

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, August 20, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to the rest of the Assembly, a very good friend and colleague who sat in this Legislature representing the constituency of Drumheller from 1979 until 1986. Mr. Mickey Clark is seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask him to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you one of the members from my constituency who worked very hard on my campaign. The next one moved to Edmonton, and I lost her to another important constituency — moved right next door to the Premier. I'd like to introduce Carol Kiernan and Dianne Wittmann and their families. I'd ask you to rise and receive the warm welcome from this Assembly.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table with the Legislative Assembly a report entitled Western Canadian Low-Sulphur Coal on behalf of my colleague the Minister of the Environment.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Budget Deficit

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Treasurer. Given that the government is asking for borrowing powers up to \$5.5 billion, will the Treasurer now come clean and tell us what the real deficit will be at the end of this budget year?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the tabling of Bill 30 will provide us with another opportunity to discuss the future borrowing requirements of the province of Alberta. However, the linkages suggested by the Member for Edmonton Norwood are in fact inappropriate. To suggest that raising the limits by this Bill is encouraging or predicting a deficit of this size is in fact wrong.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, we will have an interesting debate, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to us that the Treasurer is taking out a mighty big piece of insurance with this proposal, if we follow his scenario.

A supplementary question. As I asked yesterday, will the Treasurer then undertake to table in this Legislature all

revenue projections done by his department since the last election on May 8?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, you will recall that on several occasions since this Assembly was convened, that question has been asked before. I have taken some pain to point out to the member, who probably wasn't listening, that the one-third assumption probably explains away 95 percent of the variation in a package of pricing assumptions and volume assumptions affecting the revenue projections of this government. In consequence to that we will not be providing further information than the assumptions built into the budget.

Of course, I can advise the member that the price of oil in the last few days has risen substantially. The price of September crude has gone from about \$13 to \$16.50 a barrel for west Texas intermediate, which reinforces the assumptions we've indicated. The prices of crude oil, as one of the elements of that package of pricing and revenue assumptions to the province, will in fact firm for the last part of 1986 and will strengthen through the early part of '87. That is now being reinforced by market forces.

MR. MARTIN: That's all very nice and dandy, Mr. Speaker. We're just trying to get the facts so we can deal with it in the Legislature.

Given that the worst-case scenario mentioned by the Treasurer would leave every Albertan this year with a \$2,300 debt — and I might point out that's double the national debt this year — is the Treasurer at least considering taxation changes similar to the U.S.A., which could bring in more revenue from those who could most afford to pay?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's a unique experience to hear the Member for Edmonton Norwood supporting a conservative American policy. I'm very pleased to hear him realize that supply-side economics, which one of your members has been criticizing for the past little while, is in fact effective and working in this province. That's why this government has maintained the lowest possible taxes of any province in Canada and will continue to do just that.

MR. MARTIN: Just a little civics lesson. Bill Bradley is a Democrat, a liberal Democrat, who brought it in, Mr. Speaker, and the conservatives jumped on it.

My final question then has to do with the federal deficit and the acceptance by this government of a growth in federal transfer payments that we're told will be some \$530 million by 1991. Given the alarming prospect of a huge deficit in this government, what plans does the Treasurer now have to protest strongly against these transfer payment cuts by the federal Tories?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, over the past five years the previous Minister of Finance has been aware of the Alberta concerns about the so-called reduction in the rate of increase of the established program financing transfers. Obviously, the province of Alberta is concerned about that, and our budget this year reflects a \$29 million reduction, which is the actual reduction in the normal transfers the province would have received.

Mr. Speaker, we should note that in the case of Bill 30, we're explaining that in the worst-case scenario the province may have to borrow something in the order of \$5.5 billion over a two- to three-year period or maybe over a five-year period. That does not at all put the province

in any kind of peril in terms of its debt ratio, because right now the province has zero debt.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, included in that assumption for borrowing is the requirement that we'll have to now borrow for some capital projects for hospitals, universities, and colleges, as the Legislature has approved. If the member is suggesting that we shouldn't do that and should not build hospitals and colleges, then let him say that. We are in fact borrowing to build real assets and invest in the future of this province. That's what this government is intending to do.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the Provincial Treasurer, and it's relative to the potential \$2 billion borrowings from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, possibly under section 10, which now has some \$1.7 billion. Could the minister indicate what other sources will be tapped to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to borrow that potential \$2 billion, if necessary?

MR. JOHNSTON: I'm not too sure if I fully understand the question, Mr. Speaker, but let me perhaps attempt to explain now. The adjustment which went through by order in council last Tuesday and which allows the government to use the liquidity in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund on a short-term basis is simply to allow us to have a supply of money should the government's efforts to borrow in a variety of markets be frustrated for whatever reasons, whether it's interest changes, the appetite of the market, or the federal government in particular going to the market.

Therefore, we would have a short-term supply of money in the heritage fund. I underscore the word "short-term," and I should clearly point out that we will be repaying the heritage fund at a rate of interest once the long-term borrowing has been put in place. We are now examining a variety of opportunities for us to borrow using the government of Alberta's triple A rating — the best in Canada — in a variety of markets. We would do that only on a need basis and a short-term basis to cover both funds which are put in the place, the very well-received farm credit stability program and the soon to be announced small business program, and as well to assist us in both the capital fund to build universities and colleges and to finance the deficit as well. That deficit is not a surprise to anyone, because we debated it here for at least 25 days.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplemental to the Treasurer, Mr. Speaker. I note his words "should the borrowing be frustrated." Has he received some signals from the international financial community — and this is why he's borrowing from the heritage trust fund rather than the open markets — that possibly they just don't like the type of management this government is getting, and he's being forced to come back to the heritage trust fund rather than get it on the international markets?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recount the number of foreign offshore investment bankers who have been to visit the Premier and myself for the last month or so. Right here in Alberta we are the most popular market in all the world right now. We have Japanese investors coming to us asking us to take money off the market on private placements. We are very popular, we have no debt and all the world understands that, and we have a triple A rating.

It's not at all a difficult prospect for us, but we are taking — and I like the words "good management," because that is exactly what this government is doing. We are managing the future of this province with effectiveness, determination, and a clear set of objectives. In that combination, Mr. Speaker, we will match the needs with long-term borrowing with the commitments which we've made to these people, reinforced by the mandate we got on May 8.

MR. MARTIN: Good speech, Dickie.

Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax

MR. MARTIN: My question is to the Premier, and it has to do with our favorite topic with the initials PGRT. This week the Premier has repeatedly stated that he believes the PGRT will soon be completely removed. I hope this isn't like the Treasurer's one-third drop in the revenues, but I'd like to deal with some facts, if I may, instead of beliefs.

By one o'clock this afternoon, had the Premier a guarantee from any federal authority that the PGRT will be completely removed before 1988 without any preconditions?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's amazing what that kind of guarantee would have to consider.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat what I told the House yesterday and the day before. That is, that I believe the PGRT will soon be completely removed.

MR. MARTIN: I could sing a song about, I believe, "For every drop of rain" or something, but let's try to deal with the facts, Mr. Speaker.

As I recall, the Premier says his belief is based on some mysterious information from a variety of discussions. I believe that's the way he put it. My question is: precisely which federal officials with the power to make decisions about the PGRT has the Premier received this information from since Mr. Masse's speech last week?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as all hon. members would know, and the hon. Leader of the Opposition would too, the government communicates with the federal government through a variety of ministers' officials. We do it by phone, letters, and other personal meetings. I don't intend to give the House a list of all the discussions we have with various people and what they've said. I've said to the House that I believe the PGRT will be removed soon, and that's the position of the government.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we are again trying to deal with facts, not beliefs. That's what this Legislature is supposed to deal with. We asked yesterday, and he said they phone and write letters to each other, and that's nice. We're glad they're friendly, but when does the Premier intend to get around to one specific phone call, namely to the Prime Minister of Canada, about Mr. Masse's position?

MR. GETTY: When I believe it is necessary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister of Energy said yesterday that some 70,000 energy-related jobs may be lost this year, does the Premier not think this is the necessary time? He could at least get on the phone and start lobbying Mr. Mulroney at this time.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. Leader of the Opposition will recall that many times in the House we've expressed the fact that the PGRT is a wrong tax. We believe it's illegal. We don't believe it in any way has a position now with the state of our energy industry, and we are getting that tax removed.

Whether that tax comes off by itself will have a small impact on immediate employment. There is so much more that is necessary, though, because the PGRT is symbolic. I think it has to come off, because how can you deal in a comprehensive way in helping an industry if you are in fact maintaining a tax that is hurting them? I think the tax must come off because of what it represents. There are many other things that have to be done, and we'll try and deal with the problem of unemployment, as expressed by the Minister of Energy.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier, and it's following the Premiers' Conference. Relative to this item of the PGRT, has the communiqué from that conference gone to the Prime Minister indicating the stand of the Premiers?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, not just to pass on the communiqué but in addition to present to the Prime Minister the mood of the conference. The mood that I felt was so important coming out of it was that the Premiers were no longer, at least in this conference, maintaining their interests on a narrow provincial basis. In fact, we're looking to try and work to make all parts of Canada strong and bring their influence to have that happen. I think it's an excellent potential for balance for a House of Commons which, just by its nature, is dominated by Members of Parliament from Ontario and Quebec.

There is particular potential to have the Premiers thinking, as they are now, of the interdependence of one province to another and that no province is really healthy if another province is hurting. That kind of thinking, which I found so encouraging amongst the Premiers, is one that I think will go a long way in the future to balancing federal policies that sometimes threaten or overlook certain parts of this nation.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. In view of the harmonious relationship he says exists amongst the Premiers, will the Premiers support the Premier of Alberta in asking for a tax on the retail side, the consumer side, to help out the energy industry in Canada?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Premiers realize the federal government needs to raise funds. It's up to the federal government to determine how they do it. There is no question that implicit in their support for the commodity producing and resource regions of this nation, there is support for those regions and a shift away from the manufacturing and industrial regions. They are supporting whatever it takes to help the energy industry in Alberta, agriculture in western Canada, or the fisheries in Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we would want to assist should Ontario's auto industry be devastated. That's the kind of thinking that was evidenced among the Premiers.

Energy Industry Assistance

MR. TAYLOR: My main question is also to the Premier. Clearly, the federal Tories don't seem to understand the financial condition of Alberta, including the lack of liquidity of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund or the dire conditions

of the oil industry. Clearly, this government is preparing for a worst-case scenario when we hear the Minister of Energy talking about 70,000 jobs lost and the Treasurer raising the provincial debt ceiling to \$5.5 billion.

Will the government undertake a cash flow stabilization program, namely loans to oil operators, based on the difference between a set, stabilized oil and gas price and a market price for oil?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think I've advised the House quite a few times in the past that that's certainly one of the options we are looking at.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. I hope he won't keep looking until the patient dies. Instead of dodging around the question, though, will the Premier assure Alberta then that the removal of the PGRT is not linked or predicated on natural gas deregulation?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that's absolutely the Alberta position.

MR. TAYLOR: That's interesting; it doesn't appear it's too successful.

The next supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier think he can receive a written guarantee from the federal government that if Alberta accepts no floor price, the federal government will not impose a ceiling price any time in the foreseeable future?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that would be a remarkable thing to obtain from any government. Of course, as all people in political life know, you can't commit a future government to anything. So I don't think it would be particularly helpful.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, that's what you call an Oklahoma handshake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: Don't be too impatient. I know there was a full moon last night, fellows, but just settle down a little.

A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is the federal government proposing that instead of cancelling the PGRT, they will give the tax back to Alberta companies in the form of job incentives created by them?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I wish the hon. member would handle his questions as well as he does his quips.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose there's a whole area of negotiations that goes on at the official and ministerial level. I would try not to get into details in the House.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. What information does the Premier have on the degree to which projects, such as Burnt Lake and other heavy oil projects, must have some assurance of a price in the range of \$20 a barrel Canadian in order to remain viable?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there have been some discussions with various heavy oil project operators, and some of them are able to bring their operations to such a level of efficiency that they are able to operate now and make money even at the current level of energy prices. Others will consider suspension for a period of time. None are

talking of abandoning any projects; most are looking forward to this heavy oil development in Alberta as one of the great sources of future supply for Canada.

Police Information Systems

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Solicitor General. It's with regard to the use of social insurance numbers. Could the Solicitor General indicate if he has had any discussions with his federal counterpart regarding the use of social insurance numbers as tracking devices or methods or techniques outside the original intent of the use of social insurance numbers in the province of Alberta?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of the department having had any conversations with federal people on the use of the social insurance number. We are presently communicating with all jurisdictions, provincial and federal. Perhaps that will arise at that time.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could he indicate whether any discussions have taken place with the RCMP of the province as to the usage of SI numbers? If so, can the minister indicate whether any restrictions exist in the use of those numbers in the surveillance or pursuit of various criminal elements in the province?

MR. ROSTAD: Again, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of such communications having taken place. I will investigate and report back to the Assembly on such things. I do believe the use in that manner would be restricted.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the minister in terms of his research. Could he also survey other departments of government to determine the use of the social insurance number and to assess as well whether or not they are in line with the federal Act in terms of provincial usage?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, our current study as it relates to driver's licences is very broad, and we definitely have included a number of other government departments, as related in the other questions. We haven't directly discussed the use of the social insurance number. As to the legality of it, I believe the Attorney General's department would be involved in that, but I again undertake to look into that for the member.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, to the Solicitor General. Would the minister consider discouraging any use of the social insurance number other than for its original intent?

MR. ROSTAD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, as far as a personal opinion. Aside from that, I believe the legal opinion would be that it is not permissible to use it in that manner.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, what steps then is the Solicitor General taking in order to make sure that disqualified drivers cannot obtain a licence, anyway, by lying? What foolproof method is he working on?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I believe in question period two days ago I mentioned to the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona that in my mind a foolproof system is not possible.

We are undertaking a very intense study to determine if there are any openings whereby somebody with fraudulent intent can obtain another driver's licence and in fact then carry it on through to apprehending and increasing the risk of apprehension for suspended drivers.

It would take more than this question period to go over all the areas we're studying. It will take some time to in fact come up with that. I can reiterate to the hon. member that effective September 1, we'll have our suspended driver apprehension program, which will then allow the police to revisit alleged offenders and apprehend them if they've been driving while suspended.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In light of the concern over this issue and other privacy matters, would the minister seriously consider implementing a privacy Act similar to that which they have in federal legislation in order to protect Albertans against improper use of the great mass of information which the government holds with respect to private citizens?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is clearly out of order. The original question started off with social insurance numbers.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The point of order will be heard at the end of question period. Thank you, hon. member.

Heart Transplants

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, given the fact that five heart/lung transplant operations have been performed in the last month at the University of Alberta hospital and the government provided funding for only 12 transplants, will the minister please provide additional information regarding the funding of this program?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not exactly sure what additional information the hon. member wants. The Premier announced on April 28 that we would fund 12 heart or heart/lung transplants at the University of Alberta hospital over a period of the next year at a cost of some \$1.7 million for operating and, I believe, just over \$900,000 capital cost.

I have been asked on more than one occasion in the last 24 hours whether or not the government would provide additional funding. In view of the fact that five operations have taken place in less than a month, the answer is that we will certainly be prepared to look at the possibility of additional funding if and when we arrive at that point.

MRS. MIROSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I understand that some of the patients are from B.C. Does the government intend to collect the money from the government of B.C. for the cost of the operations?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the arrangements with the government of British Columbia are that that government will pay for the actual cost of the operation for residents of British Columbia. That runs in the order from \$70,000 to \$110,000 for each one, depending on the nature of the operation. We hadn't made a decision as to where those funds would go. Generally speaking, they would go into the General Revenue Fund of the province. We made a decision that those funds can be added to the \$1.7 million

that was approved. So the program might in fact accommodate more than 12 if those funds are added to the university's funding that was provided by way of special warrant in the announcement of the Premier in April of this year.

MRS. MIROSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There are a good many Albertans waiting for surgery such as this. Will this jeopardize their surgery, or will they have to wait longer for surgery?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of aspects to this program that are important for hon. members to know about. First of all, it's a western Canada program; it's not an Alberta program in terms of the heart and heart/lung transplant program. Residents of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia are all eligible. There are no criteria in place with respect to place of residency. The criteria relate to the health of the patient and the requirements for a heart or heart/lung transplant and whether or not a suitable donor organ is available at the particular time. It's a coincidence that so many operations were performed over such a short period of time. I believe that was entirely unexpected by anyone.

I should add that while it appears the hospital would have a great deal more capacity than just the 12 transplants per year, that is in fact not the case. There is some considerable limit on the capacity of the operating team in the hospital to carry on many more than the 12 operations in one year, in spite of all their skills. That's because that hospital presently has some 700 open-heart operations scheduled in one year, largely involving Albertans. Each time they do one of the heart transplants, a number of those are delayed some length of time.

So it's not a matter of merely providing more funding to increase the scope of the program. The hospital would also have to gear up, so it's unlikely they would be able to do many more than what they had originally scheduled.

MRS. MIROSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister please tell me if this program will be expanded in 1987?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I can't say now whether or not the program will be expanded in 1987. As I've just commented, there is some physical limitation on the numbers of transplants that can be performed without deterring from other important heart operations being carried out at the hospital. But I certainly think we as a government would be fully prepared to look at some expansion of the program if the operating team, the board, and management of the hospital believe they had the capacity to carry it forward and placed a high priority on the program.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I'm not sure I clearly understand if the funds for operations done outside the province accrue to the hospital and yet priority is left with the hospital staff to figure which operations to do. How will he ensure that Albertans have first priority? After all, doing out-of-province operations will bring in money to the hospital and to their budget, whereas doing Albertans will not.

MR. M. MOORE: First of all, the hon. member needs to understand that with respect to the heart and heart/lung transplant program, Albertans do not have first opportunity.

That's a western Canada program. It was announced that way, and we believe very strongly that the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre should serve all of western Canada in that capacity. So the criteria are based upon the health of the individual, the urgent requirements, the availability of donor organs, and those sorts of things. A medical team makes that assessment.

It's purely coincidental that three of the first five patients, I believe, happen to come from British Columbia. It's also purely coincidental that at least that many donors' organs came from British Columbia as well.

That's different from the regular program at the University of Alberta involving open-heart surgery, where a very high percentage of the patients are Albertans. I said earlier that there is some limitation upon the ability of the hospital, its staff, and the surgeons to expand the heart transplant program without detracting from the open-heart surgery program. We wouldn't want that to occur; neither does the hospital. Hence the reason why my hesitation in suggesting that the program would be expanded even though they've done five operations in the space of barely more than three weeks. That has placed a great deal of strain on the hospital and, as I understand it, has likely resulted in some delay of other operations that would have otherwise taken place.

Energy Industry Assistance

(continued)

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Premier. This year the government has announced \$500 million in assistance grants to the oil industry. As of today, only some \$74 million of that total has been paid out. Will the Premier now admit that the programs are a failure and other solutions are required?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the very subject was discussed yesterday in the House when the Minister of Energy was here. As I said yesterday, I guess the question period really is winding down, and we're now just going to repeat them over and over again.

Let me say this, Mr. Speaker. Over the period since last June the government has dramatically lowered royalties to the industry. That has helped the industry very much. Then the government reduced royalties another \$100 million in the spring of this year, mainly to small companies. That has helped them very much. That has helped them maintain employment in their industry. They say it and they needed it, and we were able to do it.

Then we were able to come up with programs, first in the exploratory drilling area to help them with exploratory drilling. It's important to our country and our province that resources are found for the future. Then we provided \$200 million in development drilling service work for the industry. That is being taken up very quickly. As a matter of fact, some are saying that it will be all gone too soon. Nevertheless, we are prepared to help, because it provides employment in the industry. Then we were able to assist the Husky upgrader. That provides employment in the industry. Then we were able to help Syncrude. That provides employment in the industry. Then we were able to help Suncor. That provides employment in the industry. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, they asked the question, and they don't want to hear the answer. It's unfortunate. But that's the truth, and it's helping employment in the industry.

We are also negotiating with the industry additional ways of either modifying programs or adding some type of cash

stabilization program. If we can do it and it's possible within the resources of this province, we'll do it. We think it's also necessary to have a federal/provincial program to make sure the dollars are spread to all consumers throughout Canada. We've done those things because we wanted to help employment in the industry, and it has helped employment in the industry. We're committed to the help of that industry.

MR. PASHAK: A supplementary to the Premier. We're still getting essentially the same old, tired answers. Yesterday your Minister of Energy, and I think you alluded to the same thing today — you're hinting that the cash flow position of the energy explorers is about to improve. That's perhaps allowing some take-up, but this minister's incentive ...

MR. SPEAKER: Question, hon. member. Order. A supplementary question. The Chair awaits your question.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is: what specific measures is this government going to take to improve the cash flow position of the industry?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I won't force hon. members to again hear the program I just outlined to them, but all those matters that I just discussed help the cash flow position of the industry. As I said, we are also dealing with those raised by the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. We're also dealing with the possibility of loans in a cash stabilization program with the industry. We are doing these things because the industry is so important to us and because we hate to see people out of work or laid off. We're trying to do everything we can within the resources of this province to help them.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. He mentioned the Husky upgrader. The construction of this project and federal support are no closer than ever. In his discussion on the PGRT, has the Premier reminded the federal government that it has backed away from a signed agreement to support the upgrader with loan guarantees, or would the Premier rather forget all about the upgrader?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. The upgrader is progressing. We have an agreement, funded by dollars from the Saskatchewan government, the federal government, Husky, and the Alberta government. All the necessary work needed to be done prior to construction is going on. So we're not backing away from it. We like that project, and we sincerely hope the project goes ahead, not just because it will provide jobs and resources for this province, but it will provide resources and supplies for other Canadians who will need it so badly in the future.

MR. PASHAK: A final supplementary. Can you tell us when that plant is going to start then?

MR. GETTY: I've always noticed, Mr. Speaker, that when hon. members don't have good questions, they yell to try and cover up the fact.

Mr. Speaker, the necessary engineering work that is being done right now and funded by the four groups I mentioned is going on. That will bring us to a period of

time when they will then make the final commitment to construction.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question to the Premier. I wonder if he is prepared to commit this government to the construction, operation, design, and all costs afterwards of the Husky upgrader before we really know what they are.

MR. GETTY: There's an excellent point inherent in that question. That's why the work is going on, at which time the decision on the full construction will be made.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. In his earlier response the Premier alluded to the self-sufficiency of oil and gas in Canada. In 1975 and into the early 1980s there was a program in place to bring Canada to self-sufficiency with Alberta's major assistance. Under current economic conditions could the Premier indicate at this time whether we in Alberta or Canada can still reach that goal of self-sufficiency by 1990, which was projected in 1975 and 1980?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think that is the potential tragedy of the current situation with international energy prices. The fact is that the strides that were made towards self-sufficiency for Canada — probably the only nation in the industrialized western world that could achieve self-sufficiency in energy — may well be threatened by the current situation. Therefore, it takes a remarkable degree of forward planning and commitment to that matter and to put dollars in place now to make sure those things that are necessary for self-sufficiency in the future are carried out, particularly because of the long lead time they have; for instance, an oil sands plant or the Husky grader.

If we started a new oil sands plant tomorrow, it would not come on production until 1991 or 1992. When it commences, the Husky upgrader will not come on until 1990. That kind of lead time that is so necessary for the future supplies of Canada is one of the things that is being threatened because the planning to have those projects come on when they're needed isn't going on now. Our government is trying to make sure that other Canadians understand that matter. I was particularly pleased that the Premiers were supportive of that kind of thinking last week when they gathered here in Edmonton.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. Premier. He referred to the income stabilization program. The Canadian Petroleum Association and the Independent Petroleum Association of Canada both indicated they don't have any idea what these programs involve. Is it true that the government has not consulted directly with these important organizations on this matter? If not, why not?

MR. GETTY: No, it's not true, Mr. Speaker. They have been discussed with them. I think they're referring to the real details. The principle has been discussed with them. It's clear, though, that when you're talking to the Canadian Petroleum Association — that's one of the problems with dealing with the energy industry. The Canadian Petroleum Association is made up of the majors. What they would like to see done — they're not looking at income stabilization that helps the small or medium companies. They'd like to see the PGRT removed and royalties cut. That would help

them. But it wouldn't help the small companies who basically aren't paying royalties now and who don't pay the PGRT.

So just removing the PGRT and cutting royalties would not do the things that are necessary. That's why we're talking, Mr. Speaker ... [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members' parties in Ottawa have made the House of Commons a joke. I hope they're not trying to do that here with the noise when people are speaking. [interjections] It's already happened in the House of Commons. I hope they aren't going to do that here.

Mr. Speaker, as I was explaining to the hon. member, the important thing is those smaller companies, who don't pay PGRT now and who also basically don't pay royalties. We're trying to devise a scheme to help them, and they're very supportive of it and need it.

Employment Initiatives

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Manpower. I'm sorry; I'm not sure what the correct title is for that now. Will that do?

Mr. Speaker, this province is being absolutely devastated by unemployment. Way back in 1974 the government launched a \$178 million employment creation program, and we've had additional programs since that. Investing money in employment creation is worth while but only when such programs do as they're intended to do, and that's create jobs. Will the government account for the number of permanent jobs that have been created and diversified industry in the previous two years as a result of the 1984 job-creation programs? Are they working, Mr. Minister?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that when we're talking about historical data, the question is more appropriate for the Order Paper. I am not familiar nor do I have it at my fingertips so that I can deal with it here, but I should say that I and this government are very pleased with the direction we've gone.

I should say that in the fall of 1984 my former colleague introduced a 30-month labour market strategy, and it's one of the few portfolios that has multiyear budgeting. I would like to say that I will be approaching my colleagues later in the fall with a new labour market strategy. It, too, will deal with a multiyear program so we can be responsive to the needs in job creation and job retention. We have to address these matters over longer terms, and it's certainly our view to encourage and develop an environment conducive to the creation of employment. Certainly I believe this government has done it, and I'd be pleased to show this House the success of those programs over the last two years.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Does the Assembly agree to allow this particular line of questioning to draw to its complete conclusion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the minister can't give us the numbers, can he tell the members of the Legislature what it has cost us per person for the job retraining programs we've funded? We asked the Minister of Social Services, and she gave us the numbers. We'd like to know what your department is doing.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I did not say that I couldn't provide her with that number or that information. As I recall, I said it is a matter for the Order Paper. If the member is willing to put the matter to the paper, I'd certainly be willing to consider responding.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, it's hard to know. Does the ministry have a monitoring system in place that tracks the length of employment secured, and at what rate of pay?

MR. ORMAN: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. In my department's estimates I talked about the average rate of pay for the Alberta wage subsidy program and the summer temporary employment program. I indicated that those programs have been successful. In an announcement I made in this House, I also indicated that this past summer we had the largest per capita job-creation program in the country.

I should say that the best-laid plans of mice and men are not always what they seem to be. We anticipated in the area of 1,500 new jobs this summer for students in our enrichment of STEP and Alberta wage subsidy. It has gone well over 2,000. We've been very pleased with the programs we've had for job creation. Whether the member is appreciative or not, I'm sure the people who got jobs under that enrichment program are.

MRS. HEWES: The employment situation simply doesn't bear out what we're hearing.

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. Perhaps this question can be answered: will the minister tell the Assembly what types of diversified jobs have been created in the past two years?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would say that we have some 15 various job programs in the department that are geared to training and retraining. They have been very successful. I should say in response to the hon. member that this department is an extension of economic policy; it's not an extension of social policy. We don't create jobs in the main. We train people, retrain people, and prepare them for the change in the economy of this province.

We recognize that for the future of this province to be healthy, we will not be able to rely solely on agriculture and energy, because we have low world prices. Mr. Speaker, there's not enough money in the country to retain all the jobs that would be lost through protracted low grain and energy prices. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade may like to share with the member the direction we're going on diversification. Certainly my department is in step with the diversified economy in training and retraining the work force.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker. I'd be delighted to describe to members of the House the initiatives of the government with respect to diversification. Earlier today in Public Accounts I had an opportunity to describe the process that began in 1971.

If I may. I'd like to run through some of the programs that we've developed to create an environment ...

MR. TAYLOR: We want the results, not the programs.

MR. SHABEN: If the hon. member would listen, it might be helpful. He would learn something. The responsibility of the Department of Economic Development and Trade is to support industry and small business and act as a catalyst

and to assist by way of providing the kinds of building blocks that create an environment for the creation of job activities. I will give some examples for the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, the Chair appreciates the willingness to share the information with the House, but picking up on a comment made by the minister, perhaps all members of the Assembly will examine their minutes of Public Accounts as of this date.

A final supplementary on this issue, the Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Manpower. Does he have any evidence that provincial government departments are eliminating jobs and replacing them with STEP and PEP positions at lower wage rates?

MR. ORMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any information. As a matter of fact, the success of the PEP and STEP programs, particularly the STEP program in the summer, allows the government to bring in students, particularly students in secondary education, and gives them the opportunity to come in and learn how government works.

It is particularly helpful to have those students working for the government during the summer when there is an influx of summer holidays within the civil service. I would say that just because we are bringing in summer temporary employment students does not lead me to believe that we're laying people off and bringing in summer students.

MR. SPEAKER: There are at least three issues to be dealt with with respect to coming to the end of question period. The first one is that the Solicitor General wishes to give additional information from a previous question period as raised by the Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Police Information Systems (continued)

MR. ROSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you indicated, on Monday the Member for Edmonton Strathcona asked a series of questions which I undertook to investigate and report back to the Assembly. First of all, I might indicate that upon checking out the annual reports the hon. member referred to, I found that perhaps the staff of that day were a little too optimistic in their indication as to when the full information contained in the motor vehicle division computer was accessible to the Canadian Police Information Centre computer.

I might indicate that in the past I have also been misinterpreting a little bit of information. Perhaps I could just clarify the record by setting out the steps as to when and what information was available from our computer to the Police Information Centre computer. Perish the thought that I would intentionally mislead the House or the Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

The Canadian Police Information Centre computer has been in existence for some time, as I indicated, first of all with just fingerprintable offences but then with the addition of many other files, some relating to stolen vehicles and some to total criminal records. In fact, in 1978 the computer could interface with the motor vehicle division computer. At that time it could only access information relating to vehicle registrations, such as instances of whether a particular driver was in fact the registered owner. In 1980 that interface was upgraded so it could check with our computer as to

whether the driver had a valid operator's licence. In 1981 it then was upgraded such that it could obtain information relating to the entire driving record of that particular driver. That information is then interfaced from the motor vehicle division computer to the Police Information Centre computer and comes out in a specific form used by all police forces. In short, there is direct interface, and it was interfaced in 1981, not at present as I was indicating.

The initiative at present is the suspended driver apprehension program, where our computer will receive any traffic offence that has occurred from court files. If the person is found to be driving while suspended, after that incident we can then have the police go out and apprehend that suspended driver.

I apologize for any misinformation.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm obliged to the Solicitor General for unearthing the information. Just to be clear, though, Mr. Speaker, is he saying that the annual report in 1978-79 that said further interfacing with the Canadian Police Information Centre was undertaken by adding demerit point suspensions to the previously available information was or was not accurate?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, as indicated, I think it was enthusiasm or overoptimism of the staff on that day. That in fact did not happen. The demeritable points were accessible by the Canadian Police Information Centre computer in 1981.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. A point of order, Calgary Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, earlier in the afternoon I raised a question with respect to privacy legislation which was ruled out of order. With due respect, the question by the hon. Member for Little Bow related to the social insurance number, which clearly raised a question of privacy in the use of those numbers as a method of invasion of privacy. In my view, this raised the issue of privacy as a whole. Privacy legislation is clearly one of the methodologies whereby a community controls the abuse of information, whether through social insurance numbers or otherwise. So I fail to see the reason the question was ruled out of order.

I must say that I make an attempt to be responsible and nonstentorian in my approach, and this member finds that discouraging in light of the absence of precedent insofar as other lines of questioning are concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member care to cite *Standing Orders* or a reference from *Beauchesne* with respect to this particular point of order?

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, this is not a matter of a rule per se; it's a question of whether or not this is a supplementary which follows on topic. That is a matter of judgment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. At the time the Chair was following the line of questioning, the Chair had some difficulty with it. The Blues may well indicate that the line of questioning as developed by the leader of the Representative Party was with respect to social insurance numbers. At no time was the matter of confidentiality, as raised by yourself, brought up. Indeed, one might be allowed to stretch an inference from the original line of questioning,

but in the opinion of the Chair, it was too much of a stretch. Therefore, the Chair still regards as appropriate action by the Chair at that time.

Nevertheless, the Chair would ask hon. members to follow along for a moment or two, and perhaps members might care to refer to *Standing Orders* and to *Beauchesne*. A difficulty develops at this stage in a sitting with regard to the number of times questions are being raised, the same topic being raised very frequently. The Chair believes that an exceeding amount of latitude has been given.

One of the issues which comes to mind, the matter of the PGRT, is of course no surprise to hon. members. The Chair respectfully draws to the attention of all members of the House that this matter was raised on Monday, July 7, by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon; Friday, July 18, by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon; Tuesday, August 12, by the Member for Calgary North Hill; Friday, August 15, by the Member for Edmonton Highlands; the same day, by the Member for Calgary Buffalo; Monday, August 18, by the Member for Edmonton Highlands; Tuesday, August 19, by the Member for Edmonton Norwood, the Leader of the Official Opposition. With respect to this day the matter was raised on at least two formal occasions and also referred to in at least one additional supplementary.

Again, the Chair would refer hon. members to *Beauchesne*, citation 359(8): "A question that has previously been answered ought not to be asked again." The Chair realizes full well that a number of members feel that questions have not been answered, but the Chair then respectfully reminds hon. members to pull out their brand-new copies of *Beauchesne* and look at citation 363(1), which reads:

A Minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for his refusal, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed. A refusal to answer cannot be raised as a question of privilege, nor is it regular to comment upon such a refusal.

The Chair respectfully draws those items to the consideration of all members. The Chair also believes that given the diversity of this particular province, perhaps other questions might be developed from time to time, unless there is a sufficient degree of urgency and developments continue.

There is another item for consideration, and this refers to *Standing Orders*. Standing Order 23, which relates here, reads:

A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member: ...

(c) persists in needless repetition or raises matters which have been decided during the current session; ...

(f) debates any previous vote of the Assembly unless it is that member's intention to move that it be rescinded.

In that regard, hon. members, please take note of what occurred in this House on July 14 of this year. On that occasion the hon. Member for Calgary Forest Lawn sought unanimous consent, and the following motion was passed unanimously.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the [province] of Alberta to convey to the government of Canada its opinion that the petroleum and gas revenue tax ought to be completely removed as quickly as is possible.

The Chair has offered these various comments to all quarters of the Assembly to take into consideration with respect to future question periods.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, could I reply on the point of order, please? Thank you.

I recognize what the comments from the Speaker refer to; however, I'd like to point out first of all that with each day, particularly with consideration of the concern with respect to the PGRT, it is legitimately within the terms of both *Standing Orders* and *Beauchesne* to ask either the energy minister or the Premier if by a certain hour that day any new measures have been taken in that regard. I realize that what the Speaker is saying is that this is coming up again and again. I would point out that we are under an obligation to ensure that questions in question period are of an urgent nature and that sort of thing. It seems to me that in an economy like ours, the incidence of the PGRT coming to the floor during question period as one of say, a dozen on a given day is legitimate under those circumstances.

I also recognize that the Speaker was saying that the minister is under no obligation to answer the question. That is certainly true. There is no contest. In fact, on each occasion that the issue arises, the Premier or the Minister of Energy could choose to sit. I'm trying to be as thorough as the Speaker was in making his observations.

Citation 23(c) talks about persistence "in needless repetition or raises matters which have been decided during the current session." Mr. Speaker, that is a judgment call. If the Speaker rules out of order a question which for example asks the Premier about something he has no control over with respect to the PGRT, a further line of questioning ...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, bring to conclusion the point of order. Please do not engage in debate.

[The Member for Edmonton Highlands rose]

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry; at the moment the Speaker is still standing — in spite out of outfits today, yes. Your turn.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to make a careful, except that they were not prewritten, set of comments. I was acknowledging that if a line of questioning on a day is ruled out of order, that that may be the case. However, we maintain that there is merit to the issue of urgency with respect to the PGRT and believe that we are falling within the letter of the guidelines of the citations from both *Beauchesne* and *Standing Orders* and that although it may be raised three or four times a week, that doesn't necessarily mean that it's not legitimate to do so. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. With regard to some of the comments made in the discussion here, part of the difficulty is also that the matter is being raised two and three times in a day, and today is one of those occasions when that occurred.

The Chair also has some concern with respect to *Beauchesne* 119, with regard to the rulings of the Speaker. Perhaps the House leaders of the various parties would like to take that into consideration, and if any appropriate action needs to be taken, it can be done by a formal motion of the Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: Let's not get carried away here. We're going to lose control.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood like to stand and perhaps make the same comment to the House or perhaps be gracious enough to think of something else?

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. There was no ruling made. I thought we were having a discussion. There's no need to act like an autocrat here. We're trying to get along the same as you are. Legitimately, if you take everything that you're doing now, there would be no point in even having a question period. Our role in this opposition is to raise the pertinent questions with the government. Whether they want to answer them or not, I agree. But if we can't have that latitude to talk about something that is making national news day in and day out, to find out what the government is doing, then we're defeating the role of the opposition in this House.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, having been in the House since 1967 and watched a variety of Speakers, I have never seen a Speaker who has given more latitude or dealt more fairly with both sides of the House. I think the comments by the hon. Leader of the Opposition that you are losing control or to knock it off or that kind of thing are absolutely out of order and should be withdrawn. This House is very proud of its decorum and very proud of its Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, as usual the Premier wasn't listening. He only heard what he wanted to hear. I said the potential would be there if we followed this sort of thing. I would say yes, and let me say clearly that I think the Speaker has been fair in this House. I was not talking about what is going on. I think the Speaker is doing a good job in terms of fairness, and I've said that publicly, so the Premier should not jump to his feet and worry about it. My point was clearly that if we make decisions here that hamper the opposition, then all of us are suffering, including all Albertans and the government. That was the point I was making, and the Premier should wake up and know what I was saying before he jumps in.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, you just may want to respond to this, but it was you who called the leader's attention to what he said, not me. You did.

MR. MARTIN: Then why are you up?

MR. GETTY: Because, Mr. Speaker, he then tried to defend the position you had challenged him on, and I don't believe it's defensible at all. No matter how he tries to wiggle out of it, the honourable thing for him to do is to just say that it was wrong and sit down.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, for clarification on the point of order. At the conclusion of your remarks earlier I understood you referred us to section 119 and indicated that if there were precedents set by your rulings, those precedents should be examined by the various House leaders of the four parties that exist here, and under those conditions you are willing to have your rulings challenged or changed as long as it comes within the agreement of all of us in this Assembly. I think that's what you're saying to us.

Possibly in making that comment, the Leader of the Official Opposition felt that you were imposing and saying, "Unilaterally, that is my final decision and I can't change now." As 119 in our guideline of *Beauchesne* proceeds, it

indicates that once a decision is made by the Speaker, the Speaker doesn't have any appeal other than back to the House. I think that's the opening or the outlet you are giving us, Mr. Speaker, and I think that at this point we should take that direction from you and accept that. In terms of its imposing rules on us under this democratic process that can occur through 119, that certainly shouldn't happen.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, mine is more of a question. I didn't understand what in fact the ruling was, other than some comments which you had made to draw our attention to certain citations of *Beauchesne* and certain matters within our *Standing Orders*. If there is a ruling, is it that any further questioning related to the PGRT for the rest of this legislative session will be ruled out of order? If that was your ruling, sir, then I think you can understand the kind of reaction that we have felt to that sort of ruling. I as one member of this Legislative Assembly certainly didn't understand that to be your ruling, but simply thought you were making some comments on the procedure by which question period was going.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, if I may. I know that your decisions are not for debate, and I feel what has happened is what often happens in sports: the referee or the people taking part are getting rabbit ears. As far as I was concerned, you were outlining a set of rules, a set of possibilities, and warning us that we were skating close to it. In the vigour of debate we were maybe landing a few punches on the belt buckle or a little close, and you were telling us where the line was going to come. Certainly I took it that way.

I think maybe the Leader of the Opposition misunderstood. I don't think you were giving a ruling. Then to hear the Premier ask for apologies when I couldn't get one out of him a week or so ago does sound a little bit ironic. If we get down to the order of business now, realizing that you were giving us guidelines, and get down to debate and forget about it, I think we'd be a lot better off.

MR. SPEAKER: In drawing to the attention of the Assembly the great difficulty that is involved at this stage of a session, the comments made by the Chair were indeed along the lines of the first portion of the comments made by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. The Chair also pointed out the great amount of latitude which has been exercised.

With respect to a comment made by the Member for Edmonton Highlands, there has not truly been a definitive factor with respect to the questions raised on the PGRT as to what has developed in terms of this particular day. Maybe because the day has arrived, people mentally think this question is then in order for this day.

Nevertheless, the citations were read as general advice to the Assembly that the Chair has this great uncomfortableness about the number of questions which are brought up on a very repetitious basis and asks for the consideration of the Assembly with respect to the fact that while that is indeed an important issue, there are other issues which can be raised.

The Chair appreciates the comments made by all. The difficulty the Chair indeed has at the moment is that at one stage the Chair clearly heard the word "autocratic." The Chair would respectfully request that that word be withdrawn.

MR. MARTIN: Let me say that I said that — perhaps I did. [interjections] Let me finish before the backbenchers

jump up, Henny Penny. You'll get your chance. I will apologize, Mr. Speaker, if I said that. What I meant about an autocratic resolution is that if we start to get into that, it will not serve us all well. If I used that term, I apologize to the Speaker of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the committee come to order, please.

head: ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND
CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION
1986-87 ESTIMATES OF
PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are two votes on pages 11 and 12. Would the hon. minister of forestry care to make some comments to the committee before we go to the vote?

MR. SPARROW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The material in the estimates is fairly well explained. These programs have been carrying on for quite a number of years. Due to the long delay in question period, maybe we should cut short my remarks and save some time.

The grazing reserve program is coming to an end next year. In 1976 this House made the decision to use heritage funds for grazing reserve development; it was a major expansion in our province's ongoing grazing reserve program. This was a \$40 million commitment commencing in 1976-77, and to date about \$31.7 million has been expended. Since '76-77, 13 new grazing reserves have been developed, covering an area of some 250,000 acres. As we all know, each reserve is based on an integrated land use plan; that type of planning has been used elsewhere throughout the province, as we've discussed in our previous estimates. Twelve of the 13 reserves that have been developed are now in operation. The last one will be coming into operation as a Blackfoot reserve and recreation area which will provide recreational opportunities to the general public as well as grazing for local livestock producers. To date, Mr. Chairman, some 91,677 acres on these lands have been seeded to tame forage, and as of 1985 this program has created something like 78,000 animal unit months for grazing.

With reference to maintaining our forest program, the amount of \$745,000 will be expended this year, which will end the program. As discussed in previous estimates, in future years this program will be followed through by our new federal/provincial agreement where we're sharing the cost with the federal government.

With those comments, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to answer any questions that come about.

1 — Grazing Reserves Development

MR. CHAIRMAN: Comments, questions, and amendments to vote 1?

MR. JONSON: Just two questions. First of all, I note that in the west end of my constituency, the Drayton Valley

constituency, and further to the northwest there is a considerable amount of activity going on. I wonder if the minister could advise as to the occupancy rate — I'll use this term — of the grazing reserves being developed. This is a question quite often raised within the constituency when they're looking at the amount of money being devoted to this program, although they are certainly glad to see the development going ahead.

The second question, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it, there is a commitment or a ongoing effort to bring the cost of putting cattle and sheep onto these reserves more in line with what is being charged by private landowners for the same type of pasture. I wonder if the minister could bring us up to date on the rates being charged for grazing reserve use.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Minister, do you want to answer now? We have other speakers.

MR. SPARROW: Go ahead.

MR. McEACHERN: I have a number of questions. I guess my rookie stripe may be showing a little bit, because some of them would probably be obvious. I also have a couple of observations, so I will make those first.

We're glad to see in vote 1, grazing reserve development, that the developments are shifting to the north, in the gray-wooded areas. We have long stated in this party that that is an area that has some room for expansion in the agricultural industry. Also, of course, we're glad that the program has been cut back or curtailed in the more sensitive foothills regions, the Eastern Slopes, in the south and central part of Alberta. I think that is implicit in these numbers, and we appreciate that. I would think that the program in the north could probably use some input from local people. I don't see any provisions for that. I know you had that kind of public input in the central and southern regions of Alberta, and I'm wondering if the intention is to get local people's input to just where and how much you push into that northern region.

I also wondered about the idea that these grazing reserves could be used for recreational purposes and other departments getting involved. Does the minister mean that the recreational use would be for the private or commercial use of the holder of the lease? Or would it be for public use generally, for fishing and camping and that sort of thing, without charge or with normal charges? It's just a question. I don't find an answer in these documents as I look at them.

In subproject 1 — this is still in vote 1 — does the expenditure of \$264,300 that I'm looking at have any channels for seeking public input from the residents? That's just a more specific question about what I was saying in a general way a minute ago. In vote 2, which is the biggest vote, nearly \$5 million...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Would you restrict your comments to vote 1.

MR. McEACHERN: I am raising subproject 2 of vote 1. Sorry. When I said 2, I guess you thought I meant the next one.

I see that's up by some 52 percent, and I just have a couple of questions about that. Could the minister describe the types of land development and construction facilities? I've been looking in the annual statement, and I see that

it describes the development as bulldozing the bush and planting a crop. Does that take up all of the \$5 million or are there some camp facilities or other things that might be more costly? This is what we were wondering. What other facilities might there be besides that basic kind of thing? Is it related to other departments, and if so, how are the costs apportioned and that sort of thing? Another question we have in that regard is whether the leases are advertised like a public tender or how the renter applies for a lease. The recreational facility: are we talking about campsites there? If there are things beyond what I've just mentioned, just what sort of recreational facilities are we talking about and how are they being developed?

In subproject 3 that number is down quite a lot, but if you're winding up the project, I guess that's understandable. What departments have got involved in these special projects and what are they? What provisions are there for evaluating the environmental impacts of these projects?

Those are some of the questions that come to mind. Looking at the information here, those were things I was left wondering about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other comments, questions, or amendments? Mr. Minister.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Chairman, with reference to the first questions about the occupancy rate, in the last few years the occupancy rate has been increased in most reserves throughout the province. The one near Ponoka, Medicine Lake, that would be of interest to the Member for Ponoka-Rimbey was reduced last year and consequently is running at an operating deficit in comparison to the majority of the others throughout the province. The average of the 13 reserves under this vote built by heritage grazing reserve funds is 52 cents per animal unit month of a deficit. That's the amount of subsidization, if you want to call it that, that is taking place from the rates we charge. Unfortunately, because of the lower occupancy rate of animals in Medicine Lake, that one is at a rate of about \$6.17, so the occupancy of that has to be addressed in future years and should be increased. If you go back a year or two when we had the early winter, unfortunately many cattle got left on that one with two feet of snow. It was a catastrophe for some of the patrons in that area. Because of the overgrazing that took place and the bad summer, we've cut it back to let that reserve come forward, and of course your costs carry on.

The majority of other pastures are at about the break-even point or very close to it. A couple of reserves, that one and another one away up north at Fort Vermilion, have a higher rate, and those two bring our provincial average down to that 52 cents. If you can go back a few years, Mr. Chairman, we were talking about \$7 and \$8 as being the average of subsidization to these reserves throughout the province. I think we've cured our problem and now just have spot problems, with various climatic conditions being the biggest problem with our growing season. With our two years of drought and the early snowfall one year, it does shake up the system. We're trying to do our best in that area. Hopefully, our problems were solved in the Ponoka area.

With reference to further questions from the member from the opposition, the grazing reserve development program under this vote in the heritage funds was specifically to build 13 grazing reserves throughout the province. These grazing reserves are managed and run by the department

staff; they are not leases to private-sector ranchers. Any rancher or farmer in that area can bring his cattle in and drop them off on an allotment basis. We keep them until fall and then he picks them up. I think you were having some confusion with our leasing land on a grazing lease conversion policy or something else because the majority of your questions seemed to lead toward that. It doesn't have anything to do with private individuals leasing these lands.

In one of the reserves I described, the Blackfoot reserve just east of Edmonton, the major component will be for recreational use. To give you some examples, about 100 kilometres of trails are being developed for cross-country skiing, hiking, and that type of thing for the general public. There will be about 7,250 acres of land cleared for grazing during the summer, and 1,100 animal unit months of grazing for elk will take place on that reserve. It's different from the normal grazing reserve; because of its closeness to the city, the demand for recreation was high. On every other grazing reserve, though, they do have recreation. Hunting takes place every fall. Through our use-respect program we have posted the areas with designated routes, and the public is definitely welcome as long as they check with the grazing reserve manager. There are definite routes they can follow. These reserves are specifically run by the department.

Your questions about these being advertised. Every spring we advertise in every community to allow farmers to bring their cattle to these grazing reserves. A board of directors is set up by the participants, and they meet with our staff and our managers. They set the limits of how many cattle they can handle. They inspect the reserve as far as its quality and make recommendations annually for changes in policy. The campsites that you talked about tie into that too. They can come in in the fall; the public can do whatever that manager allows them to. He's on that site year-round and runs it as a major ranch for the participants.

The groups that were involved as far as integrated management planning. I don't know specifically which groups were on these 13 reserves, but normally the fish and game clubs, the Alberta Wilderness Association, and the ranching organization in that area, whether it's the Western Stock Growers' Association or Unifarm, would be involved in the types of planning we do, if they want to participate. That planning took place many years ago; we're just doing the development now, but other departments definitely have input. Environment and Fish and Wildlife have input to what areas are cleared and what areas are not, and it's definitely all done to a plan.

I think there was some confusion. I hope I've answered your questions, and if there are any others, Mr. Chairman, I'd be glad to answer them.

MR. McEACHERN: Just a couple of supplementaries. Thank you for your explanations. As I said, my rookie stripes were showing a little bit in some of those questions because I wasn't quite sure just what was going on. I think I now have a better understanding.

A question about the particular grazing reserve that you said was costing the most money and had been the most trouble: would that be an example of having pushed the concept of grazing too far in a region that maybe wasn't really suited to it?

I had one other question: when a rancher or a farmer brings his cattle to turn them loose in the grazing reserve, is there a per head charge for that or not?

MR. SPARROW: Very definitely there is a per head charge on each of the reserves. We've tried to maintain that rate through the last several years and not increase it because we challenge the ranchers and participants to help us get their costs under control and reduce the input costs. Definitely there is a charge; there are three different charges. Southern Alberta and the irrigation districts are higher, central Alberta is in the middle, and northern Alberta has a little lower charge.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can you give an approximate number?

MR. SPARROW: It's approximately \$8 per animal unit month throughout the province. That is, for every animal you have on the reserve, each month would be \$8. Normally that animal would be on the reserve four to five months.

As far as the one in the Ponoka area that I mentioned, the costs there are primarily due to our cutting back, letting that reserve mature and get a better grass cover prior to putting more animals on it. We may have overgrazed it too early, not having let the grass get well caught, and a quick, early snowfall didn't help. That caused the problem in that area, and I think in the years to come that will be under control and definitely brought back into line.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question on vote 1?

Agreed to:

Total Vote 1 - Grazing Reserves

Development \$5,291,000

2 — Maintaining our Forests

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2 on page 12. Are you ready for the question? The Member for Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: I have a few questions. First, we were wondering why there was such a drastic cut, but if I heard the minister right, I believe you said you were winding down this program, so we'll move on to one or two other questions.

In terms of reforestation, is the moratorium on the use of herbicide spraying to kill competing hardwood still in effect, or is some of the spraying still going on? Is the minister investigating the research of Michael Conway-Brown in B.C. on mechanical or manual methods of hardwood competitors for the replant of spruce and pine? I'm talking here about the thinning of the trees section, supposedly cutting out some of the types of trees that you don't want. I guess that's two slightly different problems, but we're talking here about trying to get forests that are marketable, and those two questions are based on that. The other one on the thinning process: is it done by chemical killing or by manual cutting?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions to the minister? Mr. Minister.

MR. SPARROW: With reference to manual methods versus spraying, this specific amount refers primarily to that manual removal or thinning of the trees that has taken place through the stand-improvement basis.

With reference to herbicide spraying, we've had an ongoing project throughout the province, partly under this program and partly under our regular budget, with 10-

hectare areas using herbicides to test their long-term effective use and the scientific benefits that are accumulating from it. The majority of any spraying in the past has been done under that process, trying to accumulate the scientific knowledge that's needed before we expand massively. I think what you're referring to is that the industry has been asking for the right to use aerial spraying, and the majority of any spraying has been done manually from the ground.

As you know, last spring I turned down an application for aerial spraying in the Hinton area until we had more knowledge on how it is to be handled. If we do any spraying, the policy has always been to work with the community and advertise to make sure that the concerns of the public in that area are taken into consideration. It's something we will all have to address in the future and be very careful about, because there are definite advantages to having it. It's the type of spray and method of spraying that really cause most people concern. In comparison to other provinces, we do very little spraying. The majority, as I said earlier, is strictly to try and get the scientific data we need on test plots spread throughout the province. The majority of it has all been done by our government personnel.

MR. McEACHERN: A couple of supplementary questions. In terms of reforestation, if an area has been burned off, is it the policy of the government to go in and try to reforest that fairly quickly, or do you give it some time to see if it's going to regenerate itself, as they sometimes will quite quickly? I gather the problem with that — or at least it's been a problem in the past; maybe government policy will change on that now in view of another development.

The first replacement in a burnt-out area is the softwoods like poplar and willows and that sort of thing. In the past they've not been looked on as being very useful, although with that new mill for using softwoods the Premier was talking about during the election, that may change. Will that likely change, or is it the idea of the government to move in fairly quickly and put in the spruce and pine which are much better for lumber?

Another question: now that we're on this thing of reforesting, are we seeing to it that companies that cut forests or other things that destroy forests — are companies being made to get involved in replacing and reforestation as a result of their cutting?

MR. SPARROW: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The current practice for all contractors or lumber companies using our forests is to have them do the reforestation in the areas where they are harvesting the trees. This program primarily was used and set up back in '79, I think. Basically, the purpose was to provide for the replanting of trees in fire-burnt areas and industrial clearings and the expansion of recreational uses in those areas.

Your question with reference to how soon we move in. Normally they leave the burnt area for two to three years prior to moving in, giving an opportunity to survey what is coming back naturally before they go into reforestation. There is a lot more work that can be done in old burnt-out areas, but a fair amount of work has been done. To give you some examples, this program has created some 120,000 acres of new forests of pine and spruce, and about 4,500 acres of over-dense forest have been thinned; that's the volumes of land we're working with. As I said earlier, this will be the last year under this vote in the heritage funds, and in future years this will be a normal budgetary

item. We have a 50/50 sharing of these types of costs with the federal government.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 2 - Maintaining our Forests \$745,000

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

[Motion carried]

Recreation and Parks

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are three votes for this department, on page 17.

1 — Kananaskis Country Recreation Development

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you care to make any comments?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few brief comments and follow the precedent established by the previous speaker in regard to time. It should be noted by all members of the Assembly that the Recreation and Parks Department works very closely in association and co-operation with three other departments, particularly relating to vote 1 under Kananaskis Country recreation development. The amount to be voted, of course, is \$11,872,000.

While a significant portion of the work has been completed, the total for '86-87 is down some \$7,554,000. As I indicated, it should be noted that there are three departments. With Public Works, Supply and Services, the major portion of subproject 2 entails some \$9 million for facilities in the development of the alpine village in the Ribbon Creek area. Under vote 4 for \$1,542,000, the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife is responsible for the development of the campgrounds and trail systems as well as the supporting facilities. The third department is under subproject 5: the regional roads program under Transportation and Utilities, for some \$383,000. It's ironic that of all six budgetary items under the subprojects, the second-lowest of the expenditures is the only one directly related to the Department of Recreation and Parks, and that is some \$254,450 for campgrounds, day use facilities, and trails. Significantly, though, Mr. Chairman, it's to be noted that that's down somewhat from the \$1,642,000 that was allocated in the previous '85-86 estimates.

In working closely with the three departments, the responsibility is of course to bring the facilities on stream so they will be, as I maintain, a legacy for all Albertans for future use, and we're well pleased with them. To date, I'd encourage all members of the Assembly to try and get out and see them. We're going to try and set up an MLA visitation once we're out of session, and I'd invite all members to try and participate in that. As I said earlier, I'm pleased with what's happening to date and would welcome any questions that members might have.

I would like to point out, Mr. Chairman, that one of the keynotes of the overall program, while it's conducted specifically through Public Works, Supply and Services, is that the major amount of work evolves through construction contracts with the private sector. I think that's an important facet of it and one that should be remembered, because it puts the dollars back into the private sector right where we'd like to see them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Comments, questions, amendments?

MR. WEISS: If any other members of those three departments I've mentioned wish to supplement that, I would welcome their opportunity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those are the ministers referred to in the implementation of vote 1, I take it. The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, as I go through each provincial department of this particular capital projects division, I'm trying to ask the minister responsible to explain the relationship between this vote and the moneys being spent in this area with other spending that's going on in their department in that same area. I would like some clarification or perhaps briefing from the minister, if he would, about how this relates to vote 5 under his Recreation and Parks department, which has to do with Kananaskis Country management. Included in that particular vote 5 was \$1.2 million in capital projects. I'd like to have a handle on how this particular spending relates to the capital spending in his department. If the other ministers, Fish and Wildlife and Transportation and Utilities, could also provide the same indication, I'd appreciate that, because what I'm finding confusing is that there's so much money being spent in so many different budgets. I'm finding it very difficult to be able to collate all that information into some consolidated whole to get an understanding or grasp of exactly how much money is being spent in Kananaskis Country.

Also, this spending is going on over a series of years. Vote 1 indicates that as of March 31, 1985, \$200 million has been spent on Kananaskis Country recreational development. In addition, almost \$12 million is being asked for in vote 1. Will this come to an end in fiscal year 1986-87? Will it come to an end in the 1987-88 fiscal year, or is this a project for which there will always be one more project or new development to be funded?

I guess what I'm looking for is some kind of consolidated budget to be provided by this particular minister, if it can be, as to the spending from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund capital projects division and its relation to all the other spending being done by government in Kananaskis Country. That would be a big help.

In looking at this funding from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, my question is whether this is being seen as an investment in a business sense and not an investment in a social sense. I think the minister said it was an investment for all Albertans to the extent that it enhances their recreation opportunities and their appreciation of the wilderness, the Rocky Mountains, or that area of the province. To that extent it provides some social good for the people of this province, and in that sense it's an investment. But is it being viewed to any extent as a business investment, in the sense that a certain rate of return of some kind is being realized? Is there some kind of economic study that has been looked at in terms of the return to the provincial economy? Specifically in terms of a return to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, is there any particular target being set for the money that might accrue to the General Revenue Fund or to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund from these investments?

In subproject 2, reference ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, I wonder if the Chair could interrupt. Are you asking the Minister of Recreation

and Parks to have with him the following ministers in answering these questions: Tourism; Forestry, Lands and Wildlife; Transportation and Utilities; and Public Works, Supply and Services? If you are, perhaps the minister could clearly understand. If you are, perhaps you could formally ask him and give the minister an opportunity to notify those people, if he wishes.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Your point is well taken, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Subproject 2, the infrastructure for an alpine village, is being carried out by the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services, so if not to that minister, then to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. Could we have a total for that subproject provided to the Assembly, please?

The bottom of page 17 has a figure of \$11,872,000 which includes all the subprojects for this year, and that's related to all of the spending in a global sense up to March 31, 1985, provided on page 18. However, there is no total actual expenditure provided for any of these subprojects. In particular, I am identifying item 2, although I'd be equally interested if the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife could provide us with that information for subproject 4 and if the Minister of Transportation and Utilities could provide us with that same information for subproject 5.

In looking at subproject 2, I don't know where, if it's in this budget, one would find any kind of spending for the Mount Allan ski area. It refers to an alpine village near Ribbon Creek; Mount Allan is right there. Does this project relate to any of the spending going on on Mount Allan for the 1988 Winter Olympics, or is that again something completely separate from what's in this particular budget? Again, I'm finding a consolidated budget hard to piece together from all this different information, and by the same token, it's hard to find out how Kananaskis Country's various activities and responsibilities are being seconded out to other departments.

I come down to item 6 for fish and wildlife enhancement. I guess this would be to the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. My question is whether this project is related to the bighorn sheep herd we've been hearing so much about that has a crucial habitat on Mount Allan.

With those questions, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my remarks. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks is the minister before this committee. If there are any questions for other ministers, please put them to the Minister of Recreation and Parks and he will then refer them. Hon. minister.

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and through you to the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View. I would not try and respond on behalf of any other ministers of other departments. I'm sure they would be more than prepared to and would welcome the suggestion put forth by the Chair that the member would redirect those.

There are a couple of points that perhaps I could clarify. I believe the member is very fair in asking the questions and also in his concern about perhaps not fully understanding the relationship within the departments. As I've indicated in my opening remarks, there is a close and direct relationship in co-operation with the other departments, and that's so more in the role of the particular projects as outlined. While the other departments would be responsible

perhaps for the initial development, we then become the custodians or caretakers responsible for the ongoing direction of those facilities and for the use they then provide for the taxpayers, the Alberta citizens, the tourists, or whoever they may be.

As indicated by the hon. member in making reference to general revenue and the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, these specific funds or dollars allocated come from within the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, from the capital projects division, and that's what we're asking to vote on here today. If he were to refer back — we're not in that particular vote or discussion, but he made reference to vote 5 under the Recreation and Parks summary by subprogram with regard to Kananaskis Country management — he would find that those items he referred to specifically were under that category, and they are dealt with on an individual basis. I think it would be unfair to take the time of the Assembly or other hon. members to go into those in detail. That's not the vote that we're here to discuss. But I would welcome outside the House or at any other opportunity going over those specific items individually, item by item, with the hon. member, because he specifically relates to a dollar amount or a particular item and says: will it come to an end, or what is being done?

Specifically, if you were to look at item 2, it does say for the infrastructure for an alpine village. Yes, that's what it refers to, and I'm sure the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services will respond in more detail. The particular infrastructure is to that specific project. No, it doesn't cover Mount Allan. Those particular items were covered within our department's budget where they were to date, and previously any other items would have been covered in the capital projects division prior to this date. As the member is well aware, the majority of those projects in some cases were under private development.

When he says, "Will it come to an end?" — I believe that's the member's quote, Mr. Chairman — yes, I guess we're all hopeful that there is an end to everything. Unfortunately, there is not an end to the two things that we try to avoid; those, of course, are taxation and death. They will come some way or another. We're trying to develop the facilities to bring them into fruition and to see them completed for the events that we're looking forward to, of course, in end use, not just the Calgary Olympics but for ongoing years. In particular, those projects will see completion just as it's noted, as I've indicated under item 3, where we're down to some \$200,000 from \$1.6 million in the year previously. So the amounts have decreased.

If there are to be other projects coming on stream for development, of course they will then be plugged in and we'd be voting on them on an individual basis. But as far as that particular project, that should see it come to a conclusion, and there wouldn't be a request for further funding specifically for that facility or that development.

The investment that the hon. member refers to, Mr. Chairman — I appreciate his views. When he refers to it being a business investment, I too believe it is a business investment. Will there be funds accruing back through to the fund? Of course, if there were to be some realized, funds would then be going back into general revenue. Part of the overall conditions of agreement in some of those particular areas is that those will be sold in a five-year period at then market value. Yes, I'm optimistic and hopeful that we'll see a recovery or recapturing of some of the initial investment that was made. I applaud the government's decision to make those initial investments and to proceed

with them when they did, as far as the staging and the overall development. Had they not, I still don't believe we would've actually seen them in place today and finished on time and on schedule, as is the wish of all members, I'm sure, for the Calgary Olympics.

The comments in more specific detail, if they were to so desire, as I said, would be coming from the other departments. If there are any other further comments from members, I would try to respond as well, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PIQUETTE: To the Minister of Recreation and Parks. I'm not sure if I understood you correctly. Did you indicate that next year this amount to be voted will not be voted for the Kananaskis Country recreation development but will be available to, say, other Recreation and Parks developments elsewhere, hopefully in northern Alberta? I'm just wondering when this whole total project is going to be finalized so that we can start addressing some of the needs in northern Alberta. That was the main question I wanted to ask, whether this was clearly understood or whether we're going with an ongoing kind of project in southern Alberta. I think that until this time this money coming out of the heritage fund has not been evenly distributed throughout Alberta. I think it's time that northern Alberta got its fair share out of the heritage fund.

A comment that I would like to make as well is that last fall I did have the opportunity of visiting Kananaskis Country and the park development. I would have to agree that it's a very beautiful, well laid out plan. In the long term I think it should serve very well the tourism industry in southern Alberta.

There's no doubt that when you start looking at all the various types of spending, there has been perhaps some waste in some departments, especially in the fish and wildlife enhancement area. I was talking with some of the forestry people out there about replantation of some animals like fish into the streams. I guess some of those experiments haven't really turned out the way they should have because of the fact that they were actually eating a lot of the fish stock that this enhancement program is trying to protect. Hopefully some of those mistakes — I should have said that the river otter is the one that was planted there and actually put in the wrong area.

I would like to ask the minister whether there is an ongoing study about the impact of a lot of these animals or the big game put into the area of the Kananaskis, whether adequate studies have been made prior to the whole enhancement program beginning. This year \$383,000 — perhaps the minister could be more specific in terms of what else is going to be done this year. I know there has been a lot of trapping in the northern part of Alberta for transplanting some of these animals down to southern Alberta into the park.

I guess those are the two main questions I have for the minister. Thank you.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I find it difficult to respond directly. Perhaps I could, rather than debate the issue — because specifically we are addressing the votes to the Kananaskis Country recreation development. I'm sure other hon. members would like the opportunity sometime to have had the debate if we were to talk about funding with regards to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. I'm sure there are many urban parks and centres, interpretive centres, and others that have been developed with the funds. So I don't think it's a question of whether funds are going north or

south. I think we're here as Albertans. It's my specific function and role as the minister to try to represent all Albertans. As a northerner I certainly share the views and concerns of the member and always will be speaking out loudly and clearly, of course, as I've said in my estimates as well, to see the development of a northern project. But I'm not here to debate or discuss that at this point. I don't want the hon. member to feel that I'm trying to minimize it or not discuss it. It's just that that isn't specifically within the vote at this time. But I'm certainly going to be looking for the hon. member's support when we come back with it, and I'm sure I will have it at that time.

His specific question was: when will it be finalized? Mr. Chairman, through to all hon. members of the Assembly, I'm of the belief, opinion, and hope that it would be your desire as well as all hon. members' that I don't think we'll ever see it finalized. I stop when I say that, because the word "finalized" means "Stop; it's over." I don't want to see it over. I want to see it going onwards and upwards, being creative, showing some initiative and boldness, developing as user needs and recreation needs change in ongoing development phases. That's when I refer to the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View, to say specifically that those projects are here that we're voting on today but we may have to come back individually for others.

When I say "others" to all hon. members, I really don't know specifically what they are. They might be to develop another phase of it or another facet of it. Who knows when we talk about recreation use that we would have expanded to some of the fields and needs that we have today. To think that we have hot tubs in a beautiful recreation area today; that isn't for everybody. Some wish to pay for that and have that type of service. Others want the wilderness or the hiking trails for the horses and others. Those are the kinds of things, Mr. Chairman, that I hope we wouldn't specifically say were finalized, because we'd want to go on to expand. On the other hand, I would then want to say we would wish to expand if there were to be another type of northern development, that we wouldn't say, "You build it, you put it in place, and you walk away." We have to be able to be creative, to keep in mind the future tourism potential and the other recreation needs that would be part of it. So if it were developing other fishing needs or recreation, I would hope we'd be able to do that. Please, I would like to emphasize that it would be ongoing, not a final program.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure this is the appropriate time to be asking the question. I'm going to pose it; perhaps you can direct me. It's regarding Capital City Park in the city of Edmonton.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're out of order, hon. member. We'll come to that, I believe.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Chairman, I would point out to the minister that when my colleague beside me was asking about finalizing it, of course what he meant was a major sort of stopping of the capital expenditures that have been going on for that very expensive park over a number of years and hoping that some money would perhaps be freed in another year for northern development, which I have some sympathy for. It is the expensive nature of the project that I wanted to address myself to. I think the Kananaskis park symbolized for the people of Alberta the attitude that has grown in this government over a number of years: that

it was okay to spend money in a big way because we were Albertans and we had lots of oil money and we could afford expensive things. The government has fallen into that sort of pattern, and they did so with Kananaskis in a major way.

As I door-knocked, the people, particularly people on welfare or social assistance or unemployment, really resented the dollars that went into that park. I personally look forward to going down and seeing how nice it is, because obviously a lot of taxpayers' dollars were spent on it and one should know what we've bought with those taxpayers' dollars. But I cannot say that it gives me great joy to think in terms of building a very luxurious park for the benefit of people who can afford it and international jet-setters who come flying in to use it when many of the people in Alberta are lining up at food banks and will never get to that park. It really does bother me that taxpayers' dollars get used in that way.

I can't see from what I've read or heard that there is much intention that the park will ever really pay for itself in terms of a tourist attraction. It is probably going to be a perpetual subsidy to people who are already quite wealthy and can already afford to pay for their own recreation. That really worries me. We've had five years of recession in this province, and we should now be thinking in terms of tightening our belts in a number of ways and on a number of projects. I think Kananaskis has symbolized that this government has not done that.

I suggest very seriously that you start looking at other areas in just ordinary day-to-day government things. What kind of money did we spend to host the Premiers' Conference? Those kinds of things become important symbols in a time of economic difficulty, which we are into now more than ever. Certainly it's been true for the last five years, and it seems to me that the government has been very slow to respond. We as MLAs in this province will not serve ourselves well if we don't take a look around and see what other people are doing with their little bit of money, where they're getting it from, how much they've got, and how we are spending the tax dollars of this province. It's with really mixed feelings that I look at these rather lavish, well-done kinds of things like the Walter C. Mackenzie hospital that we talked about yesterday, the Premier's banquet that we enjoyed so much the other day, and the Kananaskis golf course. I find myself feeling very ambivalent about how one deals with that. I think the answer is that we have to start cutting back from a Cadillac service sort of mentality to a compact sort of mentality. That is what I would suggest at this time.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate hearing from the hon. member, particularly when he talks about the pattern and the resentment about dollars having been spent when he called door to door. Yes, I had those concerns presented to me too. I'm sure other members have as well. The hon. member mentioned such words as "luxurious." He did mention about falling into — and I wish he had used one word about a trap, because I welcome the opportunity to expand on that.

I would like to say that, yes, there were some expenditures made, and I'm very pleased that my predecessor made what I call some wise decisions, and I will refer to them. I wasn't going to, because specifically I don't wish to be debating an item, but I think it should be brought out to clarify that particular point the hon. member has raised with regard to expenditure and dollars wasted. This might

be an opportunity to clear up any misunderstanding with regard to such items as the luxurious washrooms that were referred to in the past, the white sand, the monument that was built.

Boy, I look to my right and thank goodness that my predecessor stood firm on the ground and not in the sand trap and put those expenditures into being. I say that sincerely to all hon. members, because having had the opportunity recently to be there, I saw that those were good, sound decisions that cost you and me — and I say "you and me" because you and I are taxpayers — as well as the Alberta taxpayers but saved us money in the long run because those facilities are still in use and will be for many, many years. We haven't had to go out and replace the sand as they normally would have had to because of the winds in the area and the other factors pertaining to it. The golf course is well accepted worldwide. It is a first-class facility, still at the cheapest rates for a course of that nature in Alberta if not Canada. So it isn't expensive for those that use — I forget the exact word that was used about those that can afford it. It's used by many, many Albertans — some 2.4 million users last year, and it is expected some 3 million people will use the facility this year. It certainly has worldwide use, because it's not just all Albertans, and in particular it's not those with dollars.

The hiking trails, the nature trails, the outdoor areas are the areas that are used the most. The day users alone that go to the area are unbelievable. I encourage the hon. member to make that trip and see, and I'm not trying to sell him, Mr. Chairman. I'm trying to encourage him, because I believe in it now more than I ever have, to see what some of these things have done as far as overall investment.

As I mentioned before, we're going to be officially opening some 40 new units to expand the William Watson Lodge and double its capacity very shortly. It's just unbelievable what it is doing. When you think of the rates at under \$5 a day, I don't call that luxurious, exorbitant, or overcharging. I think they are good, sound decisions. I'm glad he and I and other members of this Assembly, ladies and gentlemen, are proud to have been part of those decision-making processes, and I'm glad they are in place for the future.

The jobs the overall park creates, I think, are an ongoing side benefit that one misses — the employment opportunities it provided not only during the construction phase but in the ongoing daily use with regard to the facility. The private sector is doing a great job of it there.

The golf course received nothing but compliments. I don't receive many uncomplimentary letters, but I surely receive a lot of nice ones, and that's a complete reversal of the normal trends of what people do in society. They generally don't take the time, Mr. Chairman, to write us and say how well things are going; they write to tell us how badly things are going or how badly we do things. In this particular case the reverse is true, and I'm pleased to say that, because it's certainly highly regarded. Hopefully we'll see the expansion that we talk about to become a worldwide acclaimed facility for future tournaments and other uses.

I can't help but pick up on the hon. member's remark about costs with relation to things like the Premiers' Conference, hosting, and things that. Please keep in mind that we are Canadians. I said earlier that we are Albertans; let's expand that a little. We are Canadians. But we also must remember that other provinces in previous instances would

have reciprocated; they would have in turn hosted as we did. This is part of reciprocal arrangements that we, too, would be doing. I don't think any one of us would pick those types of instances to ask why we are going to a specific ministers' conference and spending their dollars. It would be part of a hosting arrangement, similar to when I had the opportunity and privilege of attending and being hosted by the government of China. So I mention that and, overall dollarwise, would once again like to emphasize as we talk about the costs and the dollar level that the estimates have gone down from some \$19 million to \$11 million, which was \$7,554,000. I think they're good dollars well spent, and I look forward to visiting with all members. I'm not being defensive at all, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member. I hope it's accepted that way, because I'm really pleased and would like the opportunity to show him personally some of the good decisions that were made.

He in turn in building his own house, for example, might decide that he's going to build a \$40,000 home. If he's looking for a three-, four-, or five-year home, a short-term life span out of it, I'm sure that's what it would entail. But if he's going to say, "I want to live in that home for 20 years, and I want a 20-year mortgage," he's perhaps going to have to double that investment in some cases. Mr. Chairman, that was the decision that faced my predecessor. I'm pleased that he made those decisions based on sound management with the time that was given to him as well.

I'm not saying we didn't make mistakes, because I'm sure some were made. That's what we will try and correct. I accept what the hon. member says in using caution, judgment, and not waste. That's good, fair criticism.

MR. PIQUETTE: I just want to clarify that when I said the word "finalize," what I meant was the fact that a lot of money has already been spent over the last number of years, Mr. Minister. In terms of the whole aspect of now aiming to the Olympic Games, which are coming in 1988, the question is very appropriate in the sense that there has to be a time when Kananaskis Country is put on the back burner for a few years so that other needed development coming out of the heritage fund can be spent to diversify our tourism throughout Alberta. I think we've been putting a lot of money in one basket right now, and the heritage fund is really something for all Albertans.

When we as legislators start looking, we have to also spend that money on a more fair and equitable basis throughout the province. It's also very important that that point has to be raised. I hope that we're not going to be looking at third, fourth, and fifth phases as priority funding out of the heritage fund in the next few years when we should be addressing other needed areas for job creation, et cetera. I think that's something that's very important.

Northern Alberta very definitely is a very attractive area for tourism, but to a large extent it has not been developed to provide the theme parks, the various money that needs to be spent in terms of giving money to the tourist zones to do a job properly — I don't think we've done that well enough. The question I pose is one I would like the minister to answer: what year is the year that this part of the heritage fund will start being spent in other areas in the province as a priority? I'm not saying that we should forget about Kananaskis Country. We can put it on the back burner and set up 10-year projects or 10-year spending programs. But we definitely have limited funds in this province, and in terms of all Albertans there's got to be fairness in our

system of how that money is spent throughout the province of Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the minister responds, the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, with regard to the matter under discussion. If you are recommending that there be additions to this fund, inasmuch as the hon. member is on the select committee of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, that may well be the appropriate place to put the question. Hon. minister.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I'd welcome the opportunity to try and close, and I appreciate the hon. member's remarks. Certainly he has my undertaking to work towards the direction of that northern issue that we talk about so often. It's just that I wouldn't want to exclude any further development or any expansion that may or may not be necessary to have ongoing development within the Kananaskis region.

In particular, we have to remember, Mr. Chairman, that the Olympic facilities that are being developed encompassing the overall region or area are just part of it. Thank goodness that direction was given some time ago so that we were able to even attract the Olympics. So while some of the facilities are being developed in the overall region, they will then be utilized for Albertans for many, many years to come. But his point is well taken. I accept it.

I did want to mention too, Mr. Chairman, that the park has not been developed just for those that are able to get out and hike or horseback. One very important facet of it, to the hon. member that asked previously, is the William Watson Lodge, as I've indicated. I was remiss in not mentioning, of course, that that's developed for the seniors and handicapped, specifically a group of citizens that are not forgotten. Those facilities are just ideal, utilized year-round, and certainly well recognized.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

The golf course, of course, is one that does not just create an expense to hon. members; there's a great deal of revenue generated back through to Albertans. It's a very monetarily worthwhile project.

I'd like to close on those points, Mr. Chairman, and leave it at that. Thank you.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to follow up on a couple of comments that the minister made, first of all in regards to this question about whether spending is going to come to an end in Kananaskis Country. I appreciate his comment that as developments are proposed from time to time, a decision may be made to add those enhancements or new facilities, but there must be a master plan that has been approved for the Kananaskis park. This government wouldn't be spending all this money without one. So my question maybe would be better rephrased to ask: how close has the government come to concluding this master plan for Kananaskis Country? Are we 80 percent, 75 percent, 50 percent there, or are we pretty well finished with realizing the original concept of Kananaskis park?

In terms of the investment in a business sense of Kananaskis, the minister indicated that the projects will be sold after five years. Perhaps he could enumerate which ones those might be. In relation to that there are two questions I have. Would they be sold after a public tender process to the highest bidder? Is that the process that is envisioned? Secondly, would the money realized by such

sales be put back into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for spending in other areas of the park or in other areas of the province?

The minister in replying to previous questions also indicated some statistics. He made reference to 3 million people. Originally I thought it was in the context of the golf course. I can't see 3 million people using one golf course in one year, but perhaps the minister would just inform the Assembly how many people will use the golf course in this particular year. And what are those green fees? I know that he made reference to them being well within the present market for green fees throughout the province. Would he please just give us that information?

Thank you.

MR. WEISS: I don't have all the figures at my fingertips, but I certainly would be willing to try and respond within reason to the hon. member. I refer initially to his comments where he mentioned what I had said about the funding coming to an end and to add on and enhance with regards to it. In particular, the hon. member should be aware that there were public meetings held with regards to the overall development in the past. That was through co-ordination of all the various departments involved in the integrated resource management plan, people from all walks of life and potential users and developers. I will try and provide much of that material to the hon. member so that he may familiarize himself once again with some of the end plans.

As far as what may or may not happen, Mr. Chairman, I said earlier and I wish to emphasize to the hon. member and to all members of the Assembly that I certainly can't crystal ball anything to say what may or may not take place in the way of a future expansion, because those ideas might not even be thought of today. I wouldn't want to restrict or prohibit any kind of future development that might be great. I wouldn't refer to a water slide, for example, being great in Kananaskis, but five years ago I don't think any of us thought that water slides would be as prevalent as they are today throughout the areas or thought of the West Edmonton Mall as the development that it is today. So with that I would like to restrict my remarks on trying to hinder any future development. As far as dollars, yes, there is an end number that we will be coming back to as far as the overall development and I'll undertake to provide that, but it will be developed in phases.

As far as where the funds are to go back into after a sale of some of the facilities — for example, the ski lodge — I'm unable to answer that to the hon. member, and I'd look for guidance from the Chair, from any other hon. members, from the Provincial Treasurer or the Government House Leader. I'm not sure, Mr. Chairman, whether that goes back into general revenue. I'm assuming that it would. That's my personal assumption, without asking for any clarification at this point from the department or from the Provincial Treasurer.

By memory there are some 58,000 rounds of golf per year. I'm not a golfer, Mr. Chairman, so I can't actually determine that as far as the number of persons, but I understand it's significantly larger than most. If someone were to multiply by a factor of four, say, if that's an average number or whatever, he'd come up with a given number of golfers.

As far as rates, once again, not being a golfer I should pay more attention. When I was last there, I believe the rate was \$20 or \$22. If somebody wishes to holler out and

correct me on that, I would welcome the invitation from a golfer. I believe it's \$24 now.

AN HON. MEMBER: Twenty-two.

MR. WEISS: Twenty-two is right. I was sure it was raised from \$20 to \$22, and I appreciate the correction on that. I understand that's even lower than what courses are in Jasper and Banff, for example. So it's not prohibitive, it's not exclusive, and it certainly is there. I know many people from as far away as the community that I live in and represent, the city of Fort McMurray, that go golfing at Kananaskis. So we're not trying to prohibit anybody, and we certainly would be prepared to review the rates anytime as well. I hope that has answered that hon. member's question.

MR. PIQUETTE: One last supplementary question. You indicated there will be approximately 3 million visitors in the park this year. Does the government have any figure, in terms of what is the projected revenue, that goes along with the number of visitors that are coming so that we have an idea at least? Is the investment paying for itself? Can the minister reply to that question today or maybe later?

MR. WEISS: I welcome the opportunity to reply, because the majority of the Kananaskis is free. That goes back to the hon. member's questions earlier about expense. The majority of the use in the park is free to those who wish to use it. There are certain areas — there are some 22 campsites within the area — that vary depending on the amenities. Again, if you so desire or wish to have one with a hot tub, you would pay as high as \$15. Your rates may vary then from the \$3 to the \$6 to the \$9 depending on the type of services or amenities that you wish to have. If you're an outdoor person, you can pay as little as next to nothing. So I think that's a very important point that has been overlooked. The majority of the use, to drive into Kananaskis, to just sit for day use, to sit by a campfire or stream and put one's thoughts together and collect one's own ideas, is free.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: While the minister is taking questions under advisement and will get back, would he look into my previous question about some totals by subprojects to date as of March 31, 1985? I don't expect he necessarily has it sitting in front of him on his desk this afternoon, so if he would sort of undertake to get back to the Assembly on 1 to 6 and break down this \$196 million by those six subprojects — or if that \$196,627,000 includes other projects not included in these six, then that's fine. I'd be looking more for the totals of the subprojects that are listed on page 17, and if he would just, say, undertake to get that to me at a later date, I would be quite satisfied with that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WEISS: I'd be prepared to undertake that, but I'm wondering if the hon. member will accept that I believe the total to date under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the Kananaskis project is some \$221 million.

MR. PIQUETTE: I realize that the service of the Kananaskis park is free to visitors coming through, and that is one of the questions I was leading up to in terms of a return for our investment. I realize that we're trying to make it

affordable for all tourists and our Alberta tourists as well to attend, but in terms of looking at the tremendous cost, the amount of money we've invested in Kananaskis Country, I think the government would be perhaps advised to look in the future at how we can get that investment back in terms of taxpayers. I know that with the number of visitors coming to the park we generate income in terms of small business, et cetera, but in terms of the ongoing paying of this park, it's not an ordinary park.

It's as big as a lot of the national parks we have and in some ways probably even more luxurious than our national parks. All of them charge a fee to get into the park. I look at our situation with the deficit, et cetera, and I kind of wonder if the minister or the government is looking at a plan to eventually have at least a fee as you come into the park to help pay for the ongoing expansion, et cetera, of the facilities there. I can't see how we can invest that kind of money in one location and not treat it to some extent like the national parks, which are funded at least partially by visitors coming into the park. I know we do have some campsite fees, but when you start looking at the whole fish and wildlife enhancement program, the trails, and so on and so forth — by the way, we spent about three days in the park last fall. Am I off topic here?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, go on. You're okay.

MR. PIQUETTE: There is no doubt that I feel this is a very worthwhile type of park, and I'm prepared as a taxpayer to pay my fair share in terms of using the park. I would like to have his response to that, because I know there really is no entrance fee as you come into the park.

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, that's a difficult one to answer — difficult in that how does one ascertain what users pay? I'd mentioned in my expenditures that I hoped the Assembly would bear with me that we would never have to go to a full user-fee concept. It would be a very difficult one, and I would not want to be responsible for having to ask all Albertans to pay for that type of service.

There are some other benefits, though, that we receive. How do you get it back in other ways? Keep in the mind that the average tourist or Albertan, whoever it may be, when using a park or facility, whether it be on a day use or an extended weekend or for holidays, spends an average of \$50 to \$100 per person. Is that not putting revenue back into the general coffers in other ways, whether it directly goes to one business, many businesses, or the multiples of many businesses? That's to the general economy, so that's good business.

What we've done by having the fees at such an attractive rate — it's free to go into the park itself — is attract the people to start with. If we put up a gate at those nine different entrances and controlled them, then I'm sure the hon. member would come back and ask what we were doing putting up gates and restricting them and having to have somebody maintain them. We've just been told to cut down on the public sector, and now to turn around and employ 200 people to maintain it — I don't think it's good balance. I think there can be a balance in the use but still have the people use the facility. So I think it would detract, Mr. Chairman, if we were to go and take that park as an example and charge for it. Should we then not charge for every park?

I've also said in my estimates that it would be reviewed in monitoring the ongoing rates. So perhaps the hon. member will bear with me in that we will be reviewing it. Perhaps

I would have to come back and ask for his support for some fee increases to offset in other areas. I'm hoping in the particular review that Kananaskis will be one park that will be, if anything, void of having an entrance fee but would perhaps have some adjustment fees in other areas. It would be very hard to control due to the size of the park, the overall use of the park, and the overall cost to implement. I think it would be very costly in the long run and that that number of 3 million perhaps would deteriorate to a number that I don't wish to predict.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, before you call the vote on point 1, I previously asked a question on subproject 6 regarding whether any of that money is being provided to support or enhance the habitats of the alpine bighorn sheep on Mount Allan. I don't know whether that minister or the minister of forestry would be prepared to answer it.

Thank you.

MR. SPARROW: To be short and sweet, yes. That project under vote 6 has also been used to enhance habitat for elk and moose and other species too. Very definitely there is enhancement on Mount Allan itself for the sheep. I haven't got a detailed breakdown on which species, but definitely yes.

There was one other question you had asked with reference to item 4. Forestry has primarily been involved in trail construction. The amount on item 4 of [\$1,542,000] basically finishes up all the trails that were in the original plan, and I do not know if other trails have been asked for future years. To my knowledge this will finish the trail system that was designed.

With reference to the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, that's the first time I've ever heard of the problem he ran into. My staff haven't informed me, but if he'd give me some more information on it ... There's not a lot of transplanting of animals. The river otter was brought into the area, but we are not bringing in a lot of other types of species. Very definitely, though, over the years we've had fish enhancement programs on fish ponds and put-and-take ponds, and the stream enhancement programs have been very, very successful. Fish and game clubs throughout the province have been involved with us in many projects. There's still some encouragement to do more of it in that area of stream enhancement and also placement of more natural species. With the number of people travelling throughout the area, there is a very heavy demand on the sport of fishing, and in years to come we very definitely will have to look at enhancements in that area.

I think that has covered most of the questions that were brought to my attention, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I want to thank the minister for his answer. I would point out that he's supposed to answer from his seat, but on the other hand, he couldn't do that very well because the Member for Calgary Millican was occupying his seat. If there are no more questions, we will call the question.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 1 — Kananaskis Country

Recreation Development	\$11,872,000
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Total Vote 2 — Municipal Recreation Tourism Areas	\$4,000,000
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3 — Urban Parks

MR. EWASIUK: I was going to ask a question under vote 1; I was asked to defer it to this time. It's regarding the Capital City Park. While the cities of Edmonton and Calgary are not mentioned in this particular vote, I wonder if the minister might want to tell us if there are any plans for funding expansion for Capital City Park in Edmonton. I ask, and I'm lobbying for it, as a matter of fact, because I think the preservation of the way it is at the present time is good as well. It provides deer, ducks, pheasants, and a variety of rabbits and birds in the area. Because I live there, I kind of enjoy that. However, there are those that would like to see expansion of those parks. Are there any plans by the government and the minister to in fact expand the Capital City Park?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I can appreciate the member's question. It's not specifically in vote 3 under urban parks, because, of course, urban parks relates to the five communities of Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Lloydminster, and Grande Prairie. The capital projects, as it relates to the city of Edmonton — there is some funding in place to assist the city of Edmonton. We're working with them, and hopefully that will be in conclusion. But as far as the overall expansion, that will be within their own parameters, and as far as any further expansion of the program as far as dollars, that program has been completed successfully. But there is some funding in place, and we're working with the city of Edmonton to see that they will be obtaining that very shortly.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 3 - Urban Parks	\$4,256,000
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MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I move that the votes be reported as read under items 1, 2, and 3.

[Motion carried]

Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications

1 — Electronics Test Centre

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The amount to be voted is \$565,000, Mr. Minister.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I did deal with this centre during the estimates in general, and if there are specific questions, I'd be pleased to try to respond.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Chairman, we have a couple of questions on this particular proposal. In terms of the Electronics Test Centre, the implementation indicates that the amounts that we're being asked to approve here, some \$565,000, are "to complete the equipping of the centre." So I'd like the minister, if he could, to advise us: is this then the last payment that we're proposing to be asked for for the Electronics Test Centre? If not, can the minister advise what kind of ongoing commitments we may be looking at in future years? We had \$1.3 million last year and now it's \$565,000. Is this the last payment, and if not, what kind of commitments are we going to be looking at down the road?

The other thing is that in terms of electronics certainly everyone is aware that things change rapidly, that there is extensive technological innovation. I'd like to know what

provision there may be for keeping the test equipment at the centre up to date. If we're looking, as it says here in the implementation of this project, to complete the equipping of the centre, then what provision may there be for continuing capital provision to make sure that test equipment is, in fact, up to date?

The third question I'd appreciate an answer to is: can the minister advise what plans there may be for the Electronics Test Centre to be self-supporting at some point in the future — I guess that's related to my initial question — especially in terms of its operational costs?

Fourthly, can we perhaps get an idea from the minister for the fiscal year '85-86, where we indicated at one point almost \$4 million of public expenditure, how many Alberta companies and institutions made use of the Electronics Test Centre in 1985-86 and how many electronics products were put through the centre that year? Is there some indication from the Alberta Research Council that there will be an increase, or are we looking at a decrease in the use of the centre for the coming year? What is the, perhaps, longer range plan for the Electronics Test Centre in terms of other initiatives that the Alberta Research Council is sponsoring?

Thank you.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, the first question had to do with how much future anticipated capital expenditure may be required. My understanding is that this completes the initial equipping of that centre. In fact, I'm told the centre is already in operation to some degree and has been for a while, so this is a rounding out of the equipment that was originally envisaged. I guess that covers not only question 1 but also question 2.

With respect to the operational cost, it was hoped that the centre would be able to operate on its own in this coming year. It's not expected that that will be so; the centre was slightly later than expected in terms of its start-up. Because of the later start-up the revenues being generated. I'm advised, are not quite those which were projected. I believe that the forthcoming year is expected to require somewhat under \$1 million of operational subsidy based on current usage.

However, the volume of use for the centre has been picking up. I'm now on question 4, and regrettably I can't give the hon. member details as to the numbers of companies or the number of products. I would be pleased to take that as notice and get back to the hon. member. I've just no way of doing it this afternoon. I can say that it is hoped and projected that in about a year from now, by 1988 I think, the centre will be meeting its operational costs out of revenue. I'm surmising that when it comes to additional equipment, if that be necessary, that may also be possible to generate out of revenue. The intent is to make it self-supporting at the earliest opportunity, and we seem to be moving in that direction.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions?

Agreed to:

Total Vote 1 — Electronics Test Centre	\$565,000
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2 — Microchip Design and Fabrication Facilities

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The vote is \$5,496,300. Are there any questions?

MR. GIBEAULT: Four questions, Mr. Chairman, on the microchip design and fabrication facilities. First, the objective indicates that this is to provide funding for capital and equipment for these facilities. If he could, I'd like the minister to advise the Assembly what arrangements there are in place to provide for the ongoing operating expenses of these facilities.

Secondly, similar to the previous question on the other project, what is the projected future financial support from the province that will be required for the microchip design and fabrication facilities? We can see here that we were asked for about \$8 million last year. We're looking at \$5.5 million in the current fiscal year. Again, I think the Assembly would like to know — certainly I would like to know — the estimated future financial support that will be required for the microchip design and fabrication facilities.

The third item: again, we'd be interested in knowing if the minister can advise how many microchip designs have been developed through the MDFF in the '85-86 fiscal year and how many companies or institutions made use of these two facilities in Calgary and Edmonton. Are we looking at increased use in the coming year? What sort of projections are we looking at there?

The fourth question is: what provisions are there to commercialize the chips that are developed through the microchip design and fabrication facilities? And is there any provision such as a royalty for recovering some of the public investment when the chips become commercially successful?

MR. CRAWFORD: Chairman, in light of the time, I think I must move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

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

Resolved that from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund sums not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, for the purpose of making investments in the following projects to be administered by:

Forestry, Lands and Wildlife: \$5,291,000 for grazing reserves development; \$745,000 for Maintaining Our Forests.

Recreation and Parks: \$11,872,000 for Kananaskis Country recreation development; \$4,000,000 for municipal recreation/tourism areas; \$4,256,000 for urban parks.

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

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard the report, would those in favour please say aye?

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no. Carried.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Assembly will be in Committee of Supply again tomorrow night for the departments of Energy and Community and Occupational Health. On Friday the balance of the departments will be called if there's time, starting with the remainder of the Technology, Research and Telecommunications estimates.

Mr. Speaker, I move we call it 5:30.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Government House Leader has moved adjournment until tomorrow at half past two. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no.

[At 5:30 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]