he and then the Member for Banff-Cochrane were so complimentary of the department, I will understandably deal with those points, and that I wish to ask questions and be critical of what I think needs some public clarification and comment for the people who have concerns.

One I would like to comment on is the way that this department is so inextricably intertwined with both the provincial and federal departments of the environment and ask if this minister, considering that he is obviously such a diplomatic person, couldn't try to sort out the disagreement over whether or not we really need a federal department of the environment to pass countrywide regulations and protect forests, lands and wildlife. I think how important that federal department is and how much effect it has on forestry and wildlife and so on is a very important issue,

so I would hope that he would use his diplomatic skills there for us.

In terms of forestry, the minister commented that some provinces treat their forests like a mine; we're treating it like a crop. I'm reminded of a line from a commercial and would like to say, "Stop, you're both wrong." They are not a mine that you can just take out of indefinitely without replacing, and they are not a farm or agricultural crop. Forests are, in fact, an integral part of an entire ecosystem and have to be used as such. That means that we can't just chop down one kind of tree and reforest with another, as is being done in some areas of the province. You know that when you clear farmland, the purpose is to destroy all competition on the land so you can grow a single crop. In forestry that would mean making sure there is nothing there but one type of tree: no other types of trees, no animals, no birds, and so on. That is the agricultural attitude toward forestry. I would certainly not want to see that become a common practice, and I'll get into that in much more detail in a few moments.

In terms of the grazing leases, I found it almost amusing that I am termed an extremist because I don't want the Eastern Slopes pillaged. I didn't know that that made me an extremist, so that was an interesting point to learn. I was also interested to hear that there was wide public input from various fish and game associations. I've no doubt there was; it's just unfortunate that their very negative attitude toward it was ignored when the decisions were made. I was also disturbed to hear that those who now hold leases will be able to claim 100 percent of their lease payments against the purchase of the property. I would be concerned that the selling prices of the properties, once lease payments were deducted, would become pretty low. In fact, I wonder if there would be any cases where we would end up paying them back some of their former lease payments when they took ownership, if they'd leased them for a long period of time. I would certainly have some concern over that.

There was mention made of communication exercises on it. I've always had another name for communication exercises. Someone called it public relations; I would call it a public snow job. It indicates to me that one of the aims of this department is in fact the same as the Department of the Environment, and that is to improve its image. My concern is that it improve its performance. I will try to improve the image if the performance improves, and I will be complimentary when things are done well.

MR. STEVENS: On a point of order. The member speaking has given reference to the words "snow job." I wonder if the Chairman would direct some comments to his opinion about what is right or what is wrong with the reference to the words "snow job."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair will make a ruling on that. The Member for Edmonton Glengarry, proceed.

MR. YOUNIE: I'll have to be careful exactly how I say that. Last day there were allusions to procedural wrangling stifling debate. I will try to make sure I don't upset the hon. member any more, although I'm sure I may anyway.

I'm very concerned about the matter of herbicide spraying that was brought to the Minister of the Environment by a group from Hinton. The minister has publicly said that he believes that is the wave of the future. Those groups seem to find that attitude frightening and, in fact, have found a couple of other things frightening. When the Coalition for

Forest Spray Alternatives in Hinton invited Michael Conway-Brown to speak on the subject of forest spray alternatives, he pointed out how effective it can be to use hand-cutting methods to clear out competing brush rather than herbicide sprays. Quoting from Michael Conway-Brown's letter, he claimed:

Bill Mattes of Champion Forest Products stated from the audience [while Mr. Conway Brown was speaking]: "we had a phone call, just very recently, and [were] authorized by Frank Pendl, ... and he said two years after your treatment the stem number of the red alder has increased six-fold over the original stem number".

To explain that for members, that means this person interrupted him from the audience, called into question all his research and said, in fact, that his research was totally erroneous and that he had a phone call from the person who had been directing the research project saying it was erroneous and questioning his results. Mr. Conway-Brown tried to correct the speaker in the audience and said, "No, these are the figures," and he reasserted that Mr. Conway-Brown was erroneous. My concern is two-fold. One, when in fact Mr. Conway-Brown contacted Mr. Pendl, from whom it was claimed the call had been received, he made these five statements:

(1) he had never talked to Mr. Mattes [as Mr. Mattes claimed]; (2) he had never even heard of Champion Forest Products; (3) he had talked to no one recently about the Okeover research project; (4) the statement regarding a 6-fold increase of stem density was most certainly wrong; [and] (5) if he authorized anyone to speak on his behalf about the project, it would [have been Mr. Conway-Brown, not somebody from the forest company].

That indicates to me that in fact the purpose of Mr. Bill Mattes was, in public and in a way that would deny Mr. Conway-Brown a chance to even refute it, to try to say that Mr. Conway-Brown's superior had called him a liar and that in fact Mr. Mattes' call had never been made, so he was the one who was being very misleading at least.

My concern in this matter comes to another thing. This is a seminar that members of the representatives of the ministry went to. It was a seminar offered by Ian Fraser of CML Consultants. They are a sort of quasi-military group or ex-military group that advises corporations on how to deal with what they describe as environmental activists and "antis", whom they accuse of not following rules. In their explanation of why they are so good at teaching corporations how to deal with these horrible people, it says that — and this was on their agenda — Ian Fraser and his associates have considerable experience and success dealing with environmental activists. Their military backgrounds in the Canadian and British armies include extensive training and experience in counterintelligence in conflict situations. This has proven to be very effective when dealing with the antis, who, as we have all come to realize, do not play by the rules.

This is the kind of instruction, the advice, that Champion Forest Products was getting to handle those horrible environmentalists who don't want herbicide sprays all over the forests and the wildlife that live there. I have some very serious doubts about the company's intentions and how they will handle herbicide spraying, if that is the way they are willing to handle opposition to it.

There was a reference by Dave Cooper in the *Journal* on the topic as well:

A counter-intelligence consulting firm with "considerable experience and success dealing with environ-

mental activists" gave tips to forest companies and the provincial department of forestry Monday.

This was last April 29.

That gives me very, very grave concerns about this company's intentions, and it also gives me concern about vote 1.2.5 in the estimates, which refers to corporate security services, which has had very nearly a 500 percent increase in its budget. I'm wondering exactly what corporate security services are and how much of those security services are related to what department officials learned at Mr. Ian Fraser's seminars. Personally, I would like to read what he said at some point to see how I can expect to be dealt with when I question environmental practices of various corporations.

In terms of herbicide spraying, the Alberta Fish & Game Association is asking for a provincial government moratorium on the use of herbicides in the forestry industry. A group from Hinton met with the Minister of the Environment yesterday. Before that meeting they met with me and explained some of their concerns. They gave me a copy of the text of the petition they're presenting. I think it gives us some very important ideas on why in fact the moratorium they're asking for is justified and why the public input they're demanding should not only happen but should be taken into account afterward when policy is formulated. Listening to them and then ignoring them isn't good enough. Listening to them and taking seriously what they say is what I would recommend. The petition they're presenting is:

WHEREAS: there is considerable uncertainty about the long term effects of forest herbicide use on wildlife, human health and the entire forest ecosystem.

WHEREAS: more jobs might well be created through alternatives to spraying, such as handclearing and increased commercial utilization of "weed" (hardwood) species.

AND WHEREAS: there is presently little public awareness of, or input into, this important issue which involves public lands ...

WE THE UNDERSIGNED urgently request the government of Alberta to deny any and all permit applications for silvicultural herbicide use (operational or experimental) in Alberta until such time as: (1) full public hearings have been held on forest herbicide use, and: (2) the issues of environmental safety and spray alternatives, above, have been adequately resolved to the satisfaction of the public by the proponents.

I was very glad to hear indirectly that in fact the minister had made the group very confident that this would be the case, that there would be a moratorium until public input has been gained. I would like the assurance of this minister that he agrees with that and will make sure that there is no spraying done until the various interest groups have publicly stated their concerns and those concerns have been dealt with by thorough scientific research. Once that is done, I have every confidence that an honest appraisal of their evidence will show the dangers, and we will never see that kind of herbicide spraying to get rid of the various weed species of trees that interfere with the softwoods.

It might be important to point out that in fact the government has just announced and has bragged on many occasions of its new developments in hardwood pulp, for which we have commended them publicly and said that we think this is an area to move into. We don't at the moment see anything wrong with the plans. I have to wonder why economic development is promoting the use of hardwoods yet forestry is considering the softwood industry's attempts

to get rid of the hardwoods because they consider them a nuisance and a weed. Perhaps a little co-operation between the two industries could solve the problems and solve many other attendant problems involved with herbicide spray.

One of the concerns I have is the lack of research into the exact nature of the herbicides. One of them that will be used is Roundup. The industry is asking to aerial spray Roundup over somewhere in the neighbourhood of 2 million acres of forest. Roundup's active chemical is one that was just classed by the EPA as a dangerous carcinogenic material. On that basis I would be concerned about aerial spraying of 2 million acres of forest. I would be concerned about aerial spraying of a single acre under that circumstance.

I'm even more concerned in terms of herbicides about another fact. That is that in registering herbicides there is no requirement by any government department that they list the inerts or surfactants that are included. Nobody knows, for instance, with Roundup what the inner surfactants are. It is suspected that one of them is benzene. If one of them is benzene, I would have to say that to call it an inert substance is prevarication of the worst sort, that it verges on outright falsehood. Benzene is so dangerous that in fact one tar sands laboratory in this province quit using it as a solvent because they considered that it wasn't even safe to be used in laboratory conditions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order.

MR. ELZINGA: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, just out of curiosity. I wonder if the hon. member is not giving the speech on these estimates that he refrained from giving the other night on environment.

MR. YOUNIE: If I may speak on that, I'd be glad to answer it. Questioning herbicide sprays in the forest industry certainly has implications for the Department of the Environment. I hope that the hon. minister, seeing as he is not here, will at least read *Hansard*. I'm sure he does. But I don't see how you can possibly question my right to go into the details of the herbicide that a forestry company wants to spray on 2 million acres of our forests. That obviously comes under Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, as I'm sure you'd agree.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

DR. REID: A point of order, Mr. Chairman, since he's referring to something in my constituency. I don't have the exact figure, but I do not remember anywhere seeing the figure 2 million acres. That is about the size of the total forest management agreement area of Champion Forest Products.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Labour is disputing facts. I don't think the hon. member has to substantiate that in his debate. Would the Member for Edmonton Glengarry proceed.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. The figure which I gave as ...

MR. HERON: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the *Hansard* record will indicate that I was cautioned on reading from a document after the second sentence. I wonder if the Chair would similarly acknowledge when the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry reads lengthy documents in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair appreciates the point raised by the Member for Stony Plain. The Chair would also assure members of the committee that the Chair will be very alert to what the members are doing. However, as the time restriction is 30 minutes, I think we should let the hon. member proceed with his comments to the minister of forestry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, and I do hope that these points of order will not count as part of my thirty minutes. But to comment, I did point out in fact that I was ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. To the Member for Edmonton Glengarry, the clock does not stop. That's why, in your interest, I ruled the way I have.

MR. YOUNIE: I appreciate your generosity. I also will point out that I identified what sections were quotations, and it did not appear obvious, to me at least, that I was going to read everything I said, but I wanted to quote something to make a point. The figure I gave was an estimate given to me by representatives of Alberta Fish & Game and the Alberta wildlife association, so I guess they would have to be questioned in terms of accuracy.

As this group has gone away assured that they will have the moratorium and public input will be given, perhaps there has been enough said on pesticide spraying.

I'll go on to some comments on the Eastern Slopes policy. I think that deserves to be commented on some more. I have some serious points of debate with what has been said about it already. I would like to make a point of one sentence from a news release put out by the Alberta government on revisions to the policy. The Eastern Slopes policy as passed in 1977 was identified by environmental groups as a reasonable compromise. Industry didn't think it was perfect, but it was a reasonable compromise. A quote from the Alberta government news release on it:

The changes in the policy and regional plan will permit increased emphasis on development of a strong tourist industry plus greater recreation development.

I'm wondering how the expansion of the Jutland plant, barely out of Waterton park, will increase the attractiveness of that area to tourism unless Shell plans to in fact conduct public tours around the plant. I can't see any other way it would. As the Minister of the Environment said from one of his comic books, we can use our fingers to touch and our noses to smell. In the vicinity of these plants what we use our fingers for is to plug our noses. That is not an attraction to tourists, so I have concerns about that.

It also identified in the news release that "no changes have been made to the ... intentions for prime protection" zones, yet Shell was twice refused development in that area because it was a prime protection zone. Now they can go ahead, so that seems to me to be a very great change.

As I had some trouble with the news release, I went on to another point of view, which came from Mark Lowey of the *Calgary Herald*. He termed it a betrayal of environmental and conservation groups and said that the minister "had either deliberately or unconsciously decided to ignore the public's desire to see the Eastern Slopes protected" and quoted the minister's statement that "no legitimate ... proposals [meaning developments] will be categorically rejected for anywhere on the Eastern Slopes."

That gave me some area for concern, so I went to another news release put out by the Official Opposition. Not surprisingly, I found the facts there to be much more

in line with my own concerns, and some of those concerns I think should be dealt with. Their news release listed 21 changes in the policy that would be detrimental to the quality of the Eastern Slopes, ones that would make serious changes. Keeping in mind that the revision of the Eastern Slopes policy was made without public input — the first policy was made with public input. Once my reservations have been shown, it will be obvious how important public input is in the development of policies, if we're going to protect our forests and wildlife. Things such as deletion of references to compulsory protection are critical to wildlife habitat. Elimination of requirements that Crown land remain under public ownership: in fact, we've seen references to selling parts of those lands. Because I'm certain the minister has that news release, I will merely commend it to his reading. If he plans to change the policy in the future, it would give him some good ideas and I would not want to be challenged for reading too much of it.

[Mr. Oldring in the Chair]

The Alberta Wilderness Association likewise had some very grave reservations about the whole policy, and taking to heart the minister's guarantee that no reasonable proposal would be rejected categorically, they brought forth a proposal entitled Preliminary Disclosure for A Wilderness Natural Area, A Major Development Affecting Crown Land and Resources and then rezoned lands in the Castle River headwaters to zone 1, prime protection, their suggestion being that this area should be considered an area so important to wildlife habitat that it should not be tampered with in the form of energy development such as the Jutland development. I think it's very important to stress that they had some reasonable concerns, some vitally important concerns about it. They pointed out that it is a very important watershed because it has the highest annual precipitation level in the Eastern Slopes, which would indicate that in fact if the policies for oil and gas development such as the Jutland gas well and the nine more that are in the process of applying to the ERCB — if all of those go ahead, much of the water from that watershed will be polluted, and the dam that's going to be built there would only be blocking up water that might not be fit for consumption anyway.

It would be a detraction to tourism. Developments other than developments related to wildlife and habitat restrictions would not bring tourists into the area; it would drive them away. Considering that Waterton park is used to maximum and even hard-pressed at times to serve the people who come there, I suppose in all fairness I could indicate that it might alleviate the problem of overcrowding in Waterton when they develop that area because it will make it undesirable for recreation and tourism.

This is one of the last areas of population and good top-notch habitat for both bighorn sheep and grizzlies, grizzlies being a much endangered species. We, combined with the States, at one part of the year give perhaps the best habitat for grizzlies and therefore the best chance for their survival as a species other than in zoos. I think the reservations about it are very, very legitimate and should be looked at with great care and caution.

A number of other concerns are the whole value of the area just south of the development as an international peace park established in 1932, an international biosphere reserve established in 1979, and the proposal that it be a world heritage site as defined by UNESCO of the United Nations. I think the Alberta wildlife association has good grounds

to fear that it will no longer qualify for that designation, with the number of gas developments that seem inevitably to be going in there.

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

When we look at Eastern Slopes development and the Eastern Slopes policy, I think all of those concerns of interest groups have to be looked at. The environment has to be very carefully weighed and judged and valued. I have a number of questions for the minister; that is, how can he defend the changes that were made to the Eastern Slopes policy? I would be glad to give him a written copy of the 21 changes we identified as being negative. Mostly, how can you justify it when a policy drawn up with much public input was changed with no public input? I would really like to know how that can be justified.

I'm also concerned that the minister would say that no legitimate proposals would be categorically rejected, yet it seems there is one category; that is, any kind of development that would block gas development in the area. The developments proposed to make it attractive to tourists and protective of wildlife habitat seem to be the categories that were summarily and according to the Alberta wildlife association curtly rejected by the minister. That was the term used to describe how it was rejected. Why is the minister willing to risk losing the UNESCO designation of Waterton park and the area north of it as a world heritage site? It has an area of natural habitat for wildlife that is irreplaceable on a worldwide scale. I personally can't see the justification for the changes, and I would hope very much that the minister will consider some public input and then some new changes.

In terms of gas developments in forestry areas like that, I am concerned and I would like to ask if the minister is concerned as well about ERCB hearings into such developments. Specifically, I'm not sure if the ERCB has ever turned down an application. I'm concerned that their regulations state that the only people they must notify for a hearing about an application is people who live within 500 metres of a well site. Obviously, in that case they wouldn't have had to notify anybody in the public about an ERCB hearing into the Jutland well, and I am wondering if this minister shouldn't lobby within the caucus for changes in that requirement. It would seem to me that especially in the south where the winds seldom calm down under about 40 miles an hour, as I recall from when I lived in Lethbridge, the area of danger for forestry and wildlife around that well goes a lot farther than 500 metres and that anybody interested in forestry and wildlife habitat should have been informed about those hearings. So I would really like to see that done.

Seeing as I have only two minutes left, I would merely inform the hon. minister that I wanted to express some concerns about the Pincher Creek sour gas study, because sour gas development in the south is so harmful to wildlife as well as to humans. I wanted to comment on the effect to the fish habitat of the Oldman dam and the Dickson dam and other dams in the province.

I will make a few comments about game ranching. Number one, we're categorically opposed; and number two, I am quite concerned that there may be a connection between plans to allow leaseholders to turn Crown land into private land and okays for game ranching, because it seems to me that the most reasonable habitat for setting up game ranches

are the areas that are now grazing leases so that these two are in fact working in conjunction.

I have five minutes left? Thank you very much. In that case, I would just point out at this time that I could have gone on for 20 hours and probably more informatively and less bombastically than the previous speaker, but I am interested in hearing the minister's responses, and I'm glad there will be some open debate on these issues.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

AN HON. MEMBER: We want Bradley.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the minister wishes to respond, that's his prerogative.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to enter into the discussion of the estimates of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. In terms of the riding which I represent, it is a very important ministry of government as it affects a large land mass of my constituency and covers a wide area in terms of the economic development which is important to the people I represent.

Mr. Chairman, I should say upon entering the debate that members of the Assembly know that I was born in the Crowsnest Pass right on the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains. I've often told members facetiously that I'm the highest living member of the Legislative Assembly of the province. That's not in terms of my life-style but by the fact that I live at the highest elevation of land of any member in the Assembly, with the Crowsnest Pass being at the same elevation as the Banff townsite. So I'm very familiar with the Eastern Slopes, having been born and raised there and having continued to live there and enjoy the values of the Eastern Slopes and cherish it as a very important part of Alberta's heritage.

The public lands in the area have a wealth of resources for my citizens, whether it be the recreational values they provide for the fishing and hunting opportunities, the wildlife resource, the aesthetic values of the Eastern Slopes; and also economic opportunities, whether in terms of minerals development, coal mining, natural gas development, timber harvesting, and those type of activities; and increasingly today tourism is becoming a more important area.

I speak today from a perspective with that background and an appreciation for those values in the Eastern Slopes and also recognizing economic realities. My constituency, Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, has faced some very difficult economic times with the closure of coal mines, with the lack of opportunity in terms of the forest industry because of markets and other situations; and there is high unemployment in the Crowsnest Pass.

I'd like to speak today from a perspective of the Eastern Slopes in terms of the economic opportunities it can provide for my citizens, which is a very important and key area in terms of their future. During the election campaign my number one priority was jobs. That land base in the area is the single most important factor, I believe, in terms of maintaining jobs and creating new jobs for my constituents.

There are three areas I want to address today. One is logging; the other is natural gas exploration and the importance of it to my constituents; and the third is tourism. First of all, I'd like to deal with the logging question in an historical sense, to give some background on where we are headed in terms of debate in this Legislature and what

has been raised today. I go back in time. We've had in my constituency two major logging operations. One is Revelstoke, and the other was the Johnson Brothers sawmill. It seemed to me that they provided good economic job opportunities for over 200 of my citizens. Neither of those are operating today, some due to market circumstances. But there are other smaller logging outfits in the area, and we're looking forward to resumption of logging activity in the area.

I go back in historical perspective in terms of arguments that have been made today. We had a very serious pine bark beetle infestation in the southern part of the province a number of years back, and the plans of the department of forestry at that time were twofold. One was a salvage operation. Obviously, we had dead timber and it had some economic value. We should go in and log those resources and get the value of that timber which was merchantable and sell it and make use of that resource rather than just let it stand and eventually decay and fall. The other aspect of it was a prevention program whereby we went out and identified infestations in the forestry reserve area north of Highway 3. We went in there with attack squads and cut down that timber and destroyed it so the pine bark beetle wouldn't continue to march up the Eastern Slopes and affect other very important recreational values, whether it be in Kananaskis Country or Banff park.

The Forest Service was very successful in its program to stop the march forward of the pine bark beetle. There were others who didn't feel that we should proceed with either the salvage or the prevention program. All one has to do is go to Waterton Lakes National Park. The philosophy of the park service is not to intervene in terms of nature's course. There are immense areas in Waterton National Park which have been devastated by the pine bark beetle. You can see the gray, dead timbered slopes of mountains in Waterton National Park.

Fortunately, the Forest Service north of Waterton National Park took responsible action. We salvaged that merchantable timber so that it didn't end up in gray stands. It was manufactured, and we have replanted. We're going to have new forest in the Castle River valley north of Waterton National Park, and we were able to stop the northern progression of that very devastating pine bark beetle infestation.

At that time there was a valley called Scarpe Creek, which is in the Castle River area north of Waterton National Park. The Alberta Wilderness Association made strong plays at the time and said that we must not log the Scarpe Creek valley because it is the last pristine wilderness area in southern Alberta. The forestry department looked very seriously at the arguments which the Alberta Wilderness Association was putting forward in terms of not logging this last wilderness area, and a decision was made not to log the Scarpe Creek valley. It was left, and we continued with the salvage operation around there.

So there have been examples where the forestry department and the government have responded to preserve the last wilderness area in southern Alberta, to quote the Alberta Wilderness Association. I suggested at the time that we should put up a plaque at the entrance to the Scarpe Creek valley and say that this area was not logged due to the preservation ethic of the Alberta Wilderness Association; it was left because of their intervention. And when the trees fall in the future, people will know that's why that area wasn't cleaned out and why it will be a long time before new forest comes back in that particular area.

In terms of the logging industry in my constituency, or just north of it, we come to Hidden Creek. That was a mature forest. It's in a decline phase; there's a lot of dead timber in there. But there's still some mature timber that can be harvested, and if it isn't harvested, it will decay and die and rot. In terms of environmental restrictions, et cetera, the area does meet the logging guidelines which were put forward by the department of forestry. Then we had another campaign launched by the Alberta Wilderness Association, which said: "This is the last pristine wilderness in southern Alberta." They'd made the argument about Scarpe Creek and that had been preserved, so I thought that perhaps the last wilderness area in southern Alberta had been preserved because of the Alberta Wilderness Association. But no, we now have Hidden Creek, which is the last pristine wilderness. So we went through that whole debate again.

Some of the logging companies, one of which is no longer in operation in my constituency, said: "We need timber supplies to feed our sawmill, to employ those 120 people. Every time the area has been identified that it can be logged — the approval's been there, the licences are there — we are met with these public interest groups arguing against logging in the area." I don't know whether it was because every time this logging company had to go in and access its reserves it faced this public pressure from a small, select interest group, but unfortunately that logging company finally decided to get out of business, not because they couldn't continue to log and make a profit but for a number of factors. Perhaps this was one of them, but they are no longer in operation. So 120 of my constituents are out of work. I wouldn't say it's solely because of AWA, but that could be one of the factors. They got tired of continually having to fight these rearward actions.

Similarly, the Gladstone valley, which was being logged in the area. Because of the pine bark beetle infestation, the same arguments were brought forward in terms that we shouldn't log and we should leave those resources.

Forestry is a very important aspect of economic development in my constituency, and we're looking in the area to see a resumption of logging by Revelstoke sawmills. We hope they will make that decision to continue their operations because of the very severe unemployment problem we have in the Crowsnest Pass area. We probably have one of the highest unemployment rates in the province of Alberta. I've heard different estimates. It's hard to get hold of the figures because the statistics aren't geared specifically to that community, but it's in the area of 25 percent. So the continuation of logging is important, and with the integrated management planning process which has been brought forward by the Ministry of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, I think we can see these concerns resolved, that areas that have been identified within those integrated management plans are available to the logging industry for that important activity, important for jobs in my constituency. That can resolve the concerns. We can see that logging can continue in an environmentally responsible manner, because I believe the forestry department has guidelines in place which do protect the environment.

I've had other arguments from my constituency that these guidelines are too severe, that because of the environmental guidelines and the restrictions over the years and all the requirements of the forestry department they aren't properly able to get in there and do the job in an economic fashion. So there are two different views with regard to the type of regulations forestry has. On one hand, we have the

people who are in the logging industry who are promoting the jobs and providing the jobs saying, "They're too restrictive." We have the other arguments saying: "Don't log; put in further and further restrictions."

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to come to a second area in terms of jobs which are important to my constituency and talk specifically about the Shell Jutland well, or the Southcastle well, proposed by Shell Canada Resources. Shell Canada is a major employer in the constituency of Pincher Creek-Crowsnest. The gas plant is located south of Pincher Creek. It's not in the Eastern Slopes area of the Rocky Mountains; it's out in the foothills areas. It employs about 250 people in my constituency. One of the problems that Shell faces in that area is that natural gas fields decline. As they decline, of course, the flow into the plant declines, and they have to make economic decisions in the future as to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I hate to interrupt the hon. member. Is the member referring to an activity on public lands or referring to a matter relating to energy and natural resources?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton Glengarry went on at length about the Shell Jutland well. Yes, the proposed well which was the subject of the previous member's intervention is on public land.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would think that as long as the member's comments or questions are related to one of the votes under the minister, they would be appropriate. I would caution members that we have the Department of Energy yet to come, so matters related to Energy could perhaps be left until that time. The final point is: if the Chair was negligent in checking on a member who was dealing with another department, the Chair doesn't entertain the thought that two wrongs would make a right.

Would the member proceed.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Shell Jutland well is involved in the integrated management planning process and has been alluded to by the previous speaker. Obviously, in my judgment, it is part of that whole issue. It relates to the department of forestry and the Eastern Slopes. A lot of comments have been made here today and I want to put forward some of the other arguments with regard to the economic impact of that development and how it affects my riding and the livelihood of 250 of my constituents. So I would like to continue.

As I was interrupted, Mr. Chairman, I was explaining the importance to Shell in terms of the fact that their current reserves are declining, that they must go out and explore and find new reserves. One of the opportunities is in the Southcastle area, the Shell Jutland well, and if they are successful in terms of finding new reserves, whether it be in that specific area or in other areas in the Eastern Slopes, it will prolong the life of the Shell-Waterton gas plant and continue to provide very important jobs to my constituents into the 1990s.

In this Legislature and in the last election campaign we heard rhetoric from the opposition side with regard to jobs and the importance of jobs. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that when I talk about jobs, I'm talking about realistic and real jobs, jobs that are here today, jobs that I want to see preserved in my constituency. In terms of their presentations they're saying: "Don't let Shell explore. Don't let them

find out if they can have new reserves" so that the Shell-Waterton gas plant can continue to operate and continue to provide jobs in my constituency. I want to get to some of the specifics and some of the facts so hon. members will have other information about Waterton National Park with regard to the location of the Shell Jutland well, about a number of matters which have been raised in the Legislature today.

Mr. Chairman, I value Waterton National Park. It's a very important, beautiful part of the province of Alberta. I treasure it as much as any other member, and I appreciate the efforts of the biosphere committee there in terms of their efforts and the things they are doing in terms of recognizing Waterton National Park for the very important part of Alberta that it is. But I'd like to point out to hon. members that when they talk about Waterton National Park being threatened and the effects there, there are a couple of facts with regard to natural gas development in the area which are very important. These applications to become part of the international biosphere and world heritage site are made by those committees knowing full well that there are 25 natural gas wells in the vicinity of Waterton National Park that are closer to Waterton National Park boundary than the proposed Shell Jutland well. I don't know if hon. members in the opposition parties are aware of those facts. That's one fact that I think has to be put into the record in terms of this debate. So this one new well is going to threaten Waterton National Park? The 25 previous ones aren't a threat. The application in terms of the biosphere and the world heritage site were made knowing full well that that existing development was in place.

The second point I'd like to make in terms of this area: again we have from the Alberta Wilderness Association and others that this is the last pristine wilderness in southern Alberta. This is the third time I've faced this proposal of saving the last wilderness in southern Alberta. The facts are clear, Mr. Chairman, that the Southcastle area is not in a pristine wilderness state. The arguments have been made that an access road will be required, and that's going to provide increased access into the area. The facts are that existing older roads have been put in there to access logging development, and a large part of that area was logged from the late '60s to early '70s. So the area we're talking about has had previous industrial activity; previous logging has taken place there. The fact of the matter is that the site of the proposed Shell Jutland well was previously logged out. It's not pristine forest where this well is proposed. The area has been logged. So I'd like to put that fact forward to the House. It isn't an area that has never been touched before by man.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Member. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, is that a point of order?

MR. YOUNIE: I missed the fact as it went by, and I was wondering which wilderness group or other group he said had called that area a pristine wilderness. He mentioned them, but I didn't catch the name.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're using the member's time up.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I just happen to have a ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair would make an observation while the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest is seeking his information.

Traditionally Committee of Supply is where a minister presents his estimates for permission to operate his department as an agent of the Crown. Generally, it would take the form of the minister defending his estimates, which one would think would be answering questions. I'd make the observation that today we're seeing debate between members, and quite frankly, it's going completely over the head of the minister of forestry.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, we're talking about public lands. Just to edify the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry, there was a letter to the *Edmonton Journal* — I think on June 21, 1986 — from Mr. J. McLean-Hayden, director, Alberta Wilderness Association, that referred to "is now allowed to rape one of our last pristine wilderness areas" and from an executive director of the National & Provincial Parks Association of Canada, David Dodge, Edmonton, June 13, 1986:

[It would] involve the construction of a road right up to the back door of the park through one of the last wilderness areas in southern Alberta.

That's where that information comes from.

Mr. Chairman, I was trying to point out that that specific area has been logged before, so we're not dealing with an area that is totally in a pristine state. I wanted to make the House aware of that.

There are, of course, some concerns expressed by an outfitter in the area. Would it have some effect on his livelihood? I think that matter should be addressed. If their development goes forward in a larger sense, if Shell is successful and they look at a larger exploration development program, I think those issues can be addressed at that time, but we're only talking about an exploration well at this point.

In terms of access to the well site, my understanding in terms of the presentation made is that Shell would have a locked gate on the access road into that area. In fact, if Shell put a gate on their road, there would probably be better control in terms of public access into the area than there is now. I understand one of the proposals was to have it manned for 24 hours. Currently there are all sorts of recreationists that get into the area with four-wheel drives or in other ways, so there would probably be less public access if the road were gated and Shell manned it as had been suggested.

There have been concerns expressed about the grizzly bear population. In my judgment from some of the things I've read, if this well were proceeded with and steps were taken to restrict human access, I don't think we'd see that significant impact on the grizzly bear population. I think we can see wildlife and industry proceed if we take the necessary precautionary steps. If you look at the ERCB decision document, there are all sorts of conditions which they have put in with regard to that development which I believe the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife will agree to in terms of looking at all those specific issues and making sure those protections are there. So there will be a high level and degree of protection of the environment in terms of proceeding with that exploratory well.

We talk about threat to public life. That has been brought up in terms of this development because there might be backpackers and hikers in the Waterton area that could be affected if there was a blowout. One has to recognize, and I think the ERCB now has, in terms of its emergency response planning — if there is any threat to human life or if a well cannot be gotten under control and we have

that problem, their solution is to immediately ignite the well. That, Mr. Chairman, resolves the problem in terms of public safety. There is no longer hydrogen sulfide in the atmosphere. There is no longer that threat. I think that's responsible, whether it be in northeast Calgary. That would be the emergency response plan in Westlock-Sturgeon too. They do have that consideration in place. I go back to the fact that we have the existing 25 wells there. We haven't really had that threat to life in Waterton National Park.

Talking about threats to life in Waterton park, though, perhaps if you examined the record to see where deaths have occurred, it has been from the grizzly bear population. By saying that I wouldn't want to suggest that I don't believe we should be looking at preserving grizzly bear habitat or taking other measures, but the facts of the matter are that in Waterton Lakes National Park there have been more killed by bears than by any industrial development on the outside of Waterton Lakes National Park. The records will show that clearly.

There were some other items raised by the Member for Edmonton Glengarry. He talked about giving notice if people lived within 500 metres of the proposed well. The fact is there is probably no one living within 25 miles of that well except the caretaker at the Westcastle ski hill. There's not a lot of human habitation anywhere near that well.

He mentioned the winds. Yes, there are a lot of winds there, and in terms of any emergency the wind flow through would, in my judgment, dispell very quickly any gases that would be admitted into the atmosphere. The dispersal would be so rapid with those high winds.

AN HON. MEMBER: Give the minister a chance.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, the members opposite in the opposition parties have raised questions in question period which affect the livelihood of my constituents in terms of their future jobs. They've given us rhetoric in election campaigns that they are serious about job creation. They can't be very serious. They say: "Don't find new gas reserves for the Shell oil and gas plant. Let's shut it down. Forget about the 250 members of the oil and gas chemical workers union who supported the drilling of this well. Forget about their livelihood and jobs in the future." I think the facts have to be put out there. [interjections] The hon. critic from the opposition party went on at length about the economic impact in my constituency of these proposals, and I think I have a right in this Legislature to get up and put forward some alternative facts when it's a matter which affects jobs in my riding. I'll make sure that the people in Pincher Creek-Crowsnest know the attitude of the hon. Leader of the Opposition when it comes to jobs in my riding, Mr. Chairman.

Enough of that issue. I'd like to go on to one other area with regard to economic development in my constituency. It has to do with the Westcastle ski hill. I know I'm not going to have a lot of time, but to set the record straight in terms of the distortion — which the Official Opposition is party to in news releases they put out — and also with regard to other interest groups in this province, I'd like to put on the record some of the wrong information they've been putting out to try to influence the people of Alberta with regard to the Westcastle ski development. My colleague from Banff-Cochrane earlier alluded it. This document was put out by the Alberta Wilderness Association, the Alberta League for Environmentally Responsible Tourism, and a whole bunch of other groups. In it they state:

Recently, Mr. Sparrow, Associate Minister of Public Lands, informed the Westcastle Authority, overseeing an expanding resort near Pincher Creek, that 1,600 acres of public lands was at their disposal, and may be purchased. An additional 7,000 acres is also to be made available through leases for cottage and condominium developments.

That's the information they put out.

An Official Opposition news release, The New Democrats, issued, I note, from room 205, Legislature Building — interesting; I thought it might come from their party headquarters — dated December 3, 1985, makes the same statement:

Many Albertans did not notice last spring that the Westcastle Development Authority Act turned 1600 acres of prime public land on the Eastern Slopes over to the Authority for possible private purchase while an additional 7000 acres was made available through lease for condominium and cottage development.

Those are the types of figures they're putting out. The reality is, Mr. Chairman, that 31 acres were provided to the Westcastle Development Authority and an additional 110 acres for an option in terms of the development they're looking at there, and that the existing lease area only encompasses 752 acres. I suggest that the opposition and these interest groups were misleading the people of Alberta in terms of putting those facts out, because that was not the intent of the government of Alberta. That's what they put out there; it's documented.

The Westcastle ski facility development is very important to economic development in my constituency in terms of diversifying the economy, providing some alternatives to other industry in the future, developing a diversified economy, and providing jobs for my constituents. Westcastle ski recreational facility can provide those jobs rather than people in southern Alberta having to go to Fernie, British Columbia, or to Whitefish to ski. It's a very important development.

We've looked at what tools we can give them in Westcastle. I think the fact that a small area of land, which is basically the parking lot area, has been provided to the Westcastle Development Authority, which is a body responsible to the municipal district of Pincher Creek and to the town of Pincher Creek — not other than that responsible to elected public officials — is a responsible way to go in providing tools to the Westcastle Development people so that they can see a proper development go forward. I should note, Mr. Chairman, that whatever takes place there is going to be done in an environmentally responsible manner.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HERON: Point of order, Mr. Chairman. Out of respect for the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest's time allotment, I delayed making my point of order until this moment. I would like to, with greatest respect to the Chair, sir, ask for your comments and suggestions where you presumed and drew inference to what goes over, on, or under the head of the hon. Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Reference was made, hon. Member for Stony Plain, that the whole purpose of the estimates of Committee of Supply is that the minister of the Crown presents his estimates to the Assembly. The Assembly, hopefully, authorizes those estimates. The Chair made the observation because members were debating not comments

made by the minister of forestry but comments made by each other. However, the Chairman is in the hands of the committee. The hon. minister of forestry, please.

MR. SPARROW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can see that one of the hardest jobs I have is sorting out the misinformation that falls through the system. Public lands and forestry affects most of the constituencies in rural Alberta. Sixty percent of the province is public lands, and it's an immense job.

I'd like to comment and answer some questions. The first one was with reference to the disagreement with the federal environment Act. I would like to make it clear that the province of Alberta is virtually in total control of our natural resources. It is a responsibility that this province was given. Our department, along with Environment and many others, works very well with the federal departments. We have good co-operation and have had continuous meetings throughout the years. Sure, we have disagreements at times, but we sit down and sort them out.

The hon. member misunderstood me when he said that other provinces treat their forests as mines. I did not say that; I said "other countries." I would not want it on record that I said that about any other province in Canada, because they do have good forestry methods too.

There was mention of lease payments. He was worried about lease payments being used to be applied against the purchase price. That only affects farm development leases. The farm development lease fee is 2 percent of the value per year of the farm development lease, and there are just those five years that can effectively be applied to the purchase price. We do not credit grazing lease fees to the purchase. By the way, grazing lease fees are calculated on an animal unit/month basis depending on where the lease is in the province, and they're only about one-eighth of the value of a farm development lease. So if a grazing lease is converted to a farm development lease, our revenue goes up by 8 percent. Only when it gets to that category and it goes up to a sale does that trigger and we accredit his lease payments for those five-year periods.

The hon. member mentioned something about snow jobs. I think that's what we all get once in a while, especially from some of the unfortunate misinformation that flies through the air on various issues. I hope that in the future your colleagues from the Calgary area would be settled down by yourself to make it a little easier on the work we have.

You spent a lot of time on the herbicide issue and handcutting versus spraying. We're going very cautiously. I agree with the comments the Minister of the Environment made. We in our department get a permit from Environment, even if we do research projects. There have been no massive applications for aerial spraying. We had an 160-acre application some months ago.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I hesitate to interrupt the interesting remarks of the minister, but the committee must now rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as to business next week, it's not proposed that the Assembly sit on Monday night, but the Assembly will sit on Tuesday night. The business for Monday afternoon in Committee of Supply will be the estimates of the Attorney General.

[At 12:59 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

