

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Monday, August 11, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. SPEAKER: I am tabling the report of the Chief Electoral Officer, pursuant to section 36(1) of the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly four guests who are seated in the public gallery. All four are members of the Alberta Cattle Commission: from Barrhead, Mr. Dale Greig, an elected director for zone 8; from Redwater, Gladys Wacowich, a director at large; from Newbrook, Ilke Herrmann, a delegate; and from Grassland, Marion Wunder, also a delegate for zone 8. I would like them to rise to receive a warm welcome from this Assembly.

**head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Agricultural Strategy**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm just looking around to find which minister to ask a question of I'll start off with the Associate Minister of Agriculture. It has to do with some discussion we've had in the last couple days in regard to the U.S. subsidy to the Soviet Union. It appears by this that the war on Canadian farmers will continue. As the minister is aware, there's talk about them doing the same with China. Does the minister have an estimate of how much money will be lost to the Canadian farm economy this year, and specifically do we have any knowledge of how much will be lost to Alberta farmers with this latest subsidy to the Soviet Union by the United States?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question, no, I don't have that information, but I'll take that question as notice. I might say that we are making representation to the federal government in opposition to this practice.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up, Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate whether the Alberta government is prepared to push the federal government as hard as possible so that they would see the need for deficiency payments? I suppose there are discussions going on right now. Is this a strong issue at this first ministers' conference today?

MRS. CRIPPS: So the federal government would see the need for them?

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

MRS. CRIPPS: Federal deficiency payments?

MR. MARTIN: That's right.

MRS. CRIPPS: The assurance that I can give to the hon. Leader of the Opposition is that agriculture is one of the chief topics of discussion, and we'll do everything in the power of this province to ensure that our farmers remain viable. If that means discussing all options, that's what we'll discuss.

MR. MARTIN: Let me sum up. To either the Deputy Premier or the Associate Minister of Agriculture. Specifically during these talks is the Alberta government prepared to push hard on deficiency payments? Perhaps the Deputy Premier could tell us what's going on.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I can't say what is going on today over at Government House. The question of agriculture is certainly one of the main topics on the agenda as a subagenda item under the economy. The first item for discussion under that is a national agricultural strategy. The way the agenda is structured, it's particularly wide ranging and loose in order to allow all the provinces to have a wide scope of parameters in which to make their comments. In view of the serious nature of this topic, it would be very surprising if the question isn't addressed very seriously.

MR. MARTIN: I guess just one or two people know what's going on there, and obviously they're not here.

Perhaps the Deputy Premier could enlighten us as to government measures in view of the protectionist measures being advocated. We're seeing them almost every day from the United States. A supplementary question. Is this government prepared to ask for a moratorium on the free trade talks until after the American elections, when the protectionist sentiments might not be as high?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, in view of the seriousness of that question and the conference that's going on today and tomorrow, I think it would be wise to take the question as notice. I know the Premier will be reporting to the House on the outcome of the conference. Certainly it would be better if the question were answered at that time.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Associate Minister of Agriculture, after thanking the Deputy Premier for the fact that apparently there is an agenda, which never got filed in the House. In view of the subsidies the Americans are offering for their grain, are we prepared to drop the idea of \$10 a bushel for domestic wheat when it now appears we could underemploy or put out of business many of our Alberta and western Canada bakeries and associated people in the flour milling trade?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Leader of the Liberal Party asked that question because the supposition that we could put the millers out of business is ridiculous. There are 67 loaves of bread in a bushel of wheat. That's 6.7 cents a loaf. If you raise it from \$7 to \$10, presumably you raise it another 3 to 5 cents.

MR. TAYLOR: Fifteen cents.

MRS. CRIPPS: No, sir! Show me the figures.

#### **Renters' Assistance Tax Credit**

MR. MARTIN: My second question. In the absence of the Treasurer, I think the minister of housing may be aware of this. Until recently it has been the case that whether or not a person filed a tax return by the April 30 deadline, they had 12 months from the end of the taxation year to submit a claim for the renters' assistance tax credit. It is our information that since May 14 a renter who does not submit a tax credit claim by April 30 will automatically lose the right to the tax credit. My question flowing from that is: why has the government decided to disenfranchise renters who do not file a tax credit claim by April 30 when the statute would seem to state clearly that they may be submitted up to a year after the end of the tax year?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding has always been that this is a process when a person files their personal tax return, and the calculation is made as part of the return. That would justify, I think, the view that if one files one's return on time, one would have it in by April 30. However, if the hon. leader is pointing to a statutory provision which allows a further time, of course that would be honoured.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. It's our understanding that there has been a change made just recently. There used to be that year leeway and now there isn't. My question flowing from that: renters who are due a refund from the government are not required to file a tax return by April 30. Why then would we be penalizing renters in this case?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I know of no situation that would penalize renters in those circumstances. I would be pleased to take the question as notice, as third acting Treasurer, and discuss that with the Provincial Treasurer and reply in exact detail.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. I think they will find that this is the case; it's happening.

Would the minister reconsider this matter and give at least a year's moratorium on this measure so people won't be caught short this year?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't know in detail the answer that the Treasurer would give. But the proposition implicit in the question sounds reasonable to me.

#### **Agricultural Assistance**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. For 15 years now Tory governments have talked about economic diversification, but let's look at the scorecard. We have increased unemployment, diminished consumer confidence, a drop in housing starts ... [interjections]

AN HON. MEMBER: They don't want to hear the records.

MR. TAYLOR: They don't want to hear the things. Lower nonresidential investment, and worst of all, falling farm receipts. Data Resources of Canada refers to this economy

in terms such as "disastrous" and "hardship." Given the poor results of this, the Liberal opposition wishes to offer some constructive suggestions for diversifying Alberta agriculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: This is the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry; I'm offering them suggestions.

MR. SPEAKER: The question, please.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just about to hit that. You have to warm them up a little ahead of time over there.

MR. SPEAKER: Put the question.

MR. TAYLOR: Will the associate minister launch an initiative to encourage and support the production and distribution of Alberta-grown produce in the \$300 million market in this province or the \$3.6 billion market across Canada?

MRS. CRIPPS: In the preamble to the question — if you have any good ideas, I'd be happy to receive them. As far as the question is concerned, if you asked me what I think you asked, because you preambled so much that you were cut off part of the time — if the Alberta government would work towards increasing the market share of Alberta farmers. Of course we would.

MR. TAYLOR: We'd like something more concrete than good intentions. However, that's a start in the right direction.

Will the government investigate ways of using an estimated 42 million cubic feet of gas per day that is now being flared or wasted to heat greenhouses in Alberta?

MRS. CRIPPS: Certainly. If there's a good idea and a way of utilizing waste gas to improve market gardening or greenhouse marketing in this province, we'll look at all proposals and ideas.

MR. TAYLOR: The idea of course is to move the greenhouses to where the gas is rather than try to take the gas to the greenhouses, because right now the gas is going out for nothing.

Again, these are all positive suggestions, Madam Minister. Will the government make special efforts to encourage and support agritech corporations or companies in their development of computerized hydroponics and other advanced technology means of competing in Alberta and in the Canadian produce markets?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, this sounds like an excellent idea. Maybe the minister of economic development would like to supplement my remarks.

MR. TAYLOR: He's not here.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'm in the happy position today to be able to speak for both Economic Development and Trade, and Technology, Research and Telecommunications. We would be delighted to receive ideas on the use

of technology, whether it's computerized control of hydroponics or pure hydroponics controlled by the hon. leader of the Liberal Party. Whoever controls it, we would welcome any of those good ideas.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm making great headway. I've got the price of bread down from 15 cents to 5 cents; now we're going to hydroponics.

Possibly the associate minister will need the third, fourth, or fifth acting Treasurer on this one; I don't know. Will she assure Alberta farmers that the funding for agricultural research and resource development — that's vote 5 in the budget if you want to pull out that blue thing underneath your knees there — will be increased next year and not cut by 21 percent as it was this year?

MR. SPEAKER: That's not an appropriate question for question period; I'm sorry. It's a question for the estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: May I ask a question that you will approve then?

MR. SPEAKER: That's your third question.

MR. TAYLOR: It can't be a question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, you tried a third question, and it was out of order. Therefore, that's a whack at the bat.

#### **Gainers Dispute**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, under the circumstances I'd like to follow up on a question I asked on Friday relative to section 114 of the Labour Relations Act, as to whether there's any further progress with regard to the application of that Act or whether any other secondary picketing has gone on that's outside the law.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, there has been no further action that I'm aware of over the weekend, and of course the Attorney General is not here at this time. I will take it as notice, and he can report back in due course.

#### **Rural Private Telephone Lines**

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications concerning the private line installation program announced last spring. In the case of a business or an individual that feels circumstances force them to install a private line before the provincial program comes through, would there be any reimbursement to the individual on the difference in cost?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question correctly, it would seem to me that the individual being used in this illustration would be in a position quite similar to the position of other individual subscribers who have taken private line service in rural areas prior to this time. The same consideration would be given eventually to an individual taking it now, post the announcement but before the commencement of the program, as would have applied to anyone who had private line service prior to the announcement but before the program actually commences.

MR. FISCHER: A supplementary then. How do we establish priority? Will it be announced publicly so people know, so

they can make arrangements, whether they should put their own line in or should wait?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, there are at least two technical considerations which may influence the order of areas in terms of the installation of private lines. The first is that the switching equipment must have the capacity to handle that kind of line service. My understanding is that a good portion of the province already meets that test.

The second technical question concerns the capacity of individual lines between the switching equipment and the subscribers. That varies from area to area. It may be a consideration in terms of the priority that is given to one area of the province over another.

Mr. Speaker, if I may just conclude with the observation that I've had many hon. members seeking priority in individual line service on behalf of their constituents. The difficult question will inevitably arise — I believe we have to either make some arbitrary choices about which area gets private line service first or put in the technical provisions for the private line service and turn the whole province up at once. But that would mean some people wouldn't get it as quickly as they would otherwise.

MR. FOX: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. If he isn't able at this point to tell when and where the project will begin, will he tell us when we will know? When can people expect this project to begin in rural Alberta?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, part of the project has already commenced; that is, speeding up the modernization of the switching equipment. As to a specific switching area which might be the first to obtain individual or private line service, I imagine that announcement will come late in 1986, but I believe it will be in 1986. I can't offer any speculation at the moment as to what locale that would be.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the minister, continuing my be-kind-to-ministers day. Could I make a suggestion on how to beat the priority system by using . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. I'll phrase it as a question if you want. Could the minister consider a system that's already used by the government in allotting hunting licences; in other words, a lottery to see who is coming up, putting their names in a hat to see in which order they should be hooked up?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, obviously the government and the minister could consider that. I am pleased the hon. leader of the Liberal Party has found an opportunity to make that representation since he missed the throne speech, the budget, and all the private motions to this time.

#### **Ski Resort Development**

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Recreation and Parks in regard to the contract details between the government and Ski Kananaskis Incorporated. I'd like to ask the minister: what is the intention of the government in regard to tabling those contract details? Will they be tabling that information in the Assembly?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate answer that in regard to the fact that it's on the Order Paper. If the member would await the response, it would be there.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's been on the Order Paper for some time.

In 1983 the previous minister tabled the operation and lease agreement with the operator of the Kananaskis golf course. Why would it not be reasonable to table the agreement with Ski Kananaskis inasmuch as a similar agreement has previously been tabled in this Assembly? What's different?

MR. SPEAKER: The line of questioning is indeed out of order because of the matter being on the Order Paper, hon. member.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister: is it the policy of the government to subsidize a ski operation to the point that it undercuts other existing businesses?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly welcome the opportunity to clarify any misunderstanding the member might have or that he wishes to leave with the general public at large. It certainly isn't the intent of this government to allow any operator to be subsidized at the expense of the Alberta taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should be aware that the minister will annually approve the increase or decrease in the fee disbursement pertaining to the Nakiska ski area. That's subject to annual review, and I would welcome any presentations or suggestions the hon. member or the general public at large may have pertaining to any fee schedule. Fee schedules have not been set. They will be, but I'm certain they will not be established at anything other than subject to existing marketing conditions. That would be subject to the fees payable on other similar ski areas.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Did the minister approve the ski lift ticket prices announced by Ski Kananaskis Incorporated?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that there was any announcement. I believe something in the media was purported to be, but there was no formal announcement because it will be approved by this office and this minister first.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. There seems to me to be much to question about the conduct of the Kananaskis project. Why would the government incur the additional expense of hiring Mr. Ron Ghitter, who is an ex-MLA and a previous Conservative Party leadership candidate, to put together the deal to build the Kananaskis hotel when this would surely have better been the responsibility of existing departmental and ministerial staff?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has great difficulty with the question, which has been raised before in question period. It's also been a matter with regard to the Order Paper, and the answers were supplied to the House.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question. Is the minister in a position to remember what support was given through the

provincial and federal governments last year to ski operators at Marmot, Norquay, and Lake Louise? Can the minister indicate what support was given to these facilities last year?

MR. WEISS: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am not able to answer that. I'd be pleased to take it under advisement and report back to the member.

#### Public Service Employment Initiatives

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour, responsible for personnel. This government has from time to time spoken out in favour of equal employment opportunities for all Albertans, but actions and not words are what we'd like to see. Does this government have in place an employment equity program for the civil service?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I have great difficulty with the collection of different phrases that are used. For 15 years this government has supported the concept of equal pay for equal work. I would refer members to the example of the registered nursing assistants and the nursing orderlies in hospitals; those were equalized after an appeal through the appropriate mechanism. The department and personnel administration office have persistently offered programs to women employees of the government to upgrade their standards and be in a better position for promotion. We will continue to do that.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister can tell us what targets and goals the government has established for achieving this employment equity in the government.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, as I have already said, I'm not quite sure what the hon. member means by employment equity. We will certainly continue to offer equal opportunity for employment with the government regardless of sex, racial origin, or other items. We will continue to offer equal chance for promotion. We have a merit system within the government service. We have programs to upgrade our employees and to enable them to progress through the public service. Those are on record, and they will continue to operate.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, just to be clear then, employment equity could perhaps be synonymous with affirmative action, although not precisely. I'll continue with questions on the subject. Is it this government's intention at some point in the near future to put an aggressive employment equity program in place for the civil service?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I think I've already answered that question. We have some special programs for our female employees. Those exist, have existed, and will continue to exist.

MRS. HEWES: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'd have to say the answer has to be no.

Perhaps the minister can tell us who in the government is assigned to promoting or evaluating the programs that he has variously described under employment equity terminology?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would refer to the *Hansard* record of my estimates, I think there are some numbers there.

MS BARRETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister is prepared to rule out at this time equal pay for work of equal value as a measure by which the \$10,500 per year gender wage gap in the Alberta public service could be eliminated.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention of the government to introduce a program such as mentioned by the hon. member. Instead of attempting measures which are essentially window dressing, we are attempting to give equal opportunity to female members in the public service. I will refer the hon. member to the same numbers in the discussion of my estimates that I referred the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar to. Those numbers are on the record, and I think they are significant numbers. The proof is in the pudding.

#### **Yellowhead Highway**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. It deals with the proposal by the former federal Transport minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, and has to do with the incorporation of the Yellowhead Highway into the trans-Canada system. Can the minister indicate what progress is being made between the two levels of government to incorporate the Yellowhead into the trans-Canada system of highways?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, as a result of that conversation taking place prior to my taking over the Department of Transportation and Utilities, I followed up with a letter to the federal minister, the hon. Mr. Crosbie, and I haven't had a response back from it yet. I have also had a meeting with the Yellowhead Highway Association, which is supporting the designation of the second or the northern leg of the trans-Canada. With that, hopefully some federal funding may be available to us.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Tourism. Can the minister indicate what studies have been done by the minister's department to advise the government what economic benefits there are to northern Alberta by having this part of the trans-Canada highway system?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I can't speak to any specific studies that may have been done. However, I too have met with the Yellowhead Highway Association, and it would seem to be good economic sense to have a route through northern Alberta that was so designated. It would certainly attract more traffic that is now using the U.S. route or the trans-Canada route only and would open up another option. I can't speak to any specific studies except the information I have been given: it would make good economic sense.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, back to the Minister of Transportation. Can the minister indicate what priority the minister has placed in his department to work as feverishly as they can to make sure that this is designated next spring? I guess what I'm trying to find out is: has a deadline been established?

MR. ADAIR: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, but let me make it clear that the twinning of Highway 16 east and west of the city of Edmonton is on schedule and, in some cases, slightly ahead of schedule. The dates we anticipate

that completion are 1990 to the west and 1991 to the east, and that should not change. If there is a designation, we may have included in that some additional funds, but that should not change. As far as any delays that may occur, we may have the opportunity once we know what the designation may be to look at whether there's any opportunity to speed it up beyond that particular date that ties in the acquisition of land and all the other factors that are involved in the twinning process.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the minister. At this time what percentage of the twinning of the highway west of Edmonton to Jasper has been completed to four-lane specifications?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I don't have those figures with me at the moment, but I can certainly get them and provide them to the House.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transportation. Would the government consider going it alone on a speedup process? Is it necessary to get the federal grant before the government would consider speeding up the 1990 deadline?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, the intent was to do the twinning without the federal government being involved. The discussions that took place with the then minister of transportation about the possibility of some designation for a second trans-Canada route were just a plus in the sense of what we were doing. It had nothing to do with the scheduling that had already been put in place by the previous minister and the government at the time.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, does the minister have any recent figures regarding the traffic flows on this very major highway that would induce him to speed up the 1991 projected completion date for twinning of the highway east of Edmonton?

MR. ADAIR: I don't have them with me, Mr. Speaker, but I think it should be pointed out that the 1990 and 1991 schedules that were prepared some time ago are being met at this point in time. They took into account all the necessary involvement in land acquisition and all the other factors that are there. At this particular point those are basically right on target as far as time. I'm not sure we can speed it up any more.

#### **Workers' Compensation**

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health concerns injured workers' pensions. Such workers haven't had their pensions increased since January 1, 1982. Owing to inflation, this now amounts to a 30 percent reduction in their pensions in real terms. In view of the minister's statement to this Assembly on June 26 that he hoped "to be making a decision on the matter in the days ahead" and it's now one and a half months ahead, when is he going to remedy this lamentable injustice?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker. I said on that date some 45 days ago that it was a matter I was discussing with my colleagues in Executive Council as well as my government caucus colleagues. It is still a matter that's under careful

consideration. I accept the representation of the hon. member and will add that to the many calls.

MR. WRIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister see to it that in future these pensions will be linked to the consumer price index, much as old age pensions, to avoid the necessity of waiting until legislative time can be found for every amendment to the Act?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I believe that any number of government programs that we have in this province provide pensioners, our seniors, and any number of Albertans with some very unique programs, and those programs must be factored into any increase that we might provide by way of pensions under the public service pension plan or the workers' compensation plan or whatever. All of those are factored in. So I don't think that a legislated formula that might track the consumer price index is something we would want to use in this province. However, I accept the representation, and I'd suggest that the hon. member might want to make that suggestion when the Legislature strikes a select committee to review workers' compensation in the province.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The hon. minister speaks of consultation with cabinet colleagues and so on, which is normal except that this legislation was first promised, I understand, in the spring of '85, then postponed to the fall of '85, and then to this spring. Will the minister assure us that the necessary legislation on this point will be forthcoming at these sittings?

MR. DINNING: No, Mr. Speaker, I can't make that commitment, because I wouldn't want to prejudge the discussion with my colleagues.

MR. TAYLOR: Don't you run your own department?

MR. WRIGHT: In making the provision that will be made, will the minister give the House his assurance that the general levels of compensation will remain, as at present, under legislative control but subject to cost-of-living adjustment or any other formula that is applicable and will not be shifted into the regulations?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I couldn't make that commitment. I perhaps don't follow the drift of the hon. member.

If I may just react to one comment of his friend at his right when he suggests: do I run the department? I don't think the hon. member would want to see a minister of the Crown, whether he's taking on new responsibilities or continuing other ones, just automatically ...

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. Order please. The minister is supposed to reply to the questioner rather than to any side comment that may have been made by any other member in the House.

#### South Africa

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister who is sitting in for the absent minister of economic development. In light of the recent Commonwealth leaders' meeting in London, at which our Canadian Prime Minister supported a call for more severe sanctions against South Africa, can we be advised today if there have been meetings

of the government with industry leaders to develop alternative markets for the \$40 million of Alberta sulphur that is now currently going to South Africa?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member so astutely observed, the minister in question is absent today. I am pleased to take his question as notice, and I'm sure the minister will be quite ready to respond tomorrow or the next day.

MR. GIBEAULT: A supplementary question to the Deputy Premier. The Premier has publicly stated that he would support restrictions of Alberta sulphur shipments to South Africa if the federal government requested them, so I would ask him if he can advise us what contacts the government has made with industry representatives to discuss options about restricting or cancelling sales to South Africa and to get some action as well with his federal counterpart.

MR. RUSSELL: No, I can't, Mr. Speaker, but I'll be glad to take the question as notice and have it answered when the Premier returns to the House.

MR. GIBEAULT: A supplementary question. Can the Deputy Premier perhaps also advise if his government has taken any initiatives subsequent to the Commonwealth leaders' meeting to improve the trade and aid links that we have with our Commonwealth sister nations in southern Africa who are being hard hit by the punitive actions of the Republic of South Africa?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I think it should be clear that aside from any issue that is involved directly with sanctions or any other kind of curtailment on international trade, this government is continuously busy with respect to the matter of international trade and development. It has been the practice to have a minister especially assigned to that. The record speaks for itself; it's quite remarkable.

MR. GIBEAULT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could we have a public statement from the Deputy Premier today that in fact he does endorse the Canadian federal government's and the Commonwealth leaders' position on sanctions toward South Africa and that it is not the position of this government to support the Thatcher position on sanctions?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, that's obviously a question that should be taken under consideration by the leader of government, the Premier, and I'll bring the question to his attention.

#### Immigrant Doctors

MR. CHUMIR: I have a question for the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. There are many qualified foreign doctors in Alberta who can't practise because they can't get internship positions. At the same time, there's only one Vietnamese doctor in the city of Calgary for 20,000 Vietnamese and three Spanish-speaking doctors for approximately 10,000 Spanish-speaking Calgarians; similar problems in Edmonton. Will the minister assure the House that he is actively reviewing the needs of these and other immigrant communities for medical care in their own language?

MR. M. MOORE: No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot assure that at all. As a matter of fact, it would be most appropriate for doctors who come here from other countries to learn the English language as soon as practical, because you cannot effectively practise medicine in this country without going through that process. I might add that for us to actively find ways to increase the spaces for immigrant doctors at the expense of young people who have grown up in this country and have proceeded through our schools of medicine would not be something I would be in favour of doing. On the other hand, the problem of immigrant doctors is a national one and should be dealt with at that level. We're trying to assist the federal government in coming to grips with the problem, but it's not at all our intention to go about a process of making sure that everyone who comes to Alberta can have medical services in their own language.

MR. CHUMIR: The problem is not the language of the doctors; it's the language of the immigrant communities. Has the minister consulted with ethnic groups in Alberta to determine the magnitude of the problem which faces them in getting medical care that they can understand and in a language in which they can be understood?

MR. M. MOORE: I haven't consulted, but my understanding is that without exception there is no one who has immigrated to Canada who is not getting far better health care now than they did previously. I only reiterate that I believe there are enough interpretation services available within those communities that adequate medical service can and is being provided.

MR. CHUMIR: Why does the minister pass the buck to the ... Pardon me?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Would the member please address through the Chair.

MR. CHUMIR: Through the Chair, I wonder why the minister passes the buck to the federal government when it's the Alberta provincial College of Physicians and Surgeons which sets rules with respect to practising in this province?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't passing the buck at all. I was saying that frankly I don't agree with the member.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, will the minister give the House an undertaking that he will look into this serious problem as soon as possible?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I've already told the hon. member that I don't regard it as a serious problem. Surely in the ethnic communities in this province there are resources available for interpretation that will allow anyone to have adequate medical service. It's not our intention to embark upon a program of ensuring that people have medical services in whatever language might be their native tongue. I believe very strongly that there are people, volunteers and others, who can quite well accommodate the relationship between a patient and doctor to ensure that they have adequate medical attention.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I may supplement the question and the answer. In response to the hon. Member

for Calgary Buffalo's question, I might say that I met just last week with many of the immigrant aid associations in Alberta; I think I met with some seven or eight of them. That question did come up, and it was very clear to me that the immigrant aid associations in Edmonton and Calgary play a very significant role in liaising with the medical practitioners in this province together with the new immigrants. Certainly it's an ongoing challenge, but I can tell you that the funding we give these organizations is paying off particularly in this area, because they are working very closely with the new immigrants who are having trouble with the language and doctors who provide them medical care.

MS BARRETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Following the responses from the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, I wonder if he will give the Assembly the assurance that this government does intend to provide the support for the multilevel health care facility at the Chinese Elders' Mansion in Edmonton, so that they can have an auxiliary hospital which is sensitive to the linguistic needs of the people in that area?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I fail to detect any relationship whatsoever between that question and the line of questioning that came earlier. It is a different item; it's the provision of extended care services in the city of Edmonton. The Chinese community has met with me as recently as week before last, I believe, to discuss that matter. The venture that they're proposing is somewhat different from anything that has been proposed before. It requires some funding from private-sector or charitable organizations with respect to nursing homes. It would also require a very substantial change in the government's policy with respect to the operation of auxiliary hospitals. All of those things are now being considered. They obviously have budgetary implications. I'm not sure when or if we will be able to respond in a positive way to that particular proposal, but it is something that I am currently considering.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. There are a number of issues to be dealt with before the House proceeds further with business. First, the Associate Minister of Agriculture has a correction with regard to a ministerial statement previously given.

#### **Agricultural Development Corporation**

MRS. CRIPPS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to correct an omission from my ministerial statement of Friday, August 8. I omitted the appointment of John Krall, Nampa, who is a farmer representing northern Alberta. He was mentioned in the news release but not in my ministerial statement. I apologize for that oversight.\*

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has received notification that there are two points of order to be raised. The Chair recognizes first the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it is on a point of order on the supplementary that you denied. I appeal it for two reasons. First of all, you mentioned, I believe, that one of the reasons was that vote 5 was coming up in estimates, but it cannot be raised in estimates, because the Department of Agriculture estimates have already been completed.

\*See August 8 *Hansard*, p. 988.

The second reason: even if it were so that it cannot be raised even if department estimates have been completed, I don't see how you can rule a question has been asked if you get up and rule that it's not a question. Therefore, I should be able to proceed with my question. In other words, a privilege can't be taken away that I didn't have in the first place.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, on that point of order. The hon. member got up and made a point, and it's left on the record as being a fact; it's not a fact. When a question is raised as such, I'm not sure that we should leave it hanging in midair when an allegation has been made. The member well knows that the reduction in research last year was a weather modification reduction, and that program is under review. He left the implication that there was a total and absolute reduction, and that's untrue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is always fascinated and interested to listen to points of order, especially those that emanate from the leader of the Liberal Party. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that both of us come from southern Alberta. There's something involved in the synergism. Nevertheless, it is not the Chair's responsibility to frame questions on behalf of members, and when, as in this case, a supplementary question was raised, the matter should have been raised as a question that was acceptable to the formulas of the House. If the member who originates the question has not been able to frame the question appropriately, it's the view of the Chair that nevertheless the opportunity for supplementary has then passed.

With respect to the purported point of order, the question was with respect to agricultural estimates. The estimates have not yet come to a conclusion; hopefully they might come to that stage later in the day. The other matter is with respect to raising a question which may or may not relate to the estimates. The hon. member should indeed frame the question and make no reference to the estimates, but just come forth with the question.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: In view of your previous comments, Mr. Speaker, as yet another member of this Assembly from southern Alberta I somewhat hesitate in also raising a point of order, but earlier in question period you ruled out a line of questioning of mine to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. I think the minister himself cited the fact that there's a motion for a return on the Order Paper regarding this matter. In reviewing the citations in *Beauchesne*, I imagine that in ruling on that point of order you looked to citation 357(1), quoting citation 171 from *Beauchesne*, fourth edition, which is as follows:

In putting a question a member must confine himself ... [and not]

(v) anticipate an Order of the Day or other matters.

Mr. Speaker, in the fifth edition of *Beauchesne* the second section of that citation goes on to read:

"... one need only look at citation 171 of *Beauchesne's* Fourth Edition, in which will be found numerous, and in many cases, inoperable, restrictions covering the form and content of questions. I suggest that if each and every one of these restrictions were applied in every case, very few questions would ever reach the *Order Paper*".

Following in this edition comes the section on oral questions, and that is found in citation 358. As I looked

at citation 359(12), the one that seemed to come the closest to dealing with this point raised by the hon. minister was that

Questions should not anticipate a debate scheduled for the day, but should be reserved for the debate.

I would respectfully submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that there is no debate scheduled on this motion for a return on today's Order Paper, and for that reason citation 359(12) would not apply. In reviewing *Beauchesne* under Oral Questions, I could not find any other citation that would uphold the minister's point.

I recognize that this is something that you might wish to take under advisement, and I would respectfully accept that, Mr. Speaker. I would like to draw to the attention of the Assembly that there is a difference between citation 357, which deals with written questions, and citation 358, which deals with oral questions, which I think would be operable in this particular instance.

Thank you.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address this point of order. I believe that my supplemental to the question from the Member for Calgary Mountain View was ruled out of order because, one, there was a written question on the subject pending and, two, it was already asked in the House. I have checked the appropriate Votes and Proceedings from April 4, 1986, and Written Question 131, to which you undoubtedly were referring, does not address the specific point in my question. It addresses the amount of money that was paid to Mr. Ghitter for putting together the Kananaskis Country hotel project, and it also asks how long Mr. Ghitter worked in order to earn that amount of money. My question specifically addressed why we would bother to hire Mr. Ghitter and incur any additional expense when we have perfectly capable ministers and staff in their department.

To go beyond that point, I believe that there is an urgency and importance to this question for several reasons. We have no conflict-of-interest guidelines for this government and for past MLAs and people who are affiliated with the government. At the same time ...

MR. SPEAKER: Stay within the point of order, please, hon. member.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm trying to point out why I should be able to ask this question given its urgency and its importance.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a matter of debate that Edmonton Meadowlark is dealing with at the moment. Perhaps the member would like to consider concluding the remarks with respect to the point of order.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, the second reason I was ruled out of order was that it was already asked in the House. It could only have been asked in the sittings of this year, because the deal was done in November or December of '85. I checked *Hansard* for the April sitting, and there is no reference to this question. To the best of my knowledge this question has not been asked since that time. I did ask questions of the Minister of Tourism during the estimates debate for that department, but those questions did not specifically address the issue that I am addressing in the question that I tried to ask today. It's my feeling that I have a right to ask that question, and more than that, the people of Alberta have a right to an answer for that question.



MR. SPEAKER: May the Chair take it that all these people from southern Alberta have finished raising points of order for this day, since all of us are located south of Athabasca, which I understand is the centre point of the province.

The Chair will indeed take the comments under consideration. Nevertheless, with respect to Motion for a Return 154, which was somewhat germane to the original point of order raised by the Member for Calgary Mountain View, the operative citation in *Beauchesne* — no matter what kind of interesting and articulate discourse took place with respect to moving through the citations in *Beauchesne* — is still citation 357:

A question oral or written [in this case oral] must not . . .

- (v) anticipate an Order of the Day or [any] other matters.

The matter is clearly on the Order Paper, and the tradition of the Assembly has been that questions are not posed with respect to what is already on the Order Paper as a motion or question. Some of the questioning did indeed refer to that matter. The Chair has said that the Chair will take it under advisement. If representations wish to be made, they can be made.

Is there one more point of order with respect to Edmonton Meadowlark? Thank you.

The Chair would like to bring to the attention of all hon. members a number of issues. With respect to a practice which a number of hon. members have fallen into, it should be brought to mind that it is not truly parliamentary to refer to the presence or absence of persons in or from the House. In this regard, the citation in *Beauchesne* is 316:

. . . it has been sanctioned by usage that a Member, while speaking, must not . . .

- (c) refer to the presence or absence of specific Members.

This practice has been growing on both sides of the House and really should cease.

With regard to answers in question period, the Chair recognizes the great difficulty, the longer that session goes on, and the imagination and skill which must be developed with respect to asking questions, especially with regard to questions that have been raised before and answers have been given or not given. It is a challenge to the intellectual ability of all hon. members to be able to frame questions. Nevertheless, a reminder should be given to the House that oral questions should not

repeat in substance a question already answered, or to which an answer has been refused.

That is citation 357(1)(d).

Also, with respect to (r), should not

refer to debate or answers to questions of the current Session.

That in part refers to comments which have occurred even on this day with respect to questions raised referring to debate or to statements made by various ministers of the Crown during estimates or Committee of the Whole. Again, it becomes a challenge to members raising questions to simply raise the question without referring to answers which are already found in *Hansard*.

The Chair thanks all hon. members for their kind attention this afternoon.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I have received a message from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, which I now transmit to you.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

[Members of the House stood]

MR. SPEAKER: The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

## head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the committee come to order, please? Before we proceed, various ministers have indicated that they would like to file copies of answers to questions on their departments.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to file with the House answers to questions asked previously in Committee of Supply to which I didn't have an opportunity to give full and complete answers. Individual members who asked questions were forwarded letters last week with these answers, but other members may wish the material.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I also wish to file copies of responses to questions asked on August 8 during consideration of the estimates of my department.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have for filing with the Legislature Library responses to questions raised during Committee of Supply consideration of estimates of the Department of Manpower. As Acting Minister of Energy, I would also like to file on behalf of the minister answers to questions raised during the course of estimates of the Department of Energy on July 25. Copies are being sent to those hon. members who posed the questions, and additional copies will be left with the Chair for any other [members] who wish them.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I too have some responses that I was not able to get in on June 16 in reply to the debate on my estimates. As well, I provided copies to the questioners.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the same order of business, and copies have been supplied to the questioners.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I have forwarded to the questioners the answers to some questions that I omitted during review of my estimates, and I sent a copy of the same information to your office on Friday, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the first hour we'll deal with the matter of special warrants to the government.

## Supplementary Estimates

MS BARRETT: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if I might submit to the members of the Assembly a proposal that given the time limits of consideration today and given that it's the last day of estimates under the

parameters of *Standing Orders*, we agree by some measure or other to allow the first half hour of these considerations to go simply to questions to be delivered by members having questions and the latter half to be given over to responses from the ministers by whatever means.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The government is proposing the supplementary estimates. Maybe the Provincial Treasurer could indicate a response before we take the question, if indeed we should take the question. Is that satisfactory to the government? Members of the committee, it's proposed that the one hour which would commence now and go to 4:40 would deal with supplementary estimates. Half of that time would be questions from members of the committee and the other half presumably would be answers to those questions, if that's the agreement.

Are we prepared to start? I don't know whether or not there are any introductory remarks. So comments and questions, members of Committee of Supply.

MR. FOX: Do we go through the book in order, Mr. Chairman, or can we go with Agriculture now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just one moment. I could ask the Government House Leader. Is it proposed we go through in the order in which they're listed, Mr. Government House Leader?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I would propose that the members rove about the supplementary estimates according to their wishes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the member for Vegreville care to rove?

MR. FOX: A-roving I will go, Mr. Chairman. Just a few quick questions on the supplementary estimates for Agriculture. In vote 2, production assistance, referring to the funds allocated to the feed grain market adjustment program, I'm wondering if included in that are moneys paid to Angus Reid Associates for doing a study of producer preference as to whether or not we opt for the pay the producers option or pay the railways option of the distribution of the Crow benefit.

Under the same vote, I'm wondering how the moneys — some \$48 million — to provide a red meat stabilization program can be allocated when the program itself didn't receive applications until the end of June. That being the case, what happened to that money?

Then we'll drop down to vote 4 under field services. I'm wondering how much of the money for the farm water assistance program to assist farmers in severe drought areas of the province was used. Does the government have any plans to provide a water well drilling assistance program in the future to help producers with not only the department's expertise in terms of type and depth of well, location, and drilling options but also the finances involved?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the Minister of Agriculture want to respond?

MRS. CRIPPS: Do you want answers to those after the questions or after the half hour? I'm not sure.

MS BARRETT: I think, Mr. Chairman, the preferred option would be if we could ask a whole series of questions

department by department and then ask for the series of responses.

MRS. CRIPPS: Fine. Thank you.

MR. SIGURDSON: I guess it's my turn to rove, Mr. Chairman, and I'll rove over to the Minister of Tourism. I just have a few questions that fall under his department. Under number 2, development of tourism and small business, providing a \$500,000 operating grant for 1985-86 and a one-time debt reduction of some \$900,000 for the Alberta Wildlife Park, I just wonder why this organization received money and not others, and how in fact that was decided. I'm curious to know what representations were made to make the government feel that an amount of some \$1.4 million was so terribly necessary and where the operating grant for 1986-87 will come from. Does that come out of general revenue, out of the taxpayers' money? That's my question on that.

The minister for economic development isn't here, but perhaps I can just address the question and somebody can pick it up and we'll get a response at some point. It's about some \$17 million being made available under the small business equity corporations program. I'm just wondering when the evaluation on this program is going to be done and if the evaluation, once it is done, is going to be made public. Out of that \$17 million that has been made available, I'm curious to know just how many companies have been formed from that investment and if all of the money was spent. Those are my questions in those two areas.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: In terms of the supplementary estimates for the Department of Economic Development and Trade, there's an item regarding funding for the establishment of an economic development director position in the New York office. I don't understand why it takes \$188,000 to establish one position. I don't know who that person is or if it's more than one position. Is it an office? What goes with that position, and why would it take \$188,000 to set up one individual? I know things are expensive in downtown Manhattan, but really, that expensive? I don't understand that.

The second question, in terms of a prototype robot through the issuance of a conditional grant to ATCO, is what is a prototype robot? What were the conditions of that grant? Will the eventual manufacturing, if any, that comes from that development occur in Alberta? Are the people who are working on that project working on it in Alberta or is this something that has been farmed out to another province or to another country? Was this an open tender process in order to provide this funding or was it the result of one company, in this case ATCO, coming to the provincial government and seeking assistance for this?

The third point: over \$1 million to maintain economic development initiatives of the department in a manner responsive to the private sector. That could encompass many things. There's no reference to the actual vote and the numbers within the estimates of that department, so I don't know which of the programs provided by that department this one relates to. There's no identification of what kinds of initiatives are intended. Is this to put some extra money into one particular program or several different programs? Is this to help send those missions overseas to promote more trade and development? Is that what we're buying with this? How is this matter referred to in the estimates?

Are there any additional costs to maintaining these initiatives which are not shown here? Does the government ensure that the way this is conducted is an appropriate one and will remain so?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed with the Member for Edmonton Kingsway, are members of the committee in fact all clear on what we are doing in the matter of supplementary estimates? A budget was passed, the government found that sufficient funds for the various projects were not there, and supplementary funds were required. Special warrants were then passed, and at this point they must be approved to legitimize expenditure of those funds. Just so all members of the committee are aware. The Chair apologizes for not explaining that previously for some members.

MR. TAYLOR: These have been spent already?

MR. CHAIRMAN: These dollars have been spent already. Authority to spend them was given and now approval is required.

MR. McEACHERN: My questions come under the Treasurer's purview, so I hope that somebody will take these down very carefully. I'll keep my comments part very short.

I want to look at the financial support package to the Canadian Commercial Bank, a purchase of some \$60 million in participation certificates and \$13 million in debentures, totalling \$73 million. As most people know, the funds only delayed the collapse of the bank. In fact, some people make the assumption that the \$255 million raised by the various supporting parties was known to be \$100 million short at the time. During the bailout the Treasurer, Lou Hyndman, assured the Legislature that Albertans' funds were safe in this bank. How much of this money, if any, has the government been able to get back to date? How much of the total do they expect to recoup in the long run? How are the taxpayers of Alberta going to make up the difference, as there is obviously going to be some not recouped?

We have of course lost the CCB, an Alberta-based bank. I'm also wondering if the government has some plans for trying to ensure that this province does continue to build some sort of financial base.

The third area of questions: what investigations into the stability of the bank to ensure that it was a good investment were done prior to investing the taxpayers' money? In other words, what degree of exploration did the provincial government do, rather than just depending on somebody else's assumptions?

A second area of concern in the supplementary estimates is the \$5 million from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund to provide funds to purchase the CCB debentures to consolidate General Revenue Fund holdings of the debentures affected by the support package. Here is a use of a rainy-day fund all right: to assist a failing bank. It turned out to be not a very good investment. What was the investment policy for the heritage trust fund money at that time? Has it since been changed due to that loss?

A final question. The \$5 million to consolidate the holdings seems a rather high cost. Who was this money paid to?

Those are all my questions. Thank you.

MS MJOLSNESS: A couple of questions to the Minister of Social Services. I see in the special warrants that we

will be providing over \$4 million in additional moneys to the day care operating allowance. First of all, I'm wondering what percentage of the money is going to private centres.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Member for Edmonton Calder. Is this to the Minister of Social Services?

MS MJOLSNESS: Yes, it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS MJOLSNESS: I'm wondering what percentage of the money is going to the private for-profit centres and how much is going to the public for nonprofit centres, if she has any figures on that. Once this money is allocated, I'm also wondering if there are any plans to have any accountability. I think we need to demand some kind of accountability when we are giving money to the different centres. I notice that the response to the Committee of Supply on some of the questions says that the department is in fact currently doing a review on day care. I would first of all ask if this particular issue will be contained in the review or if the review committee is looking at this, and also when the review will be available for us to see.

Another comment and question I have is on the Alberta assured income for the severely handicapped. You see an increase of over \$6 million here. It's based on the fact that we are anticipating higher caseloads in this area. Going along with this money allocation, I'm wondering if in fact support programs are being developed to go along with the higher caseloads. If so, what kind of support services can we see being developed?

I have a third question to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health. It says in the special warrants that there will be a medical diagnostic review in the Twin Butte area. Over \$3 million is allocated for this particular review. I'd just like a quick explanation of why we're doing the review, when we'll see the results, when this review will be completed, and when it will be made public.

Thank you.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to note first of all that as with the instances related to the consideration of the interim supply Bill, the members of the Official Opposition caucus are loathe to time and again be asked to support the expenditure of money that's already been spent by virtue of a cabinet directive made behind closed doors without consultation with the members of the Assembly. This essential flaw could be dealt with by regular convenings of the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to ask the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, who inherited the projects which led to a special warrant to the tune of \$25 million, specifically the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre and the two urban hospital construction projects, if he is able to explain the nature of the need for those additional cash flow requirements. That is, can he identify whether or not it was basic poor management that resulted in this need, separating the two new hospital projects out of that consideration, and if in fact the government has in mind to change its philosophy when contracting out these projects so that we're not looking at cost-plus tendering, given the cost over-runs of virtually every major project this government has undertaken since 1971? I wonder if the minister is prepared to instruct his officials to conduct an evaluation on this particular project if he hasn't done so already. Finally, I'd like to inquire

about the feasibility and needs studies done with respect to the overall cost of this project, which I believe, although I stand to be corrected, went more than twice as high as its original cost estimates.

Those are the pressing concerns that I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman, my first question is a rhetorical question to anybody over there who cares. What is happening to democracy? We have \$800 million that has already been spent without public and legislative perusal and we have half an hour to ask questions and raise debate about it. I just register that. It absolutely flabbergasts me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, if you wish to discuss the *Standing Orders* of this Assembly, this is not the committee in which you do it. Please proceed.

MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Fine. Thank you.

To the minister of economic development or whoever is replacing him at this time. Funding of \$188,500 to provide for the establishment of an economic development director position in the New York office: I would like clarification on the difference between what that director is to be paid and what the \$188,500 is to be used for. It would be nice to have the specific salary of that director clarified as well and an explanation of why we had to create a new position, whether there was any relationship between the need for a new position and the prior availability of somebody to put into it.

A second question: \$1,050,000, which is a significant amount of money, has been allocated to something that's described only vaguely:

Funding required to maintain economic development initiatives of the department in a manner responsive to the private sector.

That conjures up all sorts of possibilities, none of which are explained adequately in this line. Could you please give us some details for that?

AN HON. MEMBER: Entertainment.

MR. MITCHELL: Entertainment.

Seven million dollars to assist Sturdi-Wood Ltd.: could we please have explained to us the criteria for selecting this particular project over other projects? Undoubtedly it's entirely legitimate, but I think we require the criteria and the objectives against which the success of this project will be evaluated.

Similarly, for the grant of \$5,320,000 provided to the Alberta Microelectronic Centre for the purchase of microchip design and fabrication technology, it would be interesting to know what the criteria for selecting that particular project were and to what use this microchip design and fabrication technology will be put.

Finally, back to the Department of the Environment, pollution prevention and control — I say that with tongue in cheek.

To provide funds for the execution of the agreement between Kinetic Ecological Resource Group (1982) Ltd. and Alberta Environment.

It is clear that is the thin edge of the wedge. Kinetic was allowed to keep, I guess, \$500,000 of that. I would like to have that confirmed. But we as Albertans are required to cover the remaining costs of carrying the warehouses until such time as the materials that are in those warehouses

can be disposed of. We will be required to pay the costs of disposing of those materials, transporting them, and so on. Could the minister please confirm exactly how much this \$2.5 million commitment will involve in further commitments in the future to clean up the mess that was left in the Kinetic warehouses?

That's fine, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, I'll try to be equally fast. One of the advantages of doing these in a hurry is to find out my seatmate's glasses work better than my own.

First, economic development. The additional funds required by the Alberta motion picture industry — I know it's a small amount but, there again, it's the principle involved. I think in the past many of the donations were made to employ technicians rather than authors, writers, and composers, and I want to make sure they're equal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. leader. Is this a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade?

MR. TAYLOR: The question is to Economic Development and Trade: how they split the \$70,000 between actual mechanical or production facilities versus authors and composers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hate to interrupt the hon. member. The Chair likes to know which minister is being addressed. So it's economic development.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm new at this too. When I really get to know my business, they'll be terrorized.

The next one is also on financing economic development projects. As a matter of fact, this one is to the associate minister's riding. Seven million dollars spent on Sturdi-Wood Ltd. is a lot to re-elect an M.L.A. I just want to know, is the \$7 million a broad type of research as far as studying a facility or method that can be used anywhere in Alberta? Or was the \$7 million devoted to a location study; in other words, that somehow or another it had to be in Drayton Valley? With \$7 million you can elect a lot of M.L.As.

Let's move over to Environment. Overview and co-ordination "to provide for the initiation of public hearings on the recycling of wastes": \$117,000. I'm interested in knowing if this is just the initial stage of hopefully a much bigger study. Or is this a complete amount in itself for the initiation of public hearings on recycling wastes?

Next, I'll flip over fast to tourism and small business: a \$500,000 operating grant and a one-time debt reduction of \$900,000 to the Alberta Wildlife Park. That adjoins my riding, and it may be an appropriate name for a riding that votes Liberal. I'd like to know just how the Wildlife Park has been restructured or what the ongoing possibilities are for extra drains on the government. Has this been set up so that it will roll forward from now on, or is it a process which the government will have to subsidize year after year? Lastly, what kind of government control or supervision is involved for the future so that we don't get into the same problems again?

My last two are to the Treasurer. One is revenue collection and rebates. There was 7 cents a litre, increased to 14 cents a litre, for the Alberta farm fuel distribution allowance. It's a \$55 million charge. I'd like to know how much of that \$55 million increase was due to the fact that the federal

government raised its taxes on fuel. In other words, was the \$55 million spent by the Alberta government just to keep the price to what it had been when it was 7 cents a litre? Was the extra boost in effect nothing more than replacing a tax put on by the federal government?

Lastly, support for the Canadian Commercial Bank totals \$78 million here. Without going into any details, I would like to know from the Treasurer how much of that \$78 million he now expects to recover and when he will recover that.

MS LAING: To the minister of economic development. I am concerned about vote 2 and \$20 million going to Alberta Intermodal Services Ltd. I'm not clear what that is, who is going to benefit from that, and what's going on. Is this more make-work jobs for Tories?

MR. YOUNG: I'm sorry; could that one be repeated? I didn't get it all.

MS LAING: Minister of economic development: \$20 million to Alberta Intermodal Services Limited. What is that all about? Where is that money going? How is it going to be spent and on whom or on what?

To the Minister of Education. I see that \$400,000 has been designated for COATS, the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. This is almost equal to last year's budget and is one-quarter of this year's budget. This is imposed on the teachers against their will. The teachers want their own organization. As a professional group they believe, and I believe, they should be capable of certification and decertification of their own members and of judging whether or not the members are acting in an ethical and competent manner. I would question why this kind of money is used to impose this, particularly \$400,000 on two man-years. Where is the rest of the money going? How and when will the success or the failure of this council be measured and evaluated? Who will that be reported to? Does this stand in place of the Alberta professional teachers Act?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Just engaging in a little friendly relationship here with a Tory, if you can believe it. [interjections] I think he's distracting me on purpose.

In any event, my questions would be to the Minister of Energy. I'm concerned that some \$20 million extra is provided in the estimates for forest resources management. My general questions are: why was this additional funding required, and why was it not anticipated? It could be that the period in question was a particularly dry year, and there might have been an increase in forest fires.

More specifically, part of the estimates includes money that was spent on the reclamation of fire damage. I'd like to know how much of that \$20 million was actually spent for reclamation purposes. I'd like to know if there were any studies done to demonstrate the effectiveness of the government's current policies with respect to forestry reclamation.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to come back to a few more questions on the Department of Economic Development and Trade. Following on my colleague's questions about Alberta Intermodal Services, is this something to do with the container port proposals that were at one time made by the Economic Development Authority in

Calgary as well as, I think, in Edmonton? If so, does this project invest only in Edmonton, only in Calgary, or in both? If that's the case, where is that money going?

I would like to compliment or commend the minister, because it indicates there's an equity investment being made. This is something that has been raised in question period and in other parts of the debates on the estimates in the last few weeks. I would like to know what this equity arrangement might include. Is it just the purchase of shares? Are there seats allotted to the government of Alberta to sit on the board of directors? Perhaps an update on how the shares of this company are doing. My question also relates to the share of proceeds from the licensing of technology. Are any such proceeds accruing to the government or to the company from that?

I guess similar questions apply to the next item, that being the global positioning system. Again, there's an equity investment in Nortech Surveys. I wonder if the minister could answer the same questions in terms of share positions and voting positions on the board of directors of that company.

There's also an item here on the Alberta Laser Applications Science and Engineering Research Institute for the development of laser systems. What kind of financial support is that? Is that in the form of a grant? Is it an interest-free loan? Are there any strings attached in terms of requiring a follow-up evaluation or report done with those funds? How will this be applied to industry in Alberta?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. member. Ten seconds until the time is over.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Okay. I'd like some questions answered by the minister of hospitals about the \$25 million for the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre and the other urban hospitals project. Does that include the update for the Calgary General hospital? I think the minister indicated some time ago that he'd be making a decision before the end of August.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member. We have now reached the conclusion of the 30 minutes of the 60 minutes the committee had agreed to. I think it would be helpful to ministers of the Crown if I indicated the order in which the questions were asked. Of course, ministers may choose or not choose to respond. The Member for Vegreville addressed Agriculture; the Member for Edmonton Belmont addressed Tourism; Calgary Mountain View had three questions to Economic Development and Trade; Edmonton Kingsway to Treasury; Edmonton Calder to Social Services as well as Community and Occupational Health; the Member for Edmonton Highlands to the minister of Hospitals and Medical Care; Edmonton Meadowlark to Economic Development and Trade and the Environment; the leader of the Liberal Party to Economic Development and Trade, Treasury, and Tourism; the Member for Edmonton Avonmore to Economic Development and Trade and the Department of Education; the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn to Energy; Calgary Mountain View to Economic Development and Trade and a question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. The Chair is in the hands of the committee, but the Minister of Agriculture was asked the first question. Hon. Associate Minister of Agriculture.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to respond to the questions asked by the Member for Vegreville. The

member specifically asked about the feed grain market adjustment program in vote 2. I'd like to answer your second question first, because that was with regard to the Angus Reid study. You asked if that was part of the estimate. The Angus Reid study was completed prior to the introduction of the feed grain market adjustment program and in fact probably led to the development of that program. It clearly showed that the producers were at a disadvantage because of the Crow payment to the railways and the farmers were clearly in support of paying the producer. The purpose of the program is of course to offset the disadvantage the payment of the Crow rate to the railways causes our livestock industry in market neutrality. It's a \$21 a tonne payment to offset that distortion in the domestic feed grain market. You must remember that it's domestic feed grains.

The second question dealt with red meat stabilization. The member will know that red meat stabilization was discussed with farmers and between the two levels of government for a long period of time. The provincial government had given a commitment that we would have the red meat stabilization program in place. Our livestock producers expected it to be in place by a certain date. That hadn't happened due to delays in the program, so the government made an interim red meat stabilization payment in the second — or actually implemented the program effective April 1, 1985. That funding is the interim payment in the second and third quarter that would have been triggered had the program been in place during that period of time. My understanding is that it did not trigger on the cow/calf portion of the program as that was just about even. I believe it triggered on pork and finished beef.

Your third question was with regard to the farm water assistance program. This program has nothing to do with water wells; that program falls under Environment. Our program only deals with dugouts. The dugout rehabilitation program was extended from March 31, '86, to July 31. Farmers have until the end of October to complete their dugout work and have the application approved. So with regard to the well program, that wouldn't come under that. It wouldn't be our concern. There is a program under vote 6, though, which also deals with an assurance of water supply for the agricultural sector.

Thank you. I think that answers the questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, if there's time for supplementaries following the responses, we'll go to supplementaries. The Minister of Tourism.

Mr. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Chairman, the questions with respect to the park really should be directed to the minister of economic development with his responsibility for small business, because that's basically who it falls under. But since he's not here, I'll do my best to answer some of them. I got some from the former minister and managed to scramble for enough other answers that it may be helpful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister, I believe we have the acting minister of economic development here.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Fine, but I think I'll just go ahead and give it a shot. I think I can give the answers because we in Tourism and Small Business were responsible, and then the switchover came.

One of the questions was why this one and not others. Basically, that facility might have left the province if we had not stepped in. It was close to receivership, and so some steps had to be taken. As I understand it, there was a commitment of \$900,000 made, which was to be the capital. That was half the total amount to pick up those dollars; \$900,000 was provided by the government and \$900,000 by the foundation.

There was also a \$1 million commitment made up of a grant of \$500,000 which shows up in these estimates, another grant of \$300,000 in 1986-87, and another grant of \$200,000 in 1987-88. After the third year the foundation would then be responsible for running the park at no additional dollar cost to the government. There was also a fair amount of pressure from school groups, Mr. Chairman, to make sure that park remained here. So in that way we tried our best to accommodate it.

There was also a question from the leader of the Liberal Party about whether there is an ongoing commitment to not operating beyond 1987-88. That \$1 million commitment was basically to take it through 1987-88 with no commitment thereafter. The foundation would run it on their own beyond that time. Will there be a further demand in the future? Their intent is to become self-sufficient, and the board of directors is made up of private-sector people that have that intent in mind to make sure it remains self-sufficient.

The other question, Mr. Chairman, was if we have any supervision in that since we put so much money into the project. Actually, as I understand it, there are four appointments to the foundation from the government. They are really from small business, and there is one ADM in small business that receives reports and handles the necessary documentation and funding arrangements through that program. The small business division is a facilitating agent even though their involvement at this point is really minimal because things seem to be going along quite well.

Mr. Chairman, I think that answers the questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, minister. Acting Minister of Economic Development and Trade, there were questions asked by the following members, if it's helpful: Calgary Mountain View, Edmonton Meadowlark, Westlock-Sturgeon, Edmonton Avonmore, and Calgary Mountain View again. Hon. minister, do you want to respond?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure that I'm able to identify questions with the respective questioner. I was scrambling part of the time to try to get the questions down and the rest of the time to try to get some answers, in which case I missed some of the questions.

However, let me begin with the questions to do with the item on page 425 having to do with \$500,000 for the Alberta Laser Applications Science and Engineering Research Institute for the development of laser systems. That matter was raised in questions, and by way of explanation — and perhaps I could offer this explanation for a variety of the initiatives that you see here. No amount of money had been set aside for special funding of these kinds of projects. First of all, it's hard to project how much could be brought on in a year, and so the decision was taken that we would proceed by way of special warrants in the manner that has in fact been followed and that we would try to get a better impression from the activity of that year as to the forthcoming year so we could anticipate the amount of money that might be suitable to be set aside.

In respect of the Alberta Laser Institute, this was formed in 1986. The institute is for three primary purposes: automated manufacturing and robotics, materials handling and manipulation, and microelectronic chip fabrication. The total amount of money which will be contributed on the part of the Alberta government over five years is \$5 million, and the first \$500,000 is what appears in the estimate that you've seen and was paid out in the year ended March 31, 1986. Hon. members may note that there is a provision for \$1 million to be paid in 1986-87, and I believe that shows up under the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

With respect to the Alberta Microelectronic Centre question, in the year 1985-86 the amount of \$2,746,800 was disbursed out of a potential commitment of almost \$8 million. Again, the amount was paid out by special warrant for the reasons that I indicated. New emphasis would be placed on integrated circuit design and computer-assisted design software development in the Calgary facility and device physics, integrated sensor research, and integrated circuit prototyping in Edmonton. Mr. Chairman, both of these, in one case the institute and in the other case the centre, are for the purpose of trying to provide an interface between the universities and the private sector, to ensure an opportunity for the private sector to be able to call on the staff of the centre and in co-operation with that staff be able to further their particular initiatives.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the other questions, I should indicate that inasmuch as the Committee of Supply will subsequently be sitting for the purposes of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund estimates, it will be our intention to provide the responses on point to the questions raised. I should again indicate that these questions are all with regard to items dealt with in a previous fiscal year and do not come within the current budget but are submitted because they were authorized and the final approval is required this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, minister. The next questions, asked by the Member for Edmonton Kingsway of the Provincial Treasurer, dealt with the Canadian Commercial Bank in vote 5. Mr. Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Canadian Commercial Bank, I think there were at least two questions, and what I will simply do is explain the CCB investments. The two items in the estimates speak to \$73 million and to \$5 million. Those are special warrants. The \$73 million was made up of two items: \$60 million was part of the assistance program put together by all banks and the governments to deal with the problems which CCB had — that was a special agreement which we made — and there was \$13 million in special debentures which were purchased at the same time. The \$5 million was the same kind of special debentures, and of the total debentures there's \$18 million outstanding. Of the \$78 million invested in CCB, I think it's safe to say that it is unlikely that we'll collect very much from that investment. Five million dollars moved it from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to the General Revenue Fund to consolidate it with the other \$13 million of debentures which I mentioned, and at this point we have received some small payments on the debentures. Of course collection of the \$60 million is contingent upon the realization of assets on the final winding up of the entity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The next questioner was Edmonton Calder to the ministers of Social Services and Community and Occupational Health. Madam Minister.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the additional questions raised by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder. The first one was on day care and the supplementary requisition on that. That's a demand-driven program; as spaces are utilized, the funds flow. The hon. member had a question about where the breakdown was between private and public day care. The greatest proportion of spaces is in the private day care area, so I think it would be fair to say that most likely the greatest percentage of money would go into the private day care area. Obviously, we don't fund those spaces until the parents choose where they will be sending their children, and as the spaces come on stream and they are utilized, the operational allowance flows.

The hon. member indirectly made a very important point about the administrative area that is under review. I would hope that near the end of September I would have additional information. It is my intention to tighten up the administration and the allowances in the day care area. I have some concern about our ability to assure complete accountability where obviously the moneys flow based on the children utilizing the spaces; we must be able to assure ourselves that indeed those spaces are filled. We believe there will be some important administrative changes to be made. I will be discussing that; if not inside the Legislature, I will take particular pains to discuss it with the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder, because I know she's very interested. I'd love to be able to see her while I'm talking to her, Mr. Chairman.

On the second question, with respect to AISH, once again we have a demand-driven program. If you qualify you receive. I'm not sure that I understood the purport of the hon. member's question about the additional resources and programs to be made available as a result of seeing that there are obviously more people qualifying in this particular area. I would say that we really don't differentiate a program delivery in the community whether somebody is handicapped and is in no need of government support or whether they're receiving income — a pension — as a result of not having any other source of income. The community is put in a position, hopefully, of being able to deliver various kinds of services that will be needed by the whole range of handicapped people. So if the hon. member has some particular questions about a segment of the handicapped population that may not be receiving services in their community, I'd be pleased to receive that representation.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, to respond to a question by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder, she asked questions about a medical diagnostic review study taking place in Twin Butte. I've relayed the information to the hon. member, but just to confirm, it is a study that the government funded, undertaken in a very independent, arm's-length fashion by the McGill University research team. It's one that looked at the very long-term health effects of the people in the Pincher Creek area. It looked at the health of those residents over a 15-year period as opposed to an eight-week period, and I emphasize that, because there has been some debate by all members on a motion put forward by the hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, Motion 212 on the Order Paper. It was well debated there, and I'm sure we'll have an opportunity to debate it at even greater length the next time it comes up on the paper, but

I wanted to confirm that it is a study that is well-documented, well-known to all members. I would encourage the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder to be singular amongst her colleagues and perhaps read the report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next question was asked by the Member for Edmonton Highlands to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton Highlands and the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View asked the same question, so I'll try and deal with them at one time. Referring specifically to the \$25 million special warrant last year which went for funds to meet increased cash flow requirements for Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre and the two new urban hospitals, that warrant is exactly as it says: increased cash flow requirements. There were no budgetary over-runs; no additional new things occurred that required those funds. The two urban hospitals were moving faster than had been originally anticipated when the budget was struck, so the funds in this particular vote would have been in this year's budget at any rate or some future budget. They have no relationship, in other words, to whether or not there were any over-runs. The same applies to the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre. I might add that the \$25 million for the three projects is a very small part of the whole works, and it was simply an added amount that was required during the last fiscal year because progress on all three projects was better than anticipated.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that constitutes the questions that were asked.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton Meadowlark asked questions on the Department of Economic Development and Trade and the Department of the Environment. The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon asked on the departments of Economic Development and Trade, Tourism, and Treasury related to CCB. The Member for Edmonton Avonmore asked questions on the departments of Economic Development and Trade and Education. The Member for Calgary Forest Lawn asked questions on the Department of Energy.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Chairman, that is basically a question that comes under Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, and I'd like to answer the question. The amount that is shown in the estimates is for \$20.043 million. The actual amount spent last year was \$14,147,246, meaning there was a return to Treasury of some \$5,896,023 that was not spent. Primary to those funds were additional funds for firefighting and, indirectly, fire suppression, deployment of the fire crews, and additional overtime that was used during the year.

The current year: as discussed in estimates, we've increased our preliminary estimates by \$15 million. In the estimates in previous years, firefighting was continuously done by way of special warrants. This year to date we're only at about \$8 million compared to the \$15 million in the estimates.

As far as the question on studies: yes, we do current studies. They are usually two to three years after the fire rather than the year of the fire, so the funds on studies wouldn't be in this. But ongoing studies are taking place, and a very small amount of forest reclamation would be in this figure. This is primarily for the emergency side of it, but forest reclamation is done on an ongoing basis under regular budgeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Calgary Mountain View asked questions on the Department of Economic Development and Trade and the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. I believe the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has responded. We have four minutes left. The hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Chairman, a few questions about pollution prevention and control as related to Kinetic Contaminants. The opposition had made the government adequately aware of the financial difficulties of that company: it did in fact go broke, and a previous owner now enjoys year-round sunshine. I'm wondering if that amount indicates that we are paying a very high price for the environmental carelessness of that firm and in fact paying the fines that they were assessed in Ontario and neglected to pay. I would also hope that having learned from this, we will never again consider importing waste into this province as we were doing at that time. I also wonder if any of that sum of money went to the building of their new warehouse at Nisku, as I've been told that the new warehouse does not have a floor of sufficient strength or retaining walls to deal safely and adequately with spills of hazardous wastes that are being stored there.

I see that Bow Valley Resource Services is taking over where Kinetic Contaminants left off I wonder how much more this amount may climb. Considering the fact that the opposition is now trying to make the government aware that this company also has a rather shaky financial position at best, I'm wondering if the government is building into everything it does very strict measures of control to ensure that with BVRS we don't end up with the same kind of problems that we ended up with with Kinetic Contaminants.

Also, under water resource management, \$5 million was allotted to the start of construction of the Forty Mile Coulee reservoir project. I'm wondering how much that project will cost when it is finished; if that \$5 million merely gets it going; if there were not cheaper possibilities, as were suggested with the Oldman dam. Was the ECA consulted on the project and, if so, was their advice taken rather than being ignored as it was with the Oldman dam?

I'm also wondering, in terms of the \$14 million that is related to the Oldman River dam project, if again we can see some accounting of how much the less expensive alternative suggested by the ECA might have cost, if in fact that \$14 million might not have covered the majority of the cost rather than been merely a drop in the bucket or a drop in the nine football fields covered with the 1,000 feet of water that the minister referred to in his lengthy, one-sided debate on the environment estimates earlier.

With that I would end my questions. Thank you.

[The Member for Edmonton Highlands rose]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Athabasca-Lac la Biche, unless he wishes to defer to the Member for Edmonton Highlands.

MR. PIQUETTE: Are we still on the estimates? Thirty seconds; okay. I guess you caught me ... [interjections] Very quickly, I have a couple of questions for the Minister of Transportation and Utilities regarding the regional level of funding. The regional level of funding to accommodate demands under the street assistance program was raised by approximately \$1,793,000. Which communities benefitted by



raising this original estimate, and how much did each of these communities receive?

I would also like to ask a supplementary question. In terms of money which is not spent within the transportation budget — for example, delayed project or road construction — where does this money actually go back into? Do we need to raise the additional money from supplementaries?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, 10 seconds.

MR. PIQUETTE: Also, it was required to accommodate an increase in the runway project. Which airports required additional funding beyond the estimates?

To the Transportation and Utilities Department: \$4 million additional assistance was spent to provide for construction of water transmission systems to farmers. Was this money spent in drought-stricken areas in Alberta? Could the minister detail where and why this assistance was provided?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The time has expired for the first hour. The Chair would make the observation that there have been more questions asked this 25th day of estimates than the other 24 combined.

Before the committee today is the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the Hon. Elaine McCoy, minister.

#### **Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs**

MISS MCCOY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to my colleagues. I am here today to ask this Assembly to give me permission to have my department spend not more than \$16,879,015, as outlined on page 67 of the estimates. I'm also here to solicit comments and suggestions from the hon. members. Before I do that, I would like to do three things: firstly, I would like to describe the department; secondly, I would like to give a few highlights of what Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs plans to do and is doing with this money in the 1986-1987 fiscal year; and thirdly, I will take a few moments to outline my priorities for this department.

Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs is in the information business. It is information in the marketplace, and as such, my department touches on each and every Albertan each and every day of the year. One way or another every one of us deals in the marketplace every day of our lives. One way or another each and every one of us makes choices in the marketplace as to which goods and which services we choose to buy. When we make a choice in the marketplace, obviously we want reliable information so we know that what we are choosing and what we think we are getting is indeed what we do get.

Reliable information and freedom of choice: those are the two primary elements that Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs deals with. Of course, without the one, reliable information, the other, which is an inalienable right of every Albertan, can be rendered ineffective or at least less effective. Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs serves Albertans by helping to make sure that there is that reliable information in the marketplace. We do not tell people what to do; we do give them the tools to do what it is they want to do. We give Albertans tools in a number of ways, and I suppose if one were to summarize them, you could say that they are two. One, we do give information ourselves. The department gives out information for the use of Albertans.

Another way is that we try to make sure that people in the marketplace who are giving information give out accurate and reliable information. We also try to make sure that people who have given information in the past in fact deliver on what they say they are going to do.

I'll give one or two examples of those, if I may, by making reference to the estimates themselves: firstly, on the structure of the department and, secondly, on some of the programs that the department is now offering. If you would turn to page 69 of your estimates, I think it is immediately clear that the department is structured in two, one being regional services and the other being central support services or head office. In regional services we have eight offices: six regional offices and two district offices. These really are the heartthrob of the department. It is in the regions that we serve the people. We have taken Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs to the marketplace in which the people are dealing.

Our regional services have an emphasis on prevention. We emphasize consultation, not confrontation, and by and large Albertans have received this very well. Even today I received comments from some of our elected members that the regional services are indeed responding to the people when they need them.

Under central support services you will find appropriations for two of our more important people in the department: our deputy minister, Barry Martin, and Steve Stephens, who is an assistant deputy minister for support services. Let me say today that I thank them for their efforts over the years and do appreciate, as we all do, the dedication of public servants.

Turning to page 73, vote 2, consumer services in fact comprises the consumer education facility as well as the resource centre. Here again we have an example of how Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs delivers its service to the public of Alberta. Indeed, the department does put out a good deal of printed information, and it also maintains a lending library for professions who are in the helping services. Consumer education also develops various programs on other media, such as on ACCESS. At the moment, for example, a program is being developed based on the pamphlet called 2000 AD: A Guide to Financial Awareness. That is planned to be aired this fall. There is a radio program on northern CBC which transmits alternately in English and in one of the native languages that has a broad application in the northern regions of Alberta. These are examples of how Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs takes the information to the people.

On page 75, under registration and regulation of insurance companies, vote 3.1, I would mention another admirable civil servant in the person of Tewfik Saleh, who is the Superintendent of Insurance and an assistant deputy minister of the department. The insurance program is again an example of how information is dealt with by the department. Insurance salesmen are licensed, and they are only licensed after they have demonstrated a certain standard of education and knowledge about the industry. That is an example of controlling the vendors in the marketplace, if you will, by insisting that the information that they give to consumers is reliable.

The insurance program, through the Insurance Act and the Superintendent of Insurance and his delegated servants, also ensures that the information given out in insurance policies and things of that nature is comprehensible and reliable. That is another way of ensuring that information in the marketplace is of such a quality that consumers know

that what they are getting is what they wanted to get. Also, under the Insurance Act the insurance companies are required to maintain solvency, and this is another means of ensuring that the information is reliable. In this case, it's a future services regulation, such that that which you are promised to get in the future and which you are paying for today is indeed what you will get in due course.

On page 75 under 3.2, registration and regulation of businesses, a full quarter of the resources of the department are included in that vote. Here there are many programs, and I shan't go into each of them in detail. As examples I will point out one or two of them. These programs are under the direction of another assistant deputy minister, Mr. Del Keown, and I would like to extend my thanks to him as well for his dedication.

The real estate program has many protections for the consumer. Licensing is one of them, although in this area the regulatory aspects have been cut back, if you will, from a governmental perspective and increased from a private industry perspective, such that the industry is in some part self-regulatory. That has been working very well, although we continue to monitor it, and the Superintendent of Real Estate continues to maintain his disciplinary activities where and when necessary.

Corporate registry also falls under this vote. I think most people are familiar with corporate registry. That is a form of reliable information insofar as people who wish to can go to that registry and find out who it is that they are dealing with. They can pierce the corporate veil, if and when they desire to do so. Credit terms fall under this vote. There is a statute that deals with that. It requires people giving credit to fully disclose the terms of the credit arrangements. Unfair trade practices have many different aspects, one of them being truth in advertising, which is another example of disclosure and reliable information being in the marketplace.

Turning to page 77, vote 4, the regulation of securities markets is under the able direction of the chairman, Bill Pidruchney, and I also thank him for the services that he has rendered to the people of Alberta for some years. The essence of the Securities Act and the administration of it of course is disclosure. It is a policy of the government to help others put reliable information into the marketplace so that Albertans can make the choices that they want to make. In addition to that, there are provisions for licensing and registration so that those who are issuing securities or are selling them are making available to the marketplace information that is reliable. As I think members have become more and more aware over the last week or so, there are also powers under which the commission can act which stop disclosure when it is inadequate and encourage further disclosure if it is thought that the information is insufficient.

Under the Securities Commission various initiatives have recently been taken to facilitate the giving of information but at the same time attempt to facilitate the marketplace, and these I would mention too. One is the prompt offering prospectus and the other is the exchange offering prospectus, both of which were designed to give complete, true, and full disclosure and continuing disclosure, without interfering with the marketplace to such an extent that it grinds to a halt.

Those are some of the highlights of the department. Let me pass on to the third topic that I wish to raise today; that is, the priorities that I have for Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs. They are fourfold, the first being infor-

mation, the second being regional offices, the third being insurance, and the fourth being the Securities Commission.

Under the heading of information, members no doubt can tell from my description of what the department does that I put stress on reliable information being made available for Albertans as they go about their business, making their own choices. There are many questions on my mind. Does the department have sufficient informational materials addressing all sectors of Albertans and indeed addressing the needs of all Albertans? One of the areas I am asking the department to examine is whether we have sufficient materials for those in our society who are less fortunate than others. This was particularly brought home to me last week when I was in my constituency and took the time to go and visit the Calgary food bank. In talking with the director, it did occur to him as well as to me that it might greatly assist some members of our society in Alberta if Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs put out some materials designed for their specific needs.

We are also looking at a reaching-out program using the media services to more and greater effect — not only the print media but also the electronic media. The department is indeed taking various initiatives in this area. It would be a question of intensifying our efforts and also continuing consumer alerts, which is a program that has recently been started. The Securities Commission, I might add, already has a practice of putting out investor alerts, and the two together could be most useful information on a timely basis.

I have also raised a question as to whether our consumer corners could be expanded. The department now has a consumer corner in many libraries around the province. There may indeed be other places that consumers frequent, and it could very well be an addition to their lives if the information were available in shopping malls and other such places.

Turning to regional offices, as I said earlier, that is where the heart throbs in this department. It is the frontline of our delivery of services to the people, and I certainly will continue to put a great deal of emphasis on the regional offices. They are doing a good job. This is where we find out what the people need most. Our clients are the public of Alberta, and I will encourage all in the department to continue to listen to Albertans so that the department can be as responsive as needs be. That, it seems to me, has to come in from the people who are talking to the people, and that is an emphasis that I shall most certainly continue to place.

One of the more difficult questions we will be addressing this year and as often and as long as we need to address it until it is resolved is, of course, liability insurance. Difficulty is now encountered in both the affordability and the availability of certain kinds of liability insurance, although not all kinds. As an example, I think not one Albertan has any difficulty in arranging for liability insurance of the PL/PD sort that is mandatory for automobiles. Nevertheless, excess liability insurance, product liability insurance, some sorts of professional liability insurance, and a few others as well are rather a more serious question. Certainly we are addressing this right now. The superintendents of insurance across Canada are continuing to have meetings in an attempt to resolve the question. The Alberta government has hired a consultant, Mr. Wilkin, who is dealing with the question on a daily basis. We are looking at and developing background on various options that we can approach, which we would hope will at least relieve the difficulty if not resolve it. That will be one of my priorities.

Finally, as I have mentioned many times before, the Securities Commission: I will be striking a committee to review the Securities Commission and its structure. As I have had occasion to say before, the question in mind will be whether the policing aspects of the commission and the judicial aspects of the commission ought properly and optimally to be included in the same way that they are now. That committee will be struck and will report back to me in due course. I would hope that the report would come back in a timely fashion, because I think it is, as the chairman has often said, a question that needs to be addressed, and we'd like to have it addressed soon.

I solicit comments and suggestions from some of the members of the Assembly. Keeping in mind that I certainly believe in Albertans and that the marketplace choices they make should be their choices and not our choices and our role is simply to help make reliable information welcome, I would welcome any comments the members might have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by congratulating the hon. minister on her appointment. Consumer and Corporate Affairs might be a small department in terms of numbers of dollars, but it is, as she said, a very important department. It touches on everybody's activities pretty well every day.

I want to talk a little bit about the problems with First Commonwealth Securities and Audit Resources and North Sun resources, of course without trying to prejudice any of the hearings that may come up on those things, just to raise the problems of how the Alberta Securities Commission operates and to make the case that the study the minister is proposing should be widened. Rather than just dealing with the three aspects — the administrative, judicial, and investigative powers and how they are divided or not divided as the case may now be within the Alberta Securities Commission — I believe there are some larger problems that need to be addressed. I think we need an independent inquiry, not an internal department inquiry, to do the job right. We need somebody to take a look at the blind pools, as I've mentioned in question period. I know there is some change of rules there, and I won't stop to talk about those now, but I think there is still some problem with the blind pool procedure or we probably wouldn't have gotten into the mess we did in this recent case I mentioned.

You talked about accuracy of information. The trading on the Alberta Stock Exchange is based on some kind of trust between customers and their stock brokers, between stock brokers and the various company officials that put out information. We do need to take a look at that and the regulation of that. A particular problem that I think turns up in the whole business, not necessarily just on the stock market but in companies dealing with subsidiaries or parent companies of themselves, is that a fair amount of insider trading has gone on. I think you need to look at that more carefully than you have in the past.

Perhaps before I leave the study, another added comment: the trust companies of this province have got themselves into trouble quite a number of times, I think because of some of these issues that I've raised. I'm thinking of trust companies like Dial, Abacus, and Tower. This problem with First Commonwealth Securities, Audit Resources, and North Sun resources may be a little different from some of those other problems, but they are not new. Obviously, the regulation by the Alberta Securities Commission of the

Alberta Stock Exchange and of insider trading problems has not been resolved and needs to be looked at very carefully.

In going back to First Commonwealth Securities, as I said in question period the other day, the fact that they can no longer trade on the Alberta Stock Exchange leaves a number of investors and brokers with their money tied up and not able to get it. I did try to ask the minister if there wasn't some way she could expedite getting those innocent ones, if you like — I'm not implying any wrongdoing on the part of anybody else, because that's not been established yet, but we know that at some point some innocent people have their money tied up, and they may not be able to get it out until the final hearings. I don't just mean this one on Thursday; I mean the long-range hearings on the charges against the president and the lawyer for First Commonwealth. That could go on for six months, a year, a year and a half I wonder if the minister has some plans for sorting that out.

One of the reasons for calling for a wider inquiry, not just of the Alberta Securities Commission's regulations but also of how the Alberta Stock Exchange is operating and how well it's operating, is the problems we've had with trust companies. I want to mention two special ones that are ongoing right now. Heritage trust is in a great deal of trouble evidently — at least, they have not been able to file their annual statement or their first-quarter statement — and the same with North West Trust. Both of them pose particular problems which I think should be avoided in any solution that the inquiry might come up with. With Heritage trust, if you look at the shareholders ...

MISS McCOY: If I might just interject in the interests of — I'm very interested in the comments the hon. member is making, but on the other hand, those trust companies, as you are well aware, do not fall within my portfolio.

MR. McEACHERN: The regulation of the trading that these companies get involved in does to some extent have ramifications for your Securities Commission, does it not?

MISS McCOY: Again, I would caution the member that it is the public companies trading on the stock exchange that has some ramifications for the Securities Commission, which is within this portfolio, and even more for the Stock Exchange, which of course is a private, member-owned organization.

MR. McEACHERN: I think the member makes a fine distinction. I realize the Treasurer would probably want to answer these questions, and I have of course raised them with him in question period. The whole financial climate we're trying to develop in Alberta should be one of trying to encourage financial institutions. Both the Alberta Stock Exchange and the ASSP may help do that. The regulations governing banks and near banks, like trust companies, should all be looked at. If you are going to be corporate affairs minister, you must surely be interested in those problems. What I want to see is financial development in this province which would free us from having to rely on outside financial institutions all the time — we always end up paying interest down east or to foreigners — so that we can develop an Alberta-based financial industry. That is the context in which I raise those. The minister is obviously interested in those things.

I will go on to say about just those two companies that it seems to me they pose a particular problem that this

government should try to avoid in the future. One, Heritage trust: if you look at the shareholders, they have some very powerful Tory connections. I think you should consider how much that hurts the fair-dealing appearance of this government in the community overall. North West Trust has a great deal of money invested by the Treasury Branches, to the point where that may be a problem. Those things may get in the way of having the financial communities perceive that the government is doing a good job, so I think that should be part of what you look at.

I'm going to move on fairly quickly, because time is running out. I think I've made my main points on those things. I would like to perhaps have elaborated a little more, but I want to get into some consumer affairs items which we have not had a chance to raise before in this House, except for one or two of them on occasion.

First, there is obviously a crisis in liability insurance, and you mentioned that yourself. I'll just give a couple of figures to indicate the difficulties we are about to get into. Calgary's insurance costs rose from \$450,000 in 1985 to \$1.9 million this year for only one-fifth of their previous coverage. In my view, those are crisis proportions. Edmonton Public School Board's costs rose from \$25,000 last year to \$110,000 this year. Many charitable, sports, and cultural organizations have had to abandon or cut back on their operations. The industry is not hurting nearly so much as it claims. In fact, pretax profits for the first quarter of 1986 were almost 800 percent higher than for the first quarter of '85; that is, \$173 million compared to \$22 million. So the government is looking at the problem. Jim Wilkin, the ex-president of Reed Stenhouse insurance brokers, was hired for \$80,000 by Lou Hyndman in March to advise the government departments on insurance. In January Julian Koziak appointed a municipal liability insurance review committee of nine members to represent Consumer and Corporate Affairs. We've heard nothing from either of these committees, and I wonder if the minister would tell us what stage they're at, what they're doing, when they will report, and what may be done about insurance.

I wanted to mention another item of consumer protection. Damage deposits for renters are often seized when landlords sell a property or are lost when a landlord sells a property to another landlord who does not assume the responsibilities of the former landlord. I would advocate that you look at Bill 248, which I introduced into the Legislature earlier this session, to see if you can find a solution. Most provinces have, and we have not yet done that in Alberta.

The generic drug problem is probably one of the most pressing and important ones facing us right now. Multi-national corporations are pressing for a patent law that would give them clear rights to anything they develop, and generic drug companies would then not be able to copy those drugs in any way. We would be left with brand name drugs only, and this would be extremely costly. It's estimated it might cost Canadians as much as \$10 billion in a year because of that monopoly that would be granted to multi-national corporations, most of which are outside of this country. So the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs obviously must be concerned about that. I realize that ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. It's now the 25th day of consideration of main estimates, and there are 15 minutes before the normal adjournment hour, as defined in Standing Order 59(1). Therefore, pursuant to standing orders 58(1) and 59(2), I now put to you the following: that the committee approve each one of the resolutions relating to the main

estimates of the government and the Legislative Assembly for 1986-87. All in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

[Mr. Chairman declared the motion carried. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Adair	Fischer	Oman
Ady	Fjordbotten	Osteman
Alger	Heron	Payne
Anderson	Hyland	Pengelly
Bogle	Isley	Reid
Bradley	Johnston	Rostad
Brassard	Jonson	Russell
Campbell	Koper	Schumacher
Cassin	Kroeger	Shrake
Cherry	McCoy	Sparrow
Clegg	Mirosh	Stevens
Crawford	Moore, M.	Stewart
Cripps	Moore, R.	Trynchy
Day	Musgrave	Weiss
Dinning	Musgrove	West
Downey	Nelson	Young
Drobot	Oldring	Zarusky
Elliott		

Against the motion:

Barrett	Laing	Sigurdson
Chumir	Martin	Speaker, R.
Ewasiuk	McEachern	Strong
Fox	Mitchell	Taylor
Gibeault	Mjolsness	Wright
Hawkesworth	Pashak	Younie
Hewes	Piquette	

Totals:	Ayes - 52	Noes - 20
---------	-----------	-----------

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again. Pursuant to Standing Order 59, the committee has passed the following resolution: that the committee approve all the resolutions relating to the main estimates of the government and the Legislative Assembly for 1986-87.

Mr. Speaker, in order that the actual resolutions before the Committee of Supply may be part of the records of the sessions as a sessional paper, I am at this time tabling a copy of those resolutions.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it's not proposed that the House sit tonight or tomorrow night. I therefore move that

the Assembly now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m.

[At 5:28 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Tuesday at 3 p.m.]

