

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, April 3, 1987 10:00 a.m.**
Date: 87/04/03

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, grant us a daily awareness of the precious gift of life which You have given us.

As members of this Legislative Assembly we dedicate our lives anew to the service of our province and our country.
Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I introduce through you to members of the Assembly, a Canadian filmmaker of prominence Ms Kathleen Shannon. Ms Shannon was the founder and executive producer of Studio D, the women's film production unit at the National Film Board of Canada. As well, Ms Shannon has received an Oscar nomination for her production of *Not a Love Story*. With over 270 films to her credit, Ms Shannon is in Edmonton today to meet as part of a workshop with film and media filmmakers. She'll be doing the same, she tells me, in Calgary shortly. She's accompanied today by CBC documentary producer Rossi Cameron, who is co-ordinating Ms Shannon's visit. They're both in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 32

Water Resources Commission Amendment Act, 1987

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 32, Water Resources Commission Amendment Act, 1987.

The Alberta Water Resources mandate is to provide advisory services to the government for long-range planning in relation to agriculture, economic development, community, recreation, and environment factors related to Alberta water resources.

[Leave granted; Bill 32 read a first time]

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move that Bill 32 be placed on the Order Paper under government Bills for second reading.

[Motion carried]

Bill Pr. 14

Acts Leadership Training Centre Act

DR. CASSIN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 14, Acts Leadership Training Centre Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to incorporate an existing society and to provide for its constitution.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 14 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislative Assembly this morning a report titled Phosphorus Removal: The Impact Upon Water Quality in the Bow River Downstream of Calgary, Alberta; Bow River Data Base 1980-1985.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table two reports required by statute: the annual report of the Department of Advanced Education and the annual report of the Students Finance Board.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table with the House the 1985-86 annual report of Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure today as a former educator that I introduce special guests from the city of Calgary. Seated in your gallery is Dr. Paul Adams, chairman of the Calgary board of education, and Mrs. Anne Tingle, a trustee. Both of these very hard-working people have managed to govern a system that is one of the largest in Canada, and I would like the members of this House to give them their customary welcome. Please rise.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Olympia & York

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. Yesterday the minister of public works and Tory patronage finally came clean -- finally came clean -- and told Albertans that he had made a secret deal last October with Olympia & York without public tender to lease 400,000 square feet of office space. And the commitment was made for prime office space, which the government does not need, at the top dollar rate. My question to this minister: would he explain why this government has chosen this time to do this type of negotiation, a time of cut-backs in services and higher taxes, to abandon fiscal restraint, abandon principles of fairness, abandon principles of sound financial management through the awarding of this type of contract? How can he justify that?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I've been waiting for some time to discuss this matter in the Assembly, and I thank the hon. leader for bringing it up. I must say that I'm disappointed in the way in which he brought it up, because I can recall sitting in this House for a number of years listening to the same member saying, "Create meaningful jobs for the construction workers," concerned about the Edmonton unemployment rate, and I really expected he would get up and say, "Thank you, Mr. Minister," but maybe that was too much to expect. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. leader read *Hansard* of Monday night and the comments of his Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, who

was encouraging me to do this type of thing and use government buying power as a job creator. And I would like to respond as fully as I can to the hon. leader's question and any following questions on the matter.

We did this at this point in time, number one, to create jobs, and create jobs in this project there is: 2,500 direct man-years of construction in the total project, 1,800 of those in phase 1; 2,900 man-years of indirect employment in the total project, 2,050 man-years of those in phase 1. And I would point out to hon. members that 5,400 man-years of work can translate into 10,000 to 15,000 jobs to tradesmen on that project, because if you understand the construction industry, tradesmen come and go as their jobs are done.

Secondly, we did it to participate in the redevelopment of our downtown capital city. And thirdly, we did it because I'm confident we will need it to fulfill government needs in the decade of the '90s. I would point out that under reason two, it's virtually impossible to go with an open-tender procedure if you're talking about a site specific. The process was one of, I suppose, almost a combination between direct negotiation and select tender, and a number of people, a number of developers, came forward with ideas and indicated their dreams and hopes for particular sites in this city, providing there was some degree of government participation. O & Y brought . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. I'm sure we're likely to get at least one more supplementary question.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that the minister has made a commitment through the Tory patronage network to 400,000 square feet of triple A office space, and he expects the taxpayers to send more and more money to the government coffers to honour this sleazy backroom deal.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member. Hon. member. This is a supplementary question; it's not the opening question. Supplementary question.

MR. MARTIN: Supplementary question to this minister. What does this minister say to the other business people in the downtown Edmonton area who have built their projects without Tory bagmen and who have to compete in this. Aren't they going to go broke? How's that going to create employment? Can the minister justify this to the other people in downtown Edmonton?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm amazed that the hon. leader is coming to the defence of the business community; that's got to be a new position. There are references made here of Tory patronage, and maybe the hon. leader should get a little more specific in his questions, because I can assure the House that in all of the meetings that I attended in the negotiation of this project, the gentleman across the table from me, and in some cases with additional staff that he brought to the table, was John Sheppard, the vice-president of Olympia & York. Now, I'm not aware of any -- I didn't even ask the man if he was a Tory. Mind you, he's a doer, so he probably is.

MR. MARTIN: If he's into the government money, he probably is; there's no doubt about it.

Mr. Speaker, the point of it is that the land assembly was done by Mr. Les Mabbott, and this is the second time in a row that he has direct access to taxpayers' pockets without a proper tendering process. How can this government justify this sleazy

approach?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. leader is saying to the House that Mr. Les Mabbott assembled the entire land for Olympia & York, he knows some facts about this project that I don't know and I didn't enquire about. I am aware that Mr. Mabbott provided some of the land acquisition service to O & Y. What his arrangement was with O & Y, you could ask Mr. Sheppard. He had no arrangements or dealings with me on that matter. I understand there were other Edmontonians and Albertans involved in the land acquisition process. It's my hope that there will be Albertans involved in the planning and the designing of this facility. It's my hope that there will be Albertans employed in the construction of it, and I'd be very surprised if the majority of the people benefiting in all those other fields aren't supporters of this government.

MR. TAYLOR: They're probably all down at the Calgary convention.

MR. MARTIN: Yeah, right. Well, Mr. Speaker, I understand that expensive office towers in the downtown core cost as much as \$20 per square foot. Now, my question is: can the minister confirm that the government is asking the taxpayers to pay a top dollar on this deal and this is why he is ashamed to put this out to tender?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I should point out very clearly for the hon. member's sake that at this point in time it is a noncost project to the Alberta taxpayer; there are no moneys flowing in 1987, 1988, or 1989. In 1990 we will start paying a lease rate like we do in any other facility, like we do for over 6 million square feet of space in this province. Whether or not the rate there will become a cost to the Alberta taxpayer or simply a shift from existing properties to that property remains to be seen. I would share with the House that we negotiated in a rather unique way because we're negotiating with our future and that the rate on that building will be market rate of the day within a range, and we've agreed to a low to partially offset the risk of the developer and a high to protect the public. And if I'm forecasting right, it will be noncost to the Alberta ratepayer.

I would add quickly on the other point he raised . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. A touch long. Member for Little Bow.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the minister. My concern is with regards to the objectives established by this government. The budget is to be balanced by 1990 and 1991, which means a reduction in the civil service staff and services to the general public. How can the minister justify a commitment to 400,000 square feet of space at this point in time when the government has set such an objective for itself?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, we currently lease in the city of Edmonton 4 million square feet; 400,000 square feet is roughly 10 percent of our current leased space requirements. The worst-case scenario -- assuming no growth in this province, no population growth that triggers some government growth -- is that we will move 10 percent of our space out of existing buildings into this building in 1990. We literally have hundreds of different leases in this city, terminating at all sorts of time lines, and I'm

sure I would have no problem finding that much space that terminates in 1990.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Clearly the minister has specific amounts of money in mind for the high end of the range and the low end of the range. Could he please tell this House and the people of Alberta specifically within what range we will be paying for that space in 1990 and beyond?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member well knows that I never share that information with the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair apologizes to the House, but what can be more hypothetical than the rates in 1990? [interjections]
I beg your pardon, hon. member?

MR. TAYLOR: Am I allowed to stand up, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. minister care to finish off on his supplementary?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: At the end of the question period, hon. member.

MR. ISLEY: Basically, the only thing that I would reiterate is that the agreement calls for market rate at the point in time of us going in . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Within a range.

MR. ISLEY: . . . within a range, and I will not share the range as I will not share lease rates that we negotiate.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary North West. And comments about not answering questions is in *Beauchesne*.

DR. CASSIN: Mr. Speaker, to the minister of public works and supplies. I'd like to ask him, considering the magnitude of this project and the present economic condition in the city of Edmonton, would this project have gone ahead if the government of this province had not taken out such a head lease?

MR. ISLEY: The answer to that, and I believe the vice-president of Olympia & York responded to it publicly yesterday, is no.

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

MR. MARTIN: I would like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton Centre.

Long-term Nursing Care

REV. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems incredible that after we had raised just a few critical questions about the quality of food in nursing homes, the hidden forms of abuse, the understaffing problems, and the fact that private operators continue to make gold off the old, it didn't take long for the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care to strike a new committee yesterday for long-term care for the elderly. In his absence, can the minis-

ter of community health please explain how it is that this new committee is to report to him as well, when in fact the committee has no mandate to look at the necessary areas of community health and home care for the elderly but in fact focuses more entirely on the institutional setting, which is already overbuilt?

MR. DINNING: On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, that committee, in reporting to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, the Minister of Social Services, myself, and the minister responsible for housing, is going to be looking at all aspects of long-term care for Alberta's senior citizens.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister then confirm reports from the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care that in fact the minister wants to take over home care from the community health minister's department to the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care; that home care will be a direct component of that department, not his?

MR. DINNING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the home care program offered through the health units and funded by the Department of Community and Occupational Health will continue to be delivered in the quality kind of way that it has been and will continue in the future through this department.

REV. ROBERTS: Now, that's good news.

What response does the minister have to the fact that Calgary Health Services has recently taken over the private home care services in Calgary, those of Para-Med and Upjohn, and what speculation does he have in terms of the Edmonton board of health doing the same for private home care operators here in this city?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, you wouldn't want me to harbour in speculation waters, so I won't. But in the case of the Calgary Health Services taking over home care and bringing it in-house and delivering it in-house, my concern is that home care be delivered in an effective and efficient manner. That's my instruction; that's my responsibility. My instruction to the Calgary Health Services is that they should do that. That is a decision internally made, and I will respect that decision and continue to enjoy the quality services that Calgary Health Services provides for home care to our seniors in Calgary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, Member for Edmonton Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In an historic and profound move yesterday the House passed for second reading a Bill on palliative care. What is the minister's responsibility for improving the palliative aspects of home care to ensure that that very human and also cost-effective form of care is really delivered in the home as well and not just left in the institutional-sector palliative care?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is very, very accurate in describing palliative care provided through home care as a very caring and, I believe, a very cost-efficient way of providing for Albertans who are in their last days. And because of the initiative of my colleague from Calgary Foothills, that kind of foundation is going to be able to support through fund-

ing, funding of research and funding of other initiatives, in the delivery of palliative care through the home care services. Yes, it will still be provided through the institutional setting as well, but more and more these kinds of caring services for Albertans can be provided in the community in the homes of the people.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary Fish Creek, a supplementary.

MR. PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up on the second-last supplementary of the Member for Edmonton Centre, I wonder if the Minister of Community and Occupational Health could advise the Assembly to what extent the employees of the private-sector agencies Para-Med and Upjohn will in fact be given contract work by the Calgary board of health now that work's been taken in-house?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been advised by the Calgary Health Services that all the staff within Para-Med and Upjohn will be eligible for employment with the Calgary board of health, and I would direct those employees -- encourage those employees -- to make known their willingness to serve with the Calgary board of health, make the Calgary board of health aware that they are willing to do just that.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary Buffalo, a supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the minister. What justification can the minister give for funding the Calgary board of health at a rate substantially lower than that funding provided to the Edmonton board of health, the effect of which is that nursing programs for children in Calgary schools are significantly less than those in Edmonton?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I have no excuse. It is a fact that the funding as between Calgary and Edmonton boards of health -- there is an inequity. I have made the commitment to all boards of health in the province that where there are inequities, we are going to be moving towards a funding formula that will recognize those individual, special, unique circumstances in each of the health units, and we will hopefully have a formula in place by fall of this year.

Free Trade

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. I noted with interest that the agenda for this weekend's Conservative Party conference in Calgary includes a session this very afternoon on free trade, co-chaired by Alberta's minister of intergovernmental affairs and Canada's minister of external affairs. I found this information very interesting, since although the provincial government has been kept abreast of free trade negotiations by the federal government, neither the Premier nor the minister of intergovernmental affairs has been undertaking to keep the House informed of the progress of the negotiations to date. My question to the Deputy Premier is: will the session this afternoon involving the federal and provincial ministers be open to the public at no expense to allow them the opportunity to ask both ministers questions regarding free trade process and where it stands at the present time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognized the Minister of Ad-

vanced Education.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at that question coming from the purported leader of a provincial party in this province. You know, surely we all have our party annual conventions, our party policy conferences. The meeting is open. It'll be covered by the media, and I'm sure the records show that any time there's important progress or news to report to the Assembly, that has been done and will continue to be done in the matter of free trade negotiations. *Hansard* will show that that's correct.

But if the hon. leader, who is also my constituent, would like to attend, I'd be glad to take him to the sessions.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. It may be a way to find out information; I'm trying to move it into this House though.

Given the fact that the only briefing that seems to be taking place on free trade in this province is for Tory Party members or their guests, will the Deputy Premier consider holding a special debate on free trade as soon as possible along the same lines as a debate which occurred recently in the House of Commons?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't agree with the premise put forward that the House is not being kept involved as to progress reports with respect to the matter of free trade. I believe that's incorrect. Now, if the hon. member is concerned about the fact that the two parties in government in Ottawa and in Edmonton are discussing the matter of free trade at a party convention, I'm sure that we can see that full coverage of that policy discussion is brought to the member.

With respect to the matter of at what time this House may have a debate on free trade, I'm sure that's a matter that will be given consideration by the government.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. You've consistently refused to have the debate here. In speaking on the aboriginal constitution issue, for instance, the Premier stated that he would not enter into a constitutional amendment blindly. Do you feel that the government has sufficient information at your disposal at this time to enable you to ratify on behalf of this province a free trade arrangement between Canada and the United States, or would you be blindly entering into this agreement?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm really surprised at these questions. The hon. Premier reported to the House and to the Alberta media with respect to the matter of reporting by way of information and the involvement of the federal government with respect to all of the provinces. I believe the schedule of the further meetings to be held were also reported to the House. I'm mystified by the fact that the hon. leader believes he hasn't been kept informed. Certainly the last meeting on the possibility of that free trade pact being reached was covered nationally on television. I believe all Canadians are aware of the progress and the status of what is occurring on that subject.

MR. TAYLOR: A final supplementary, Speaker. I'll refresh your memory. Just two days ago you refused to table the studies on free trade in a written question put in by me.

Anyhow, given that the federal government aims to have a shell agreement in place in June this year and will presumably pass the contents of that agreement on to each province for their

perusal, will the Deputy Premier, in view of the light of the words he has just said, assure the House that upon receipt of the agreement, the contents of that agreement will be tabled in the Legislature immediately, and that if the Legislature isn't sitting, he'll recall it to go over the agreement?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'll be glad to take that question as notice and bring the concerns of the hon. leader to the attention of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the hon. Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Deputy Premier: could he advise the Assembly this morning whether a ratification formula has been reached between the 10 provincial governments and the federal government, and if so, would he explain that formula to the Assembly?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that there is no such formula. The process that has been followed and will continue to be followed is one of constant reporting, involvement, and consultation by the provinces and the federal government. However, I may be incorrect, and I'll be glad to take the question as notice and report back.

Olympia & York
(continued)

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my questions are also to the minister of public works. Could the minister indicate whether the agreement between Olympia & York Developments and the government could be tabled in this Legislature, and if not, could the minister outline the reasons why not?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the short answer is no. The reasons are that it's never been the practice of this House or this government to provide to the House copies of lease documents with private-sector individuals.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly beg to differ. Could the minister indicate studies that were done and are in place at the present time to determine the space use for the next three fiscal years? And could those studies be tabled in this Legislature?

MR. ISLEY: I'm not sure I clearly imderstand the question. Maybe the member would like to clarify whether we're studying the total space in Edmonton or whether we're studying government's needs.

MR. SPEAKER: [Inaudible] another supplementary for clarification.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I was referring to my original question in raising that second one. My supplementary question to the minister again is: in that agreement is there any type of a penalty clause that would relate to the government's responsibility if and when the government is not able to meet the space commitment they have made in that agreement? Is there a penalty clause if the government is unable to meet their commitment of buying or renting space in the

buildings developed by Olympia & York Developments?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, there is no penalty clause. It's a simple lease agreement that will require us to occupy 400,000 square feet of space in that project, effective in 1990. As I pointed out earlier in the House, there is no need for a penalty clause with renting 4 million square feet of space in the city. There are all sorts of flexibilities that we can use in this department.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Member for Edmonton Norwood -- perhaps not so much on a legal focus as the line of questioning has been going.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Could this minister confirm that two-thirds of the space in the first tower is going to be leased by the government and that there is no commitment at all for them to build the second tower?

MR. ISLEY: I can confirm to the House, Mr. Speaker, that the first phase will consist of the underground parking for 900 cars; two storeys consisting of 150,000 square feet of retail space; and the first tower, which is somewhat in excess of 600,000 square feet. Our lease space will be in the first tower. If you want to run on a percentage, we'll be an occupant of about 57 percent of the totality of phase 1. I would also ask the hon. member to keep in mind that this project is a sound investment to the proponent only when the second tower is completed, because the infrastructure costs that bear that second tower have to go into phase 1, which is why roughly 80 percent of the job creation is in phase 1.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary Millican, followed by the the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, the residents . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, if you wouldn't mind giving way, if the other member wasn't fast enough on his feet. But the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark with respect to a supplementary.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister please confirm that the 2,500 direct jobs and the 2,900 spin-off jobs are based on the assumption that both phases of the project would be built, and that in fact only half as many jobs as he has been taking credit for will be built under the circumstances of what Olympia & York has right now -- today -- committed to?

MR. ISLEY: No, I cannot confirm that, Mr. Speaker. I thought I made it very plain to the House that the total project will generate 2,500 man-years of direct employment -- that can translate into a lot more than 2,500 jobs -- and 2,900 man-years of indirect employment at an estimated cash flow of \$75 million as far as the employment benefits and an additional \$50 million into the Alberta economy for Alberta-based materials. Phase 1, which I described earlier briefly as far as its physical makeup, is a much larger stage than phase 2. Phase 1 will create 1,800 man-years of direct employment and 2,050 man-years of indirect employment, so it is not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, perhaps any more questions requiring such detail could go to the Order Paper in a motion for

a return.

Toxic Waste

MR. SHRAKE: If they don't want that, they should build it in Calgary then.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the homes that were built on the former Imperial Oil refinery site in Calgary have been very concerned since they found out that a sludge containing lead was dumped upon this land in previous times. Could the minister please tell the Assembly when the results of the testing of the children in this area will be known? And if the Minister of Community and Occupational Health could also tell us: when will the results be released?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I have some good news to report in that regard. I spoke with officials from the Calgary board of health this morning, and as a result of an invitation by the board of health earlier this week to residents in the Lynnwood area to have the children in that area where there was some concern that they might have had high exposure to lead, tests were carried out last night and more will be offered this evening and tomorrow. Some 70 children were tested last night, Mr. Speaker, and the results basically were negative. It showed no abnormal exposure to lead, and I think that that should go some distance to alleviate the concerns of the residents in the city of Calgary.

MR. SHRAKE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of the Environment. Will the minister have his department continue to monitor this situation right up until such time as we know this site has been cleaned up and the lead is gone and also the hydrocarbons, namely the oil and gas, have been cleaned up on this miserable site?

MR. KOWALSKI: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, in response to questions yesterday on environmental problems in the north Ogden area, the Minister of the Environment made a number of observations, including that living above the site posed no risk, that the city of Calgary can afford and is responsible for cleaning up the lead-contaminated site, and that it's evident to all people that there were no environmental problems with the developing homes in that area.

To the Minister of the Environment. The city of Calgary must reclaim the lead-contaminated areas. Who is responsible for solving the problem of petroleum pollution in the groundwater and soil that the minister's department identified as early as 1985?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I understand we're into groundwater questions now on the old Imperial Oil refinery site? I think that I'm going to have to be repetitious now, Mr. Speaker, and point out factual information that I've provided on previous occasions. In the late 1960s a gathering system was committed to by Imperial Oil. A number of wells were drilled, and those wells have for the last 20 years been gathering hydrocarbon residues on a daily basis. In recent years the collection has diminished very, very significantly, and there appears to be not a major amount of groundwater contamination on the site.

Now, that's a scientific evaluation given to me. Should the

member have additional information that he perhaps has garnered from those who are not related to the scientific community and either the city of Calgary, the Calgary board of health, environmental people, I'd very much appreciate receiving such information to further our efforts to make sure that everything possible is done to minimize any environmental impacts in the area and the Bow River.

I should point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that it was only a few minutes ago that I tabled and made public another very important report, which looked at the Bow River water quality from the years 1980 to 1985.

MR. PASHAK: My question was: who is responsible for dealing with that problem? The minister said on March 17 that a major problem was that the department had no regulations on decommissioning at the time that the city of Calgary took possession of the land. As the city of Calgary has no jurisdiction to write its own decommissioning laws, can the minister contend that it has full responsibility for reclaiming that site?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the transfer of the land occurred in 1975, and I think I've already responded to that question on several occasions now. Under the policies that we've instituted since the early 1980s, we've made it very, very clear that when it comes to the decommissioning of an old refinery site, the developer, the owner of the property, is responsible for the insurance that the land is transformed into a safe environmental situation. We have an excellent example that has been followed in the province of Alberta with respect to this new policy, and it's the Gulf refinery site in the Pincher Creek-Crowsnest part of the province of Alberta, where as a result of the initiatives we took in the early 1980s, Gulf Canada has had to commit substantial dollars over the last number years and has to report to Alberta Environment about the necessary and needed cleanup on the site. I've met with them on several occasions now, and they've reported to me.

So we do have a system in place today. What the hon. member is doing is taking history and going back to a situation before we had a policy in our province to deal with this matter. We do have a policy today. No such similar occurrence as the Imperial Oil refinery site could occur in 1980.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Chair is rather concerned about repetitious questions, and repetitious questions indeed will then of necessity bring on repetitious answers. And indeed some of the questions that have been asked already today are the same as yesterday, and unless the member can draw a careful distinction as to a different aspect of the problem or what has transpired in the last 24 hours, then the Chair is going to be forced to have to jump up again. But the original line of questioning given by the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn today dealt with groundwater, and on that basis the questioning continues. This is just gentle admonition to the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn. Please continue. Supplementary.

MR. PASHAK: I'm trying to nail down responsibility for cleaning up that site. The minister mentioned a Gulf site. What about the Gulf site in the city of Calgary? Will he extend his assessment to that site to make sure that there are no pollutants entering the Bow River from the former Gulf refinery, which is across the river and downstream from the Imperial Oil site?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago I tabled in

the House a motion for a return which asked for the results of ambient water quality monitoring on the major waterways and rivers of Alberta. As I recall, the information that I tabled required two or three pages to take it from my desk to the Clerk's desk. That information is public information, that information is available. I've no doubt whatsoever that the hon. member has had an opportunity to review the information, and the hon. member would know that there has been no deterioration in the quality of the Bow River. Quite frankly, quite the opposite has occurred in recent years because of initiatives of this government. The quality of the Bow River has improved.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, my information is totally different. I have it from a senior scientist at the Calgary Waterworks that monitoring of the water quality downstream from that Imperial site was neither systematic nor comprehensive. Will the minister direct his department to perform thorough and reliable tests to ensure that water downstream from these two refinery sites does not exceed safe levels for lead and hydrocarbon contaminants?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, Alberta Environment will continue to monitor and be very aggressive about the protection of the water quality in the Bow River. If what the hon. member is saying today is that the city of Calgary has been deliberately polluting the Bow River and officials within that particular jurisdiction have knowledge about it and have continued to do it on a deliberate basis, I would appreciate receiving additional information which would cause me to become even more aggressive in my investigations and protection of the water quality of that river.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary question, Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplemental, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. There seems to be a problem here. Once land or sites have been transferred, he has taken the attitude that caveat emptor, or the last one is stuck. Could the minister assure the House that he would introduce or bring legislation in that no matter how many times a site has been transferred, the original polluter will be held responsible?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, we've got a very interesting concept here. As I understand, in 1975 a contract was signed between the city of Calgary and Imperial Oil Limited. That contract, as I said yesterday -- and I'm repeating myself once again, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is, and it's unsubstantiated, that the amount of dollars that were used to cause this contract to be implemented was \$1. Included in the contractual arrangement was the recognition that the city of Calgary would assume complete responsibilities and rights to the particular property. Also included, as a contract of law, the city of Calgary would also assume complete liabilities for the transfer of the property. If what the member today is asking is that we should abrogate as a government all contracts that have been signed between two willing partners in the past and cause a whole new set of arrangements to be made with respect to contractual obligations, then I would have to respond that that is not the position of this government. We believe that contracts signed between a willing buyer and a willing seller are sacrosanct, and it is not the responsibility of the government or the taxpayer of the province of Alberta to go back into history

and then have to see their tax dollars spent to correct an arrangement that one individual member feels is incorrect.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton Strathcona. If there's time, the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

Abuse of Free Drug Cards

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Social Services. Since the institution of free drug cards for recipients of social allowance a year or so ago, a number of persons have been abusing the system by obtaining multiple prescriptions from a succession of doctors -- double-doctoring in street parlance -- which prescriptions are then filled free at any number of pharmacies and the drugs trafficked. What safeguards exist in the system to detect this fairly foreseeable abuse, and have these safeguards been there since the beginning of the scheme?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have had similar concerns raised with me, though I have not had hard evidence presented, except to say that it seems obvious that a number of people who were receiving prescriptions couldn't possibly have needed the quantity of drugs that they obviously availed themselves of.

There is some work under way in the department presently to try to ascertain what type of card or restrictions could be put in place to try to achieve the ends that the hon. member is relating to. Unfortunately, we don't want to make it difficult for people who need prescriptions to get those prescriptions, but on the other hand I think the hon. member raises a very legitimate concern.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. These abusers that you have identified so far -- at least on the face of them, abusers -- and those that are capable of being identified: what is the intention of the department concerning those?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member may well be raising a matter that is a legal one, and it may be that in terms of our assessment of the situation and investigation evidence could be brought to bear that would indeed require some other type of follow-up. But I wouldn't be in a position at this point in time to be able to speak to that evidence or, alternatively, to say whether or not it would be something that would have to be addressed in the Criminal Code.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that point, then, as to these cases we've been talking about and also such cases as there may be of single doctors improperly giving multiple prescriptions, which we've heard about recently, will the minister assure the House that in those cases where the impropriety is clear, the evidence will be disclosed to the Ministry of Justice for possible prosecution under the Narcotic Control Act or Food and Drugs Act as appropriate?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Member for Edmonton

Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: On the other point, Mr. Speaker, as to restricting possibly the number of outlets in the interests of control, would it not nonetheless be practicable to restrict the number of pharmacies dispensing these drugs on the cards which are free to the purchaser and linking them electronically with a view to stopping the hemorrhage in the system?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, certainly with the technology that is presently available, it would seem that there may be some application, and that's part of the discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we complete this set of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: has the minister herself or her officials had discussions with the College of Physicians and Surgeons as well as attempting to stop the use of these cards, attempting to see that the doctors aren't continually giving out these drugs?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, where specific concerns have been brought forward, we have communicated in some instances the name of the physician in question, but at this point in time I have not received a response on those specifics.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary Buffalo, supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This matter also raises an important privacy issue, and I was wondering whether the minister could tell us what controls and regulations are in place with respect to the collection and use of this information by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, or is the government abdicating any concern with the privacy of its citizens in this area, as it has in many other instances?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whose privacy the hon. member is speaking to, but in all cases I think that one cannot hold out the issue of privacy as being paramount if one suspects that in fact government regulations or the law is being broken.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired.

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order, citing *Beauchesne* what?

MR. MITCHELL: Section 359(3), Mr. Speaker. My question today concerning Olympia & York -- the range of possible lease rates that have been agreed to between Olympia & York and this government was ruled hypothetical. The minister's answer to the first question asked by the Leader of the Opposition was that there was an agreed-to range in this first answer. If there is an agreed-to range, then my question was not hypothetical, and the House is entitled to an answer or a clear indication of why we

wouldn't get an answer. If there is no agreed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member, for your succinct presentation. Have you a point of order? [interjection]

Yesterday it was made manifestly clear that rising on points of order and points of privilege would be done in a succinct fashion. Now, if you're at the end of your last sentence, the Chair is quite willing to listen.

MR. MITCHELL: If there is no agreed-to range, then I would accept that it is hypothetical, Mr. Speaker, and then we have a far more serious problem. That is, we do not have any idea of the specifics of a deal that this government has entered into effective 1990, and that is not a responsible way to enter into a deal.

MR. SPEAKER: At the time, the Chair rose, interrupted the hon. member, had some interesting dialogue with members from that same section of the House, and then allowed the minister to go on and give answer to the question.

Next point of order, Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, Standing Order 23(i). I want the minister of public works to withdraw a statement made earlier in the question period that falsely impugned my motive. He said that the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche was encouraging me to do such a thing. During Monday evening's estimates I did not encourage the minister to sign leases with private Tory hack firms without using a proper tendering process.

MR. SPEAKER: The point of order is to be brought up at the earliest possible moment. This being Friday, if your comments relate to Monday, that's hardly the first possible moment.

AN HON. MEMBER: During question period.

MR. SPEAKER: Yesterday's question period was yesterday.

AN HON. MEMBER: Today's question period.

MR. SPEAKER: Today's question period. Thank you very much. Okay.

Anyone else to this particular point of order, if it is indeed such? It would appear that the minister will consult the Blues and meet with the member privately or else bring it back on Monday.

Is this another one?

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker, under *Beauchesne* 327(2), (7), on Wednesday . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Just a moment please, hon. member, I don't have that . . .

MR. MITCHELL: It's on pages 115, 116: 327(2) and 327(7). concerning the Treasurer's initiative to quote from a letter to the House on April 1, *Hansard*, 510. You indicated in response to the point of order raised by the Member for Edmonton Kingsway that you would rule on whether that particular document would be presented to the House, tabled in accordance with 327(1). And I'm aware of your ruling, although it hasn't been announced in the House, and I wonder if you could an-

nounce it in the House so that I could respond to it under 327(2) and 327(7).

MR. SPEAKER: In response to that particular issue, there are two aspects to take into consideration. The Chair examined the Blues and also the videotape, and indeed the Provincial Treasurer appeared to be quoting from the letter, but the citation -- and citing is the same as quoting -- really does not seem to have been an absolute quote from a particular letter. That's one aspect. On that ground the letter would not have to be produced to the House.

On the second aspect, the office of the Speaker has been in contact with the Provincial Treasurer, and the response has been that it is private correspondence. On that basis, it does not have to be produced to the House, and therefore the document will not be produced to the House.

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker: 327 (2) and 327 (7). For the first reason, that it wasn't actually quoted from, I would like to point out that the minister went to great lengths to indicate "I simply will quote, I hope, directly from their letter . . . They're saying that . . ." My point is that if he did not actually quote from it properly, then surely there is all that much more reason why this House has the right to see that document to see what exactly he was trying to do with that document in the case that he was trying to make. Therefore, I would argue that that reason should be set aside.

The second reason under 327(2) and 327(7): yes, 327(2) says that private letters need not be tabled. However, 327(7) says, and I read this:

When a letter, even though it may have been written originally as a private letter, becomes part of a record of a department, it becomes a public document . . .

And therefore, it would fall under 327(1). Clearly, if this particular letter is in the files in his department's office and, more importantly, if that particular letter and the contents of that letter are being used in the judgment that he is making about the amalgamation of credit unions in this province, then obviously, clearly, it is a record of his department and it is a public document. It should be tabled in this House, because we need freedom of information in this province, and this is another example of how we're not getting it and how it imposes upon the proper democratic legislative process in this province. [interjections]

MR. McEACHERN: [Inaudible] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At first on getting the phone call from your assistant this morning, I assumed that what you were saying was okay, because I looked at the words of the Treasurer, and although he says he is going to quote, he doesn't. He goes off on a different tangent. Nonetheless, it does say here in *Beauchesne*, 327(5), that "to be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate." And I think his idea of using it to influence debate, to sort of add authority to what he was saying, puts it back into the realm of his trying to use it to influence the attitude of this House toward that information. So when you look at (7), then it would seem to me reasonable to expect him to table that document, because it is part of his department's correspondence with a very important public branch of the credit union and not something that you can call a private letter between friends.

MR. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Counsel has pointed out another aspect with regard to 327(7), and it doesn't relate if the letter was a confidential letter to the department, which is also

picked up in *Beauchesne* 390(p):

(p) Papers requested, submitted or received in confidence by the Government from sources outside the Government

are exempt from production. So that's under 390(p).

If members of the House choose to continue to argue with the Chair, they have the right to give notice, I suppose, through the recourse of privilege of the House and the House will then decide.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make the suggestion, because there's been a lot of information brought up in a very short period of time, that perhaps the Speaker might want to wait and think about it over the weekend and come back and review the *Hansard* as to what everybody's said so we can take a longer period of time to look at it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Chair wishes to point out one other thing that happened this afternoon. While the Speaker was standing, one hon. member told the Speaker to sit down, and the Chair now requests the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon to withdraw that remark.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware, of course -- mind you, we could check the Blues. If the Blues said I said that, because I did as I turned around while talking about sitting down -- as you know, there was quite a ruckus going on at the time. If the Blues said I said that, I will apologize. Normally you wait for the Blues before asking, and I think it's maybe a mark of your anxiety in this case to take me to task this early. If the Blues said I said that to you, I will apologize, but I don't recall saying that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Lacombe.

MR. R. MOORE: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege today to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Legislature, 112 students from James S. McCormick school located in the town of Lacombe. They're accompanied by six teachers and 10 parents. Normally I would name them all, but there's quite a number of them. We will recognize them as a group. They're seated in the members' gallery and in the public gallery. I'd ask them now to rise and receive the traditional welcome of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, a couple of guests from out of province. They are noted Canadian author Lois Braun and her husband, Joe Braun, president of the Rhineland agricultural society in Altona, Manitoba. They're seated in the public gallery accompanied by Joe's little

sister, my wife Viola, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of members of the Assembly.

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will now come to order. The estimates before the House today are the estimates of the Department of the Environment.

Members of the committee, we seem to have an unusually large number of people in the galleries. Perhaps a quick explanation as to what the House is doing this morning would be in order. The Committee of Supply deals with ministers' proposals to spend money on behalf of government for the next fiscal year, which started the other day. Each minister comes before this committee and proposes his estimates. Only ministers of the Crown, having taken a special oath to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, who represents the Queen, have the authority to do this in the Assembly. Members of this committee then have the opportunity of questioning that minister and amending the estimates before the House. Each member is allowed to speak as often as he or she wishes for no longer than 30 minutes. The setting is somewhat informal to allow the members to discuss the estimates prior to rising.

Department of the Environment

MR. CHAIRMAN: The minister is the Hon. Ken Kowalski, Minister of the Environment, and I would now ask the minister if he would care to make some opening comments. Mr. Minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It's indeed my pleasure this morning to introduce and seek the approval of all hon. colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, their support for the estimates which are printed in the budget documents that were tabled on March 20, 1987. I'd like to take the prerogative of providing a few brief overview comments with respect to some recent initiatives we've taken in this very important matter of the environment. Then I really look forward to receiving the input, the suggestions, the contributions of my hon. colleagues here in the Assembly.

As all members will know, when I had the privilege of being offered the opportunity to serve as Alberta's Minister of the Environment and when I accepted it on May 25, 1986, I indicated at that time that I basically would set before me three specific objectives. Objective one basically was to communicate with the 2.35 million people in the province of Alberta. I believe that the citizens of our province have had a tradition of concern with respect to matters affecting their environment and our environment Albertans, since the time Alberta became a province in 1905, have determined inwardly among themselves the need to protect the water, the air, the land; in other words, the environment of our province.

I can recall as a young boy growing up in northeastern Alberta and recognizing a very important initiative that the then government of the day, the Social Credit government, had taken to basically say, "Keep Alberta green." Everywhere you went in the province of Alberta, you saw these nice little Christmas trees out of boards here, there, and everywhere on quarter sections. That was a commitment that Albertans recognized and a commitment that Alberta responded to.

Members will know that when the Progressive Conservative Party formed the government of Alberta in 1971, there was implemented in that same year the first Department of the Environment not only in the country of Canada but in North America. Alberta had once again assumed its leadership position and has maintained over the years a very determined leadership position.

I want to communicate. I have initiated that communication process not with this small group or that small group of lobby interests, special interests, or selfish interests groups of people. I want to talk to 2.35 million people in the province of Alberta, and communicate and explain and listen and explain and listen have been part of the vogue of my operation since I've had the unique pleasure of serving as our Minister of the Environment in the province of Alberta.

The second major objective I set for myself was that we would work diligently and not spare any energy or effort to ensure that we would have a safe, effective implementation of the objectives of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. The objectives of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation are to improve the quality of air, water, and environment in our province. Alberta is a leader. We have no precedent to fall back on; we can look to no other jurisdiction in the world which can provide us with guidance on how we will deal with this. And it seems that every time you become first, every time you become a leader, there are those who would try and knock you down and there are those who would try and suck the blood out of you and those who would act as parasites to you and try and ensure that you cannot be successful with respect to this matter. But my vow and my pledge to the 2.35 million people in the province is that I don't care who these opponents are. I will devote the necessary energy and the necessary time to ensure that those objectives are met. And I would ask that all members of the Assembly and all of the people of Alberta who are really concerned about improving our environment join with me in this very important mission. It is a sacred mission, because we are leaving not for us but for our children and grandchildren a better place in which they can live.

The third objective I had set for myself was that I was going to ensure that the programs of Alberta Environment are responsive to the needs of the people and are operated in an effective and efficient manner. Now, having said that, I would like to reiterate that my objectives have not wavered; they have not changed. We will continue on this line and continue as aggressively as we possibly can with respect to a commitment of our energies in this particular area.

I'd think it's probably very important to view, in these brief overview comments I will be providing this morning, comments with respect to several different perspectives. I also had the pleasure in 1986 of serving as the president of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers. That is a national grouping that is made up of the ministers of resources and environment across the country of Canada. It includes the federal Minister of the Environment as an equal member on that particular committee, as it does include the ministers of the environment for the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. So in essence it's a group of 13, all of whom are equal. It was my pleasure and my honour to have been the national chairman of that particular group. We met in Alberta, in Banff, in October of 1986, and at a meeting that I chaired over a two-day time frame, we fulfilled, for the first time in the history of that particular organization, a conclusion of the agenda that was set before us. It was my pleasure, too, in October 1986, to make available to the public of Canada an information release that had

committed the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers to a number of new, important national initiatives.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Alberta is the environment leader in this country. It's very important for us to show to other jurisdictions in this country that there is responsibility within their provincial legislatures to in fact cause things to happen to ensure that the protection of the environment in those other jurisdictions will become closer to what our commitment is in the province of Alberta. There were a number of new initiatives that are now being implemented as a result of the initiatives of the government of Alberta, the province of Alberta, and your Minister of the Environment. I would just like to briefly touch on these, because I think they're very important.

The first basically was that we sought to have an agreement concluded at that particular meeting, and we did have an agreement concluded at that meeting. For the first time in the history of Canada we are going to have new water quality guidelines for use by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments; that was a first. That was a first cause to have happened by the initiatives of your provincial government. Second, we talked about these same guidelines that would address some 50 specific substances of concern, including many toxic chemicals and how they're impacted across the various jurisdictions in our country with respect to water quality. I want to repeat that this is the first time all of the jurisdictions in our country had co-operated to develop guidelines of this nature and subsequently then endorse them.

A second major initiative we took at that national conference was that the ministers agreed to adopt interim ambient air and water objectives for PCBs until further scientific work was completed. We agreed that we would be releasing across the country of Canada, so that there was no misunderstanding from an individual living in Alberta or an individual living in Ottawa or an individual living in Newfoundland, what it was that we were talking for and striving for across the country of Canada.

For the first time as well, hon. members, we agreed as ministers of the environment and resources within our country of Canada; we adopted an action plan on hazardous waste designed to harmonize legislation, policies, and programs and to study the feasibility of a national contingency fund to assure prompt cleanup of contamination where there was an imminent danger to human health or the environment. That fund that we have committed to researching, to seeing whether or not it is possible within our country, is not that important to our province of Alberta. We've had the most stringent environmental codes that existed across the country of Canada, and we really do not have major pollution problems. But if I were a resident of the province of Ontario or a resident of the province of Quebec that basically has seen not the same kind of vigilance we've had in our province, they're going to have some very interesting, important concerns to deal with in the incoming years. What I fear as a citizen of Alberta and as a minister of the Crown in the province of Alberta is that those provincial jurisdictions will then go to the federal government and say, "Hey, federal government, you pay for contamination cleanup in our provinces." And guess whose tax dollars are going to have to go to pay for that? It's going to be the tax dollars of Albertans, and we'll be penalized simply because we have been aggressive and we have been a leader in this area.

But we've agreed to look at a national contingency fund in this particular matter. Some people have suggested it should be based on the American Superfund concept, which is a very important one. We agreed that we wanted to pressure the federal

government to bringing in a new environmental protection Act, and I'm very, very pleased to report that the Hon. Tom McMillan, the Minister of the Environment for the government of Canada, has now tabled such legislation, called the environmental protection Act. It's legislation that is now consulting with -- for the first time in the history of Canada a Tory, Progressive Conservative Minister of the Environment has brought all of the user groups, the interest groups across the country of Canada to Ottawa to consult with and to talk about what this new environmental protection Act is all going to be about.

Another initiative that came out of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers' Conference that I chaired in 1986 was that all ministers of the environment adopted the principle of the life cycle management of chemical products. Now, what does the life cycle management principle of chemical products really mean? It means that if an individual chooses to come into the country of Canada and say, "Look, I want to put on the market a certain type of chemical," that individual would not have the licence to sell that chemical until that individual also showed how that chemical would be neutralized or destroyed in the end. What we've been dealing with in the world is the existence of between 80,000 and 100,000 different types of commercial chemicals. In most cases, no one knows how to destroy them. What we have to do and what we have to cause to happen in our country is to ensure a system whereby an individual who wants to market a product will also have the responsibility for the conclusion of that product so that the taxpayer in the various jurisdictions will not have to be responsible for their ultimate cleanup.

We also agreed, Mr. Chairman, that the ministers would convene a government industry task force to develop an environmental code of practice for storage tanks and related facilities which usually contain petroleum and related products, a new initiative caused to happen by the government of Alberta and the province of Alberta.

Another initiative we agreed to at this very important national conference was that we would continue very determinedly in Canada to ensure that other provincial jurisdictions understand and understood that the integration of economic development across this country must come with considerations for environmental quality. It was my pleasure at that particular national task force to see implemented a national task force on the environment and the economy, and our ministers of the environment accepted a proposal that would see the minister of the environment for the government of Manitoba chairing this particular national task force. And to recognize the politics of the government of Manitoba, I was just delighted that someone who had leftist leanings, someone with a socialist philosophy, would in fact have been endorsed by myself and my colleagues on our recommendation and our initiative to basically chair a national task force on environment and the economy. I can think of no better way, Mr. Chairman and hon. members, to get those who believe in the leftist cause and those who believe in socialism involved, to understand what quality improvements in the environment are along with economic development, than to have them chair the actual meeting. And I'm pleased to report that I'm really impressed with the leadership provided by my colleague from Manitoba in this matter. I'm just really, really pleased. I also want all members to know that I am a member of that particular national task force, and I'd be pleased to report who the other members are in just a minute or two.

But first of all, I want to cover these very important national initiatives that are now occurring because of the leadership role

of the government of Alberta, of the province of Alberta, and because the members of this Assembly, and I believe all 83 members of this Assembly, continue to have a high level of confidence in their Minister of the Environment. Mr. Chairman, I think it's important as well that I just spend a few brief minutes talking to you about the national task force on the environment and the economy. I indicated that this is a new private/public-sector initiative. It's being carried out under the auspices of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers. I'd just like to repeat again that I was the president, the chairman, of that particular task force when this new initiative got under way. The task force is going to be responsible for increasing awareness of the important linkages between a healthy environment and future economic prosperity.

The task force is made up of a number of government representatives from across the country of Canada. It will include the Minister of the Environment in the province of Alberta; the Hon. Tom McMillan, the Minister of the Environment in the government of Canada; the Hon. Guy LeBlanc, the Minister of the Environment in Nova Scotia; the Hon. Clifford Lincoln, the Minister of the Environment in La Belle Province; the Hon. James Bradley, the Minister of the Environment of the government of Ontario; the Hon. Gerald Lecuyer, the Minister of the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health in Manitoba, who will also act as our chairperson; and the Hon. David Porter, who is the Minister of Renewable Resources in the government of Yukon. In addition to that, there are a number of representatives from the corporate structure from across Canada, and there are a number of representatives from environment and academia from across Canada.

Now, we have had several meetings as well and we are working towards a report that we hope we will be able to present to the United Nations in the fall of 1987. The Canadian council of environment ministers has been invited to respond to the United Nations in New York in the fall of 1987. It will be my intent should I seek, of course, the approval of the House -- and I recognize that the members of the New Democratic Party, at least in 1986, were consistently telling me I should travel here, there, and everywhere. I'd like all members to know that I haven't taken advantage of any of those generous offers to travel here, there, and everywhere, but I might, on the basis of the unique importance of having to talk and appear before the United Nations in the fall of 1987 to discuss the World Conservation Strategy and this whole business of environment and development. And I would be delighted, and I know all members here would be very proud to wish me well if we had to undertake this onerous journey to the city of New York.

I should point out that a key objective of the national task force is quoted in the following: it is generally accepted that there is no ultimate conflict between the objectives of economic development and the preservation and enhancement of a healthy environment. However, there are difficult trade-offs to be made along the way, and we'd asked our chairperson, the minister of the environment for the province of Manitoba, to echo those words on behalf of all the environment ministers across the country of Canada.

Our objectives are very clearly known, Mr. Chairman. They're objectives that we basically have set for ourselves on a national level. There are three basic objectives. Number one is to further the integration of economic development with environmental quality considerations. The second national objective is to increase awareness by all sectors of the linkage be-

tween economic development and the environment.

The third objective is

to provide opportunities for development and implementation of resource conservation strategies in Canada.

And on a world level, an international level, we have set for ourselves two major objectives. The first is

to provide visible and substantive support to the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development.

And the second is

to participate in the preparation of a Canadian response to the final report of the World Commission on Environment and Development.

I'm a little flabbergasted by all of this, Mr. Chairman, to recognize that the little country boy from Bonnyville, Alberta, who eventually moved to Barrhead, Alberta, all of a sudden might be invited to appear before the United Nations and speak on behalf of the outstanding work of the people of Alberta, the government of Alberta, with respect to the protection of the environment.

I'm pleased as well that the world is recognizing that Alberta is a world leader and we are constantly being bombarded by questions, letters, visitations from various jurisdictions throughout the world, to ask us the question: how have you been able to do it? I'm just really, really delighted.

Mr. Chairman, as well, I'm pleased to report that as a result of a major report I tabled in this Assembly on August 20, 1986, on developing western Canadian coal, a report that basically said that the utilization of western Canadian low-sulphur coal should be expanded in the province of Ontario, that since that time a number of very important initiatives have occurred on a national level. Members will recall that it was on August 20, 1986, that I had the privilege of tabling this report that once again shows the initiative of this Assembly, this province, this government, to national issues.

Mr. Chairman, I'd now like to turn from these national and international initiatives that we've taken here in the province of Alberta to make a few overview comments with respect to the budget documentation and the estimates that are now before the members of the Assembly.

If members were to take a look at the department estimates of Environment, they would see that the estimates for 1987-88 are asking the members to approve a funding level of \$87,573,820. Members will also note in the book the documentation to that would recognize a 39.1 percent reduction from the comparable 1986-87 estimates, which members of this Assembly agreed to accept last year, a total of \$143,712,056. What I'm asking the hon. members to do today is to approve for expenditure in the province of Alberta a level of \$87,573,820, or a reduction of 39.1 percent.

Now, some hon. members may have the question in their mind as a result of the information that we provided in the throne speech -- and we said that the province of Alberta, this government, had as a cornerstone of its priorities a commitment to the environment -- and might say: "Well, gee, Ken, kind of strange. You say on the one hand that you're committed totally as a cornerstone of your government to the protection of the environment and yet on the other hand you come in and ask the members to accept and support a budget of [\$87.5 million]." So I think it's important, Mr. Chairman, to recognize once again that figures don't tell all of the story. And I want to repeat: you can't judge a book from the colour of its title.

So I think it's important, Mr. Chairman, that when we take a look at our departmental estimates of \$87,573,820 that I ask all members, in their careful analysis of the estimates before them, to extract from these estimates or to write into these estimates some dollar figures that perhaps would help everybody better understand.

First of all, I think it's important to recognize that the estimates that we approved last year and voted on last year, that \$143.7 million figure, will not be the actual level of expenditure that Alberta Environment will have experienced in the fiscal year that closed March 31, 1987. In fact, I said -- and I want to bring back to all members' attention the third objective and priority that I talked about: effective and efficient implementation of the programs before the administration of Alberta Environment. So we will not -- we will not -- expend \$143.7 million. In fact, Mr. Chairman, we're going to be returning back at the end of March 31 a significant amount of dollars to the General Revenue Fund in the province of Alberta. And members will say: "Well, how do you do that? Isn't it just traditional that you just get this money and everybody goes out and spends it?"

Well, I also reminded members last year that the major capital expenditure program that we had in the Alberta Environment estimates was an expenditure level allocated to the Oldman River dam. And I said at that time -- despite all the catcalls and the hooting and the arguments against it, that it could never be done -- that I would devote my energies to ensuring that the delivery of that project would come in at \$349.6 million in 1986 dollars. The fact of the matter is, in the contracts that have been awarded in 1986-87, they were considerably less than we had built into the budget. So we have a substantial savings and a reduction.

But let me explain further how we arrived at \$87.5 million. Members should know that these estimates do not include -- do not include -- \$43.249 million that has been set aside basically, several months ago, for the Oldman River dam. And members should also look at the capital fund, which is another estimate that was tabled on March 20 that would have dollars for the Oldman River dam. So in essence we can reduce the amount of dollars for the Alberta Environment estimates by that amount that is included in the capital estimates, and that figure is there for all members to read. It's what: \$37 million, \$38 million? This will be found under element 4.2.6 in the estimates, that dollar reduction.

A second item that I think it's important to provide for the information of all members is in element 2.2.2, an element that deals with quality of air, where there's a reduction of an expenditure level of approximately \$1 million. We had a nonrecurring item that several years ago we began working on to have fulfilled in the 1986-87 fiscal year, an expenditure level of \$1 million on a particular project. That project has now been successfully concluded. So having set up the objective, having concluded the objective, there is absolutely no need to carry that \$1 million forward. We finished the job. So that section, element 2.2.2, can be reduced by \$1 million, and if you do it, then you'll actually see an increase in that particular estimate, if you eliminate that \$1 million.

I'd also like to draw members' attention to element 3.2.6, which deals with the extension of the Blairmore coal slack piles. The members will see that the element has been reduced dramatically for expenditures in 1987 and 1988. The fact is it's been reduced by \$2.25 million. What I've determined that I would have to do because of difficulties that we had in the last fiscal year in obtaining complete assurances with respect to the

land and the utilization of the land is I've had to extend that project beyond this fiscal year, which means that I don't need the dollars in 1987 and 1988. So I come very clean and very truthfully to this Assembly and say, "Hey, we can reduce the expenditure by \$2.25 million." I'm not the kind of guy who'll come before you and say, "Well, look, despite the fact, we'll take the money and spend it elsewhere." No, no. It's not the way we operate in this government; that's not the way my colleagues operate. So I think it's important that you recognize that \$2.25 million reduction is built in there.

In addition to that, Mr. Chairman and members, I draw your attention to subelement 4.7.2, the temporary emergency water supply program. This government initiated that program several years ago when we had a drought-threatening situation in the province. Now, we set up the program, we expended the dollars, provided the help to our citizens. The program is now terminated, terminated March 31, 1987. So I could not come here and say, "Well, look, despite the fact that the program's terminated, give me the dollars again and we'll invent something else," No, no. We have eliminated from this budget \$2.56 million. So, hon. colleagues, if you add up these items together, if you add up the \$43.249 million of the Oldman River dam, if you add up the \$1 million under nonrecurring items, the \$2.25 million under the extension of the Blairmore coal slack piles, and the \$2.56 million under the temporary emergency water supply program, you see a reduction of \$49.059 million.

Now, if you take that figure and subtract it from last year's estimate of \$143.7 million, which was approved in this Assembly, an estimate that I said that we are not going to expend completely, and if you just, say, subtracted 50 million bucks from 143 -- well, you can subtract \$49 million from \$143 million -- basically, you would come up with a figure of \$84 million. But in the estimates that are before you today is a figure of \$87.573 million, which would then surely show an increase for the estimates of Alberta Environment.

I repeat what I said at the outset, Mr. Chairman: "You sure can't tell a book from the colour of its cover." It's very important to recognize that in this case figures really don't tell the whole story. And I'm very, very pleased -- in fact I was surprised -- how I was able to escape the terror of appearing before the priorities committee and Treasury Board to present these estimates. I thought that I would really come out of there with so much blood running down my back that I couldn't stand up and explain these estimates. But the fact of the matter is that Alberta Environment has been very, very well protected and I survived relatively mildly and unscathed. And I'm really pleased, because it's extremely important. We all know how important the concern for the environment is in this province, and we all know how important our protection of it is to all of our people.

Mr. Chairman, just a few other brief comments. One of the incredibly positive initiatives that occurred in the March 20 budget is listed on page 85 of the budget speech, and I am absolutely amazed -- absolutely amazed -- that not one of my colleagues, because of the modesty of the Provincial Treasurer, not one environmental group in the province of Alberta, not one individual in the province of Alberta has yet caught on to the fact that one of the most significant new environmental initiatives that is taking place anywhere is now taking place in the province of Alberta.

Can I just draw members' attention to something called a "fuel tax"?

A tax of 5 cents per litre on gasoline and diesel fuel

used in a motor vehicle will be implemented on June 1, 1987. Propane, methanol, ethanol and natural gas will not [repeat not] be subject to tax.

Now, hon. colleagues, I would draw your attention to a very important report that was tabled in 1986 by the Royal Society of Canada Commission on Lead in the Environment; the title of the report: Alternatives to lead in gasoline. All members will know that there is a North American commitment in both the United States and Canada that efforts must be undertaken to reduce dramatically lead emissions and contamination of our environment by the use of automobiles and vehicle traffic. One important way that this could be done is to encourage people to use methanol and ethanol. That has occurred in Alberta by way of a taxation measure that I think has even surprised the Provincial Treasurer that no one has recognized it. I would like all members to go to the library one of these days to get themselves a copy of this very important report of February 1986 of the Royal Society of Canada Commission on Lead in the Environment. They will see the submission from this environmental group, that environmental group, from across the country of Canada. In Alberta we've done it -- we've done it.

Now, there's a second benefit. Not only is there an environmentally important initiative here to continue the cleanup of our environment by encouraging people to use less of that pollutant that they put in their vehicles every day but there's also direct benefit to our agricultural producers who, because of the scientific community, are now being able to use a blend, will now cause a greater usage of grain in our province and in Canada. And I think that's just so applaudable. I feel really, really humble about the support that we've received with this particular matter. It should also be pointed out . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please. Under section 2 the time has expired. Perhaps the hon. minister could conclude his comments in response to questions. The authority for the votes before us is found beginning on page 162 of the government estimates.

The Chair recognizes the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am indeed very pleased to address estimates for the Environment. It's certainly been a long time coming, so I will take some pleasure in it.

The minister waxed eloquent on the role of environment and the role of people within the environment protection process. So I thought perhaps I should enlighten him on what I see as my role in that whole process and, in fact, I do not see myself as an adversary or an enemy of the department. I see a critic for the Environment department as being vital to the functioning of the Environment department and to its success, and I take that role very seriously. In my speech the minister will note that I do not take a lot of time patting him on the back. That does not mean that there is nowhere where he could be patted on the back; it merely means that I would prefer to leave it up to people such as the minister to do that backpatting, and I will try to concentrate on other areas.

I believe that my role is to let the minister know what could have been done better, what wasn't done as well as it could have been, and there are number of issues under the estimates that I would like to take a look at. First of all, I would like to take a look at the philosophy of the Department of the Environment. The department should be, in every sense, the advocate of the environment. The central goal of this department should be to

protect the environment from . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order of the committee, please. Order in the committee, please.

Hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. If I were still teaching, I would give them a detention, but I'll just keep them listening for another 27 minutes or so.

Anyway, as I was saying, the role of this department should be to be an advocate for the environment. The central goal should be to protect the environment from individuals, from industries, from municipalities, and from the government departments whose goals and actions might cause damage to the environment.

In its own statement of role and mission -- and I'll read directly from it -- the department has said that its role is to promote a balance between resource management, environmental protection and the quality of life.

I will assume that the department still operates under that goal and would express my concern that I don't see that as adequate.

The department's only job should be to fight, without equivocation, for a clean environment. The balance should be created by the interplay of this department and other departments, the public, industry, and interest groups. The interplay should take place in the context of discussion in the Legislature, thorough and demanding environmental impact assessments, meaningful public hearings -- and I stress meaningful public hearings -- and openness on the part of government. Because the department starts with what I see as the wrong philosophy, I see it as being doomed to have less than the most success it could, and that money spent may often be spent in the wrong directions or used in ineffective manners.

One issue I'd like to touch on under the estimates, and the minister did stress it a moment ago, is the Oldman dam. There is a great reduction under that expenditure. The minister has made it clear, and in fact answered my question, that the project is not under re-evaluation or indefinite hold. There is merely going to be less spent this year, but eventually that \$349 million will be spent. I would hope we don't see near the end of this year special warrants for continued construction of the dam, and the planning in fact has been re-evaluated.

I'm wondering if the minister has decided to add a fish ladder to the dam. I've had people express concern about that. They've expressed concern that in fact federal Fisheries regulations would require a fish ladder, because the department's own studies -- which I am told by Tom Thackeray we can expect to see tabled in the House in the very near future -- indicate that there is disruption of fish movement up and downstream by the dam. I think that goes without saying. Therefore, the federal Fisheries Act, as I understand it, might require a fish ladder, so I hope it will be added.

In terms of the recreational opportunities afforded by the dam -- and last year in the estimates the minister waxed eloquent about a large number of football fields stacked I can't remember how many feet high with how much water upon which people could sail and canoe and fish and beside which they could camp and so on. And it all sounded very nice. As a fisherman and a canoeist and a camper I found it all very interesting, and I certainly do like that area of the province. I wonder if the government study, which we hopefully will see soon on this topic as well, indicated that the lake created by the dam would in fact be windswept, cold, and have steep banks

which would make it unsuitable for recreation much of the year.

Now, I would point to other dams where we were no doubt told that part of the economic benefit of it would be in terms of its recreational value, that being the lakes behind the Brazeau and the Bighorn dams, which are also in foothills areas. And in fact, the maps given out to canoeists by the Department of Tourism, I believe, although I could be corrected there, indicate that those lakes are prone to unpredictable and violent weather and are not recommended for canoeing, which I presume would also include sailing and windsurfing, and would make them less pleasant than other lakes in the province for most recreational activities. I fear that the same will be true . . .

ANHON. MEMBER: [Inaudible] walking on water.

MR. YOUNIE: Well, I don't know. I've never tried that, although I'm sure if we ask the minister, he will say he can do it if necessary to protect the environment.

MR. KOWALSKI: Are you asking?

MR. YOUNIE: No. You can answer all questions at once later, Mr. Minister. Just save them up. There have been a few.

I would like to know if the minister has re-evaluated the recreational values of the dam in light of studies done and how the study -- again, that I haven't seen, although I've discussed with people who've read it -- affects his earlier economic evaluations of the dam. And in that case has the minister re-evaluated the expenditures this dam will require, both this year and in future years, in the light of the Treasurer's newfound preoccupation with deficit reduction? Is it economically feasible to pay -- depending on whose estimates you believe of acreages to be irrigated and whether or not it does stay on budget, under budget, or over budget -- somewhere between \$2,000 and \$8,000 an acre for installation cost of irrigation? In these tough economic times I wonder if that is a feasible expense. I would suggest not and that the minister should in fact consider other alternatives for irrigation.

The minister alluded to his stress on communication, and in that I applaud him. As an educator who taught communications to students, I applaud him for stressing communication and its importance. I wonder then about a 24.5 percent reduction in that portion of the budget for, among other things, communication or information; specifically, policy planning and information services. I wonder if this cut will affect the ability of Albertans to get information from the department. Or will this merely affect public relations items like the ones the minister announced last year, being colouring books, posters, and buttons? If we're going to forgo the colouring books, posters, and buttons in these economic times, I would concur. If it's going to make it more difficult to get information, I would be most concerned.

Under vote 2.1.2, a 6.1 percent increase; that is, under pollution control in the assistant deputy minister's department. Considering the stress I've put on almost everything I've said in or out of the House on pollution control, I would have a hard time being too upset about that, but I wonder if it indicates that the deputy minister's office is going to pick up some of the slack of other areas that were cut. The minister did explain vote 2.2.2, which was the decrease in pollution control for air quality. I had some concerns about that, but he did answer them. But I would be concerned about water quality pollution control cuts, and municipal water and sewerage management pollution control cuts,

and would wonder about why it was seen necessary to cut pollution control in those areas.

Even though the minister did answer my question about the one specific aspect of air quality pollution control, I do have some concerns about it generally, and it relates to areas that the minister is responsible for. The ERCB has recently held hearings on Norcen's application to build a plant a mere seven kilometres north of Edmonton, which would mean if the wind were from the wrong direction, within stench distance of my home and many others in northeast Edmonton . . . What we have here once again is an industry admitting that it could remove the sulphur from its stack effluent. They claim, however, that this is not economically feasible. They do not want to do it because they can increase profits by putting in the neighbourhood of two and a half tons of sulphur per day into the air.

Now, I am concerned that the provincial guidelines say, I believe -- and the minister may correct me if I've missed the figure -- it's 10 tons per day that an industry or plant can put into the air before guidelines for sulphur recovery and removal from effluent take effect. It's certainly close to that, in any case. Now, that would mean, when you consider the 96 percent guideline for a larger plant, that a plant that produces 100 tons of sulphur a day would put less sulphur into the air than a plant that would produce 10 tons of sulphur a day, because the plant producing 10 would put the whole 10 into the atmosphere; the plant producing 100 would only put four in. I would not consider that acceptable.

On the economic argument, I'm wondering if the minister or his department would, if I proposed a dry-cleaning business and said I could only make it economical if I jumped the used dry-cleaning fluid into the sewers -- if that argument would be given any credence. Recently Canadian Occidental withdrew their application for a plant near Breton, and they were using the same argument. I hope their withdrawal came from the department's clarifying for them that that argument was not acceptable and that we can be sure that it won't be acceptable for any other plant as well. So I hope that the minister will in fact agree that the only environmentally sound policy on sulphur emissions is a policy that requires best available technology.

Now, I'm told that for a large plant it is technologically feasible to remove approximately 99.5 percent of the sulphur. For smaller plants, however, I'm told that once you get over about 70 or 80 percent, it does create some technical difficulties. I'm concerned that the standards should be upgraded to that level. That would be a 70 percent increase in sulphur recovery for small plants, if you went to 70 percent. Now, going to these standards would dramatically reduce the amount of sulphur put into the air and I think would then in fact justify the minister's reductions in pollution controls. So I would urge him to adopt that kind of policy.

I will look with interest under Community and Occupational Health estimates to see if there's money for more study of sulphur pollution, considering that new evidence has indicated that, as I contended almost a year ago, the sampling technique they used for their so-called unpolluted area or sample group was totally inaccurate. For the Environment department I'm concerned that the study might be seen as a justification that present standards are adequate or could even be lowered, which the industry has argued. I would like the minister's assurance that the present review process will result in a considerable lowering of the total sulphur emissions in the province.

Under vote 2.6, which is waste management, this contains one of the few increases in the entire ministry. Under municipal

waste management, I wonder how much of that sum is connected to the proposed site of a new Edmonton area landfill. The site is near the intersection of Highway 21 and Highway 16, which I used to drive by twice a day on my way to and from work when I was a teacher. It lies, according to the maps I've seen, between two creeks and near several underground springs, which would indicate to me there must be considerable movement of groundwater in the area as well. Has the minister allocated in this year's budget any money for an environmental impact assessment of this site proposal? So far as I know, the only studies done have dealt with the economic feasibility of using this site. I believe that a thorough study of the environmental and social impacts must be done before the site could be approved. Can the minister assure that such studies would be done?

Under vote 4, I'm concerned about the matter of Oyen's water supply. I've heard that the government is planning to go ahead with some project to get them a water supply. Hopefully what I've heard is accurate. And I would wonder, if so, which plan from the departmental studies did the minister approve? Is there any money in this year's estimates to begin the project and, if so, how soon would it be finished?

I've got some concerns about what is a fairly big expenditure item for the government and what I believe will get bigger and bigger as the years progress, and that concerns the Chem-Security or Swan Hills waste plant. There's almost \$15 million under vote 7. The joint venture agreement will cause ongoing expenses, so I believe we must discuss that whole joint venture in light of the Treasurer's commitment and in fact even preoccupation -- some would say even fixation -- with deficit reduction, that certainly that joint venture agreement doesn't pay much heed to the idea of deficit reduction. In fact, one minister of the government has told single employables that they can feed themselves on \$4.80 per day, so I'm sure that this minister should be able to explain to the principals of Bow Valley Resource Services that their social assistance program for financially strapped corporate employables must likewise be cut to \$4.80 a day, which would be considerable savings for the province.

Also, I would like to point out that in the mind of many, including myself, that whole joint venture agreement is little more than a corporate welfare scheme for friends in trouble, or socialism for the rich, as some would call it, at the taxpayers' expense. Because of the economic dangers of a monopoly I would like to discuss the issue of whether or not Chem-Security has a monopoly on transportation of hazardous waste. That, if so, will be costly to both the taxpayers and consumers of the service. To clarify, I thought it would be fair to read a dictionary definition of the word "monopoly." It's from *The Senior Dictionary: Dictionary of Canadian English* used in most Alberta high schools. Monopoly is described as "the exclusive control of a commodity or service" or "such control granted by a government." Now, surely the minister can't believe that the dictionary was written by a band of socialists who aim to try to help me make political points, so we will assume, in that case, that the definition is accurate.

Now I would like to go to some words of, in this case, Lome Mick, chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. He said in a letter to Mr. Bob Sayers of Red Deer that there was never, at any time, any indication that independent operators would be allowed access to the Swan Hills facility; the decision was made in 1982 that the operator for the plant would have the sole responsibility of managing the transportation of

waste to the Swan Hills facility for safety and efficiency reasons. Now, as I understand the English language, sole responsibility for management is the same as exclusive control, which was the dictionary definition of monopoly. And he went on to say that in order to carry out this responsibility, Chem-Security Ltd. will contract with owner/operators. So the only way to transport hazardous waste in this province is to get a contract with Chem-Security. One cannot compete with them in any fair market sense. That means a monopoly.

He also says that direct haul by waste generators to Swan Hills will be very rare and hauling by third parties outside the system is not contemplated at this time. So unless the policy has changed since Mr. Mick wrote in November last year, I have to assume there is a monopoly. And in fact, he listed the only places where somebody transporting hazardous waste could compete, and that list was:

- a) hauling wastes from Alberta generator sites . . . outside the province
- b) site clean up and remedial work [and]
- c) transformer processing and draining.

None of those involve transportation in competition with Chem-Security to the Swan Hills plant. That indicates to me that they have exclusive control.

I would also look at the words of the Minister of the Environment in a letter of January 26 saying that:

Point number three, in our view, can only be accomplished by requiring the operator of the plant, Chem-Security Ltd., to manage all aspects of the transportation to the plant.

Again, exclusive control. It becomes more and more obvious that that is the way it is going to be done.

Similarly, this is a letter from Lome Mick again; January 23, 1987: similarly, the transportation of special waste will be conducted by owner/operators contracted to the treatment centre operator. So the only way to get into the business is as part of the organization under the management, direction, control, and supervision of Chem-Security Ltd. I think it's obvious from that point that there is going to be a monopoly on behalf of Chem-Security granted by the government through their own Crown corporation.

I could -- but maybe I won't take that much time -- read three more I had earmarked from the joint venture agreement on the plant, but I think it's been sufficiently established that the monopoly does exist. Although we may wish to call it something else, it is still that. So my questions would be: has the minister or has Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation done an economic study to determine what is a bearable cost for treating various wastes within the Alberta economy? Is the minister content to let Chem-Security set prices based on what American disposal companies -- which they were and, I contend, basically still are -- can gouge from desperate American users of the disposal services? Because that seems to be the rate we're setting right now.

I have another concern, because I am worried that not too long after the plant opens up we will see accusations of environmental damage done by the plant. That is inevitable, and I think the minister would agree. There will be opponents who will accuse that, whether it's happening or not. I am concerned that we have some method of demonstrating whether or not their claims will be valid. There is only one way to do that, and that is that at some point before the first day of operation of the plant, the Environment department has a thorough baseline study of the environmental quality in the area, so that in future

points studies can be done to prove how much the quality of the environment has changed. Without that baseline study the minister can always come back and argue that although the environment there seems to be bad in this point, it was always that way, so you can't blame it on the plant. So I think it only fair for a facility of this magnitude that we have that baseline study, and we know therefore down the road what has been done.

I would like to point out to the minister that we can't count on a free market system to set prices for the services of Chem-Security, because there is not a free market for that service in Alberta. The exclusive rights granted to Bow Valley Resource Services through the joint venture and the exclusive rights on transportation granted to Chem-Security: these both preclude free market competition in any real sense. There is left only one alternative: price review and control by a sensitive government that puts environmental and economic needs of Albertans first. To do that, it will be necessary to either bring the pricing policies of Chem-Security under the direct control of the government or, if they are not willing to do that, to rescind the joint venture agreement entirely and to pursue the plant as a Crown corporation and public utility. By the way, I am more than willing to table any of the documents I've read from so far. None of them constituted private correspondence, so if the minister would like to see them, those that I haven't filed with the Legislature could be.

I have some concerns on the issue of the marina being constructed on the McGrane Lagoon on Lac La Biche. There are a number of reasons I have concerns about it, and I think it is appropriate to discuss it under these estimates because it involves ongoing interdepartmental consultation and could well lead to expenditures in other areas of the minister's estimates, perhaps on an emergency basis later. I want to express my concerns for your department's part in it because you did say in the House, in fact, that there had been discussions. The advertising for the project was arranged by the minister's department and so on. I believe it does come under this department as well.

In fact, in view of our dispute over facts of some days ago, I would like to know to what extent the minister or any other officials in his department influenced whether or not this project would be given a go-ahead. The reflection I got from Fish and Wildlife officials in the area was that they thought that location was horrible and were against it. So they did not make the decision. I want to know at what level consultations took place and whether or not it was the minister or some departmental official who influenced the decision or if it was entirely the fault of the Fish and Wildlife department, whichever.

Also, I would like to know: does the minister not share my concern that the public advertising of the project was inadequate? My concern stems from the fact that one part of the land description in the advertisement in the newspaper was incorrect. The description "south half section 23-67-14-4" is correct, but it's very hard to find on the official maps of the area because section lines quit some distance from the lake before that area is there. So you just have to guesstimate by extending lines on the map. We did, however, come to the conclusion that it was most likely correct.

The rest of the description, though, was incorrect. River lot 55 is correct, but it's river lot 55, settlement of Lac La Biche, not river lot 55, Hudson Bay Reserve. That's a very important mistake. The minister confirmed in a letter to me that the Hudson Bay Reserve portion of the land description was put in because it was used by the proponent of the development, and I would wonder if it is not the responsibility of the minister's de-

partment to thoroughly check and include only that legal land description and to check, if they're going to use common names, whether or not the common name is the correct common name for that area. I am concerned because the Hudson Bay Reserve term does not refer to that area in the local parlance and in fact it refers very directly to a plot of land in the town of Lac La Biche -- owned by Hudson Bay Company, I presume. It does have shoreline, and in fact it has one or two locations that residents I talked to felt would be perfectly adequate for a marina as being proposed.

So I'm concerned that in fact people looked at the Hudson Bay Reserve term used in the land description and said: "Well, sure that's a good place; it's right in town. It's not going to hurt anybody; what's to matter?" If they'd known it was the lagoon . . . And one person who lives four lots away from the site didn't recognize the description as being almost his next-door neighbour, that's how misleading it was -- I am assuming, unintentionally misleading, but misleading nonetheless.

I would compliment the officials of local Fish and Wildlife offices. After I visited the site on a Friday and complained to them Friday afternoon quite bitterly about the horrible mess that was made, the project was shut down on Saturday. I'm sure ministers would like to say that there was some other reason for that happening. It doesn't matter. It was shut down, and that made me happy because it was not an appropriate location.

I have some questions related to the estimates on this issue. How much money has the minister allotted under votes 2 or 4 to environmentally reclaim this site should that be required? There is clear evidence of environmental damage being done. How much communication has there been between his department, Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, and the federal fisheries department concerning possible violations of the federal Fisheries Act?

Now that it is obvious that some local residents disapprove of this location now that they know exactly what location is being referred to, will the minister readvertise this project, hold public hearings, and re-evaluate the location? And if so, how much would that cost?

I must stress, and I think it would be unfair to say anything else but this, that I think a marina in the Lac La Biche area is a tremendous idea, would be a boost for local employment in the construction phase, would be a boost to their economy for tourism. I think it was this location that was ill considered and should never have been okayed. The idea of the marina itself is good. I hope the minister will make sure that a future site is found for a marina there that is much more sensitive.

On that note, Mr. Chairman, I will let the minister respond.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. Oh, I'm sorry; Mr. Minister, did you want to respond to this?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that in light of the interest that colleagues of mine have with respect to environmental concerns, I'll wait and respond at the end and allow all members to have their contribution, I know they're very anxious,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Mr. Minister, I'll try to be to the point and not repetitive.

The minister mentioned that Alberta was the leader, and I

think possibly, looking in the rear-view mirror, it has been. But certainly in many areas, in particular sulphur technology, the U.S. has now passed us in the case of sour gas plants. And if you take areas, certainly states like Oregon have always been ahead of us -- I don't think we've ever caught up -- and countries like Switzerland. And I suppose it depends who you're comparing yourself with. It's like the hare and the tortoise; if you compare yourself with some of the more polluted Third World countries, you're doing fine, but if you compare yourself with some of the best countries that have handled industrial problems, we're not doing good enough.

Now, he also mentions how often the province's advice is sought. Well, if it's sought by people who are trying to protect themselves from pollution, that's one thing. If it is sought by large companies that are trying to figure out just how they can get away with doing something where they are and copying what some of the large companies have done here and have been able to get away with, that's not so good either.

I am very concerned that he's cut the budget by \$39.1 million. In effect the minister has said that it really will not do that much harm, implying, I suppose, that the money he'd spent other years had been done inefficiently. Nevertheless, \$39 million is a heck of a cut, and I think that in this day and age I have to be very concerned about it.

Now, I'm going to try to restrict my comments mostly to air pollution because I think air pollution is something we should be doing much more work on and we don't seem to have a handle on it yet. It may well be, too, that as the public is stopping smoking -- although I notice the Minister of the Environment still chooses to coat his lungs with nicotine every now and again, to help stop having the oxygen flowing through the brain and activate the thing. Anybody in opposition loves to see government members smoking because it means that their minds will not get oxygen in order to do proper thinking and that surely they will, like the dinosaur, disappear.

However, now that we're monitoring air and mentioning the newfound interest in pure air, I think it's worth noting that the air monitors we use around the province are, there again, old fashioned. Eight very important constituents are left out today. For instance, the mercaptans aren't analyzed at all, and they're considered to be, particularly in our hydrocarbon age, a very important thing, very important and very dangerous if they go to large amounts.

There is the question of carbon disulfide. Carbon disulfide, as you know, is a bit of a catalyst in other ways. It can turn things that were formerly insoluble into being soluble and get into our water or food stream. And also trace elements: vanadium, for instance, is something that comes out of our tar sands, very poisonous, and as far as I know, the analysis for these types of trace elements are not being done. I'm very concerned that we're cutting our budget instead of increasing it, and instead of improving our evaluation process we're making it worse, and instead of broadening a range, we're leaving it at the same range, leaving at least eight very dangerous minerals not being monitored.

In addition, I'm worrying about the density of the monitoring being taken. I know the minister concluded yesterday saying that he suspected that the monitoring that takes place in Refinery Row in Sherwood Park could catch a 500-square-foot area of high lead. I really would ask him to double-check that. He said that he was a person that read and that he felt they could, but I doubt that our monitoring system is of such a density that they could pick out a 500-square-foot area. That's the size -- as you

say, it's smaller than a bungalow. I don't think we're monitoring our soil that closely, and I think we should have some statement from the minister just how closely we are monitoring our soil.

Certainly I think the provincial government should adopt a goal of zero increase in acid rain, zero increase in the whole province in acid rain. In other words, no facility that puts sulphur in the air should be allowed to come on unless we can show that in that area we have reduced the sulphur for enough room for it to come on. In other words, if we say that there will be no increase, I think we'd be making a step that certainly future generations will thank us for. Statistics by a recent survey on sulphur emissions in Alberta point out that sulphate depositions -- this is not sulphur -- in Alberta are calculated now to be 26.4 kilograms per hectare per year, 26.4, whereas 26.4 kilograms per hectare are nearing the maximum target of 30 kilograms per hectare. So we are going up, and that has to be of some concern to us. Yet on air monitoring, it's been cut by 28 percent, from \$3.8 million down to \$2.7 million. We've cut air monitoring when we should be, if anything, increasing it. That has to be a great deal of concern.

Now, when it comes to certain sulphur plants -- and I know; I've been in the business for some years. In our constituency we have just recently had hearings at Carbondale for a gas plant. The argument by the owners of the gas is naturally that the new regulations should allow so much sulphur to go up into the air. But with the price of natural gas today and with the fact that our share -- at least 15 percent to 25 percent of the gas is the government's share -- I think the government would be very wise to think that if under present economics sulphur inhibitors cannot be put on their plants, there might be some pretty serious thinking of, "Nothing wrong with leaving the gas in the ground until it increases to that price that it can afford to put sulphur inhibitors on."

But let's take a step further. It may well be wise that this government, if private enterprise feels that it cannot -- and this is something I would like to see -- feels that it is not affordable to put an inhibitor, whether it's on a gas plant or another plant, that we should go ahead and do it with our own taxpayers' money, with a caveat against the property, a caveat against that from there and the future, so that if there is any increase in value or if there is any money made, we get our money back. I think you'd be surprised how often private enterprises say, if you'll pardon the pun: Holy smoke; if indeed the government is going to put an inhibitor on our plant, and we know how expensive government inhibitors are, and they're going to get it back eventually from our profit anyhow, we'd better go ahead and do it ourselves." In other words, you would call their bluff if you decided as a government to put the inhibitors on yourselves and take it out with a caveat against the property.

Mr. Chairman, the minister has revealed a type of thinking that bothers me, even in question period today, that caveat emptor type of thinking -- buyer beware, or the last one getting the property has to do the worrying. That I don't think is right, and it should not be right. In other words, previous sellers cannot contract out of liability. I think it's a basic tenet of law, and I think some of the lawyers in here could back me up on this, but I learned a long ago that no matter what I put in an agreement, I could not contract out of liability no matter how smooth I was and how cunning. If I sold something that had an inherent danger in it, no matter how much I had that person sign up that it was not my fault, I was still stuck with it. Yet he seems to dunk that the last person in the chain is the one that gets stuck

with it.

This has to concern me a lot, and it goes all the way back to the present sulphur plants in industry in this province. We have never, never in this province gone back to a producer or to a sulphur emitter and said: "Put on emitters that are stronger or better than what you have." Because we use the argument that that's reneging on an old deal. I argue that it isn't. I agree you're that reneging on an old deal if you do it within one year, two years, maybe three years. But these plants are nearly all built on a five- to seven-year payout. So to say to plants that have been there 20 years: "Oh no, you know it's not fair; we allowed you to build 20 years; we can't come and make restrictions tougher now" -- to allow the companies to get away with that argument fails to realize that they've already had their money back. Nothing wrong, I think, with reviewing every five years the regulation under which a plant had been built. And in that five-year period or after five years, sure, I think it's all right. We should have built in there that we're going back at these things every five years, maybe seven years at the most, to see whether they are meeting modern standards, because we have plants in this province that are absolutely atrocious.

The next thing, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister of Environment to give some consideration to is what you call air sheds. I notice that most of the air shed we get around here is from the Minister of the Environment. Nevertheless, if you go out -- if you're meteorologically interested, air sheds do occur. There are probably five to seven of them in the province. They are like watersheds. You can measure watersheds. Everybody knows where a watershed is because they know where the water flows. Air is the same way; it flows. Air doesn't suddenly pick up and decide to go from Lloydminster to Dawson Creek; it doesn't flow that way ever. But there are air sheds. And consequently, within each air shed -- we should be monitoring the air shed, and if an air shed is up to the saturation point of SO₂ in the air or emissions, then nothing more should go into that area. But instead we look at each plant -- plant by plant by plant -- particularly around the city of Edmonton, upwind from Edmonton. We say, "Oh well, the only thing we're looking at is how many tonnes you're putting up that stack."

I know it's been an ancient principle since this government was elected that if you put the sulphur high enough in the air, it won't come down until it's in Saskatchewan. Nevertheless, the point is that some of it is bound to come down here downwind. I'm just saying that plant by plant is not the way to measure it. You measure it by air shed, the same way you would watershed. And as far as I know, I've never seen anything in Environment here that's analyzing by air shed rather than plant by plant by plant. I think it's well worth looking into that.

To get into maybe a more specific, I would be interested if the minister has done anything more about the gas plant abandoned at Nevis by the Chevron people. I understand that the government is waiting for the company and the company is waiting for the government and the government is waiting for the company. It's getting to be an old-fashioned waltz, at which the Minister of the Environment is standing by.

In my own constituency we have things like in the Westlock area the settling pond that occasionally overflows and flows down Wabash Creek. It's very questionable in my mind -- and this could be a great job creator -- whether we shouldn't be looking at many of these small towns and whether their settling ponds are large enough and whether indeed we should stay with the settling pond idea. I think there's a lot to be said, with a little encouragement from this government, to treating sewage on

the spot, possibly for fertilizer or whatever it is, and at least not dumping it into the small creeks which are least able to handle it, at least then pipeline it over to a major river. But it should be treated on the spot; this is the most sensible way of handling it.

Mr. Minister, you could possibly answer this too. As far as I know, there are no SO₂ emission controls on coal-fired electricity in this province. It was done in the old days where coal firing was thought to have to be encouraged to keep the electricity down, but I think the SO₂ emission monitoring on coal-fired plants is nonexistent. The minister quite rightly bragged -- and this is a time I'll back him up -- at the fact that they didn't put an increased 5-cent sales tax on propane and some other fuels. But why, why did you increase it on unleaded gas? We should be thinking now -- when you pull up to a pump, you'll notice leaded gas sells for more than unleaded gas. One of the most intriguing things -- and I've been in the oil business all of my life -- is why something that's had something added to it sells for less than something that hasn't added to it the very same commodity. So consequently I think it would have been a very wise idea to put a tax on leaded gas, and that would do, or take the tax off unleaded gas. You've put it on both gases, so if you went so far as taking it off propane, why did you not take it off unleaded gas?

Storm sewers in this province in our major cities are still dumped without treatment. Storm sewers rarely go through any treatment centres. Storm sewers from our major cities flush nearly anything on the land and in the sewers into our rivers. It's very much of a concern.

Herbicides. In my own constituency -- and I've dealt, Mr. Chairman, with the minister on this -- there seems to be almost a 1940s' attitude to the overflow of excess herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers from one farm to the other. The only concern the Department of the Environment seems to have is whether the water is flowing freely, not whether somebody's contaminating that water. Now, I say the monitoring that's going on in that is not sufficient. We could have a tremendous almost bomb in agriculture if the analysts start finding out that carcinogenic minerals from pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers are going into the dugouts from which our cattle are being watered and which our grain is being grown adjacent to these low water areas. In other words, we are more inclined to worry about water flowing, which was an old concept of drought areas and cattle ranchers and everything else, which were good laws for those days. They were good for the 1920s and the turn of the century. But today water should be monitored from property to property to make sure that the farmers, for their own protection, are not polluting the water to a level that makes it impossible for people downstream to use it in their dugouts and then for feed.

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

I close off now to give the hon. minister a chance, although I realize that when it comes to words per minute, there's nobody in the House that comes even close to him. So I want to close off by saying that cleaning up the environment is not only good business; it pays for itself over and over down the way. It creates jobs. And, Mr. Chairman, if the minister ever needs anyone to go at his side to the cabinet council and plead for more money, I'll be only too glad to help.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Chairman, it was indeed interesting to hear from the hon. Minister of the Environment about how a boy with such humble origins finally made it not only to the national stage but also to the world stage. But given experience at that level, my concern is with his behavior at the provincial level, and it seems to me that in terms of his performance, particularly in the east side of the city of Calgary, I'd be very reluctant to vote his ministry a single cent. It seems that the east side of the city of Calgary's been subjected to what could almost be described as chemical and biological warfare recently. And my concern here is with the extent to which the Minister of the Environment is prepared to assume full and complete responsibility for these situations instead of passing it off to some other level of government or to the industries themselves. I think that in these situations where people's health and indeed their lives are being threatened, the minister should intervene immediately, deal with the situation, and then worry about getting some kind of financial settlement from other parties later. And I'd just like to go through some of these situations with the hon. member.

The first one is the Hub Oil situation in the city of Calgary. Now, there was an old oil refinery on the east side of the city that later became an oil reclamation depot, and it's still operating that way. It was outside the city of Calgary at one time, but both the city and the provincial governments allowed housing developments to encroach and surround that particular plant. It's very ugly visually. It's an old-fashioned plant. There are old trucks that move back and forth off that site every day, dripping oil all over the ground. What the plant does is just pile gravel and sand on it, creating the same situation there, but on a smaller scale albeit, that exists at the Imperial Oil site in the city of Calgary. There's a potential, because of the way the groundwaters flow in that area, if there is oil contamination there, for that to move into a pond that's on an adjacent park site and from there into Chestermere Lake, which is part of the whole irrigation system of the city of Calgary.

It's true that the minister has taken some steps to deal with the concern that residents in that area have about air pollution ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please.

MR. PASHAK: ... emanating from the plant. He's required the plant to install scrubbers and this sort thing, and he is monitoring the air, and I commend him for that. But the problem is such that there is still pollution. People still breathe fumes that are noxious; they still complain about them. The only real solution for the problem of the Hub Oil plant is to relocate it elsewhere. The city of Calgary has said that they have a site available in the Foothills industrial estate, which is far from where people live. With some direction from the Minister of the Environment, I'm quite sure that that situation could be dealt with in a way that would be satisfactory to all and probably at no real great expense to the province either, because they could improve the efficiency of that plant. They could improve the amount of waste oil that's treated there, which means that less waste oil would be going into the environment or would have to be trucked up to the Swan Hills site or whatever else would be done with it.

The minister, by the way, promised me that we would tour that site shortly after the last sitting of the Legislature. I would welcome his inviting me to take him up on that offer.

With respect to a noxious cloud that suddenly emanated from a chemical plant in the city of Calgary, I'd like to make some remarks about that. It seems to me that the only way we knew anything about it was just the fortuitous circumstance that there happened to be in that area of the city an air monitoring unit that was brought down there for some other reason. If it hadn't been located there, I'm not sure that we would have ever found out exactly what that cloud was composed of. It turns out that the cloud was composed of sulphur trioxide, which combines with water to form sulphuric acid. It was just very fortunate that at the time and on the day that occurrence took place, it was rather cold in the city of Calgary. The water vapour content was somewhat lower than it might otherwise have been. If, for example, it had been a very humid, warm day, there could have been an extremely lethal situation occur in the city of Calgary.

I'm concerned, too, because it didn't seem to me that once it was known that there was a cloud with potential lethal consequences associated with it -- there was no plan in place to warn residents, to block off the area from cars moving in and out of it. There seems to have been no safety measures that were initiated, and I wonder what would happen if there was a real environmental circumstance that should develop in that part of the city.

Another major attack on the people on the east side of the city involved contaminated drinking water. Fecal contamination was found in a number of water taps on the east side of the city, and to my knowledge the source of that contamination has never been found. I think the minister himself should have taken full responsibility for that, should've made sure that all efforts were made that could possibly be made to determine just what the source of that was, including monitoring the waste from all of the packing plants that are on the other side of the Bow River, which was never done to my knowledge. And I know that there's been contamination in the past enter the city's systems through those packing plants.

And the last problem, of course, is the one that we've been dealing with in question period recently, and it has to do with the old refinery sites along the Bow River, particularly the Imperial Oil site and the Gulf Oil site. At the Imperial Oil site all kinds of hydrocarbons and lead contaminants have been found around the plant. And it's amazing to me that there was so much oil in the ground at the Imperial Oil site that they took out 22 million litres of oil from that site and that as far away from that site as the Ogden plant is, they had wells drilled there and they were pulling oil out of the ground there. And by the way, the oil they take out of the ground there is transported to the Hub Oil plant for recycling.

Now, if you can find oil approximately three-quarters of a mile away from the site, where in the world does the oil get to from there? Does it enter the Bow River? As I mentioned in question period earlier today, there has been some attempt to monitor contaminants entering the Bow River, but as I understand it, the oil could be in little streams. If you happen to miss the little stream that carries with it lead contaminants, you could miss the fact that these contaminants are entering the Bow River. What you need is a very comprehensive and systematic approach to monitoring the Bow River in terms of looking for contaminants.

But my real concern here is with responsibility and who is ultimately responsible for these situations. And in my view, it's the Minister of the Environment that has the constitutional responsibility for these situations. The city of Calgary has no powers to write environmental laws, no powers to impose penalties on polluters. It's only the province, which has been

given that under the Constitution, who can do this. And if there is a problem out there, it's my view that the province should enter into these situations immediately, make sure that the situations are cleaned up, and if there is a financial liability that could be assigned or assessed to someone else, then deal with that later. I'd like to hear the minister's comments about the whole question of responsibility in these situations.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Calgary North West.

DR. CASSIN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to address a couple of questions to the minister. Many of the concerns have already been raised this morning, but I would like to compliment the minister for the excellent job he has done at this time of restraint, in cutting back substantially in the estimates for his department at this point in time, and showing some leadership in breaking away from the old philosophy: if you don't spend it you lose it. I think this is very important for all departments to consider at this time and also that it has allowed us to reduce substantially the amount of moneys that might have been required to be trimmed from the service sector of our economy, particularly education, social services, and health, at this time. I think he's to be congratulated for his efforts, that we have an environment, both clean air and clean water, and a number of other problems that we have to deal with in this province because of our dependence on the oil and the energy sector and the waste and the special considerations that that industry brings with it.

I'd like to maybe ask the minister, in considering some of the major projects that this department will have to look at both presently and in the future, to give serious consideration to Canadian content where and if it is possible. I realize that when we have to cut back, we have to look at price, and that's important, but I'd like him to consider Canadian content, particularly when we're dealing with the Oldman River dam.

I'd also like it if perhaps the minister could tell us -- we've had a number of allegations here that perhaps there is some favouritism to certain companies -- whether or not there were other qualified companies that were considered. And it was suggested that perhaps the department should take over the waste management in certain sites. And I would like the minister to address that as to whether that is the most cost-effective and most efficient way of dealing with this problem.

I realize that the time is late. The minister would like to address some of the problems that have been raised this morning, and perhaps there are other members who would like to ask a question or two. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to raise a couple of constituency concerns and general concerns that I have about the Department of the Environment and also the lack of communication that seems to be existing between the Department of the Environment and Fish and Wildlife. I think what we have is two related departments that are perhaps not speaking enough to each other in terms of some of the problems that are developing within the province.

I would point out, for example, that the McGrane Lagoon in Lac La Biche is one where there was obviously lack of communication between the two departments, where one seemed to rubber stamp the other without looking at the fact that some of

the questions and some of the answers had not been looked at before approval was granted to a developer to be building on a very sensitive environmental area. Now, in the Lac La Biche area we're all -- and as an M.L.A. I am very much favour of a marina. I mean, one of the things I talked about during the election campaign was that to develop a tourism industry, we need to have better access to those types of facilities. So it's not a question that as an M.L.A. I'm against the whole concept of the marina. The only problem is the location of it and some of the questions that have to be answered by both the Department of the Environment and Fish and Wildlife.

Lac La Biche, as well as other areas and lakes in Alberta, has been identified as a migratory bird sanctuary, and I think one of things I'd like to see between the Department of the Environment and Fish and Wildlife is that it should be more clearly advertised to the public. In those areas where there are identifiable fish spawning areas, bird nesting areas, I think it's time we put up signs to tell the public about these things, that when a developer is looking at putting up a project, those areas are already preidentified. If we had that already in place, this problem would not have developed. Trying to minimize the impact after the damage has already been done is really kind of going at the situation backwards. So I think that in the example of the McGrane Lagoon there's no doubt that that principle was not followed.

The other thing which I want the Department of Environment to be very fully aware of is that before they again approve some of these developments, we have to look at the net loss provision under the Canada Fisheries Act, at the net loss productive capacity of habitats. We should not be trying, you know, to minimize damage, but we should be making sure that we'd have no net loss of the resource to begin with as a number one consideration of both departments as opposed to saying, "Well, you know, we'll try to work out a deal that will cause damage, but we'll try and minimize it as much as we can." So, you know, I think that by preadvertising, by making sure the public, the government has done its homework, by both departments of environment and fisheries openly communicating together and developing those policies in conjunction with each other, we would not have that difficulty presenting itself; like Stirling Lake, for example.

Another issue which is of very grave concern in my constituency is the causeway which was built to Churchill Provincial Park. Again, we have an environmental problem there because of the lack of circulation within the lake. Biologists did a study that showed that the causeway has deflected the current in the lake, and it has created basically a stagnant water where Lac La Biche is located. You know, where it used to come between the islands and down into Lac La Biche, in the Lac La Biche bay, the water now is circulating through the main lake and basically bypassing the whole area. And what's happening is that because the water is not properly circulating, we've got a situation where weeds, where the oxygen level, the reproductive capacity of the lake, et cetera, have been impaired. I think that's one area the Department of the Environment should be looking at very quickly to again make sure we don't kill Lac La Biche, because it is one of the most beautiful lakes in Alberta. It has a very excellent tourism potential and has worked a lot in that area, but if we destroy the lake, really the provincial park -- whatever else -- is meaningless in the end, because it won't attract the people and development later on.

The other thing is the Field Lake situation. I hope the minister has been made aware recently of the ongoing mess at Field

Lake. I received a call from a farmer about a week and a half ago; Field Lake was backing up onto his property, and the smell -- I took a trip out there -- was like a septic tank. I mean, it's that kind of a smell that was originating from the Field Lake area. The town admits that the present aeration system is not working. The Department of the Environment has been aware of that problem for the last number of years. The department has refused to fund. The town of Lac La Biche has admitted they cannot afford the cost which would put Field Lake into a much better situation. There has to be help from the Department of the Environment to clean up that mess, because that water is going into Lac La Biche. We've not only killed a very historical lake -- and I have personal experience. Field Lake used to have little fish in there and used to have actually even migratory fish coming into the lake at some time during the year. That's no longer happening. That lake is now really officially dead. And again, where is the Department of the Environment to make sure that these things do not happen? I don't want to see here in Alberta or in the Lac La Biche area what I saw in Quebec, for example, in terms of the lack of sewerage treatment and the destruction of a lot of their waterways and very beautiful lakes. Now they're looking at very expensive after-the-fact cleanup of those areas. So I would ask the minister to respond to those two questions: whether his department and the department of fish and wildlife have proper communication established. Will the minister make sure that throughout Alberta proper analysis and signs are put up to identify fishing habitats, nesting areas, and that there will be a policy which will be looking at the no-net-loss policy in regards to environment?

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the minister for the work they've been doing with the Bow River in Calgary and the tertiary treatment plant. I think the Bow River is now cleaner than it has been in the last 40 years. I'm very happy. Of course that's located in my constituency, Calgary Millican, but I hope they continue to look at tertiary treatment plants adding to the sewage treatment in this province, because our rivers are a very priceless heritage.

Also, I'd like to especially thank the minister for the quick action we've had regarding the problem we had in Calgary Millican at the old Imperial Oil site. I hope he does not listen to the NDP and their ideal as to find who is responsible. I hope he will carry on with what he's doing, working with the city and that task force that's been set up and just solve the problem, which I think they're doing. For that I want to thank you, and also . . . [interjection] That's in Calgary Millican, by the way.

Also, the Gulf plant which is also located in Calgary Millican -- I'm glad you've been monitoring that, and I hope you'll continue to do so, sir. Especially on behalf of my residents, I want to thank you for the quick action, the immediate action you took regarding the problem with the Western Co-op Fertilizer plant and their release of the gas this last week. I think your decision is correct to proceed to go after them. You're getting tough and I'm darned glad to see it, sir, and my residents support you in your actions. But don't do what perhaps would be suggested by our opposition and shut the plant down or anything ridiculous like that, because they've got people working there and we need those jobs because a lot of people in my constituency work there. So keep up the good work, Mr. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for St. Albert.

MR. STRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions to

the Minister of the Environment surrounding his budget are dictated with respect to the Oldman River dam project. I have a number of questions for the minister.

I guess the first one I have is in the awarding of the construction contract for that project to a firm by the name of Kerkhoff/Hyundai. I would ask the minister why we in the province of Alberta award contracts through government departments to contractors from outside not only Canada but the province of Alberta. The minister did indicate that there were cost savings on that Oldman River dam project, and I have a number of questions concerning how that money was saved.

I guess I'll start with the wages of Albertans being paid on that site. I have had, Mr. Chairman, numerous phone calls in regards to that project. [interjection] That's quite a few -- more than one. But it concerns the wages that are being paid on that site, the terms and conditions on that site, and numerous other questions. To start with, is the engineering for that site being done here in the province of Alberta, and is it being done by engineers who are Albertans? Or is the engineering for this project being done in Korea or being done in British Columbia? Because I'm certain that there are hundreds of unemployed engineers here in the province of Alberta that would certainly appreciate a job in their own province.

The next one I'll get into is wages. Now we understand that this is a non-union project in most instances and that the Department of the Environment owns the camp that's located on that jobsite. I'd like to ask the minister: is there a \$25 charge per day for that camp to the employees on that site that utilize it? Because in the phone calls I have received, I have had allegations from the general public that indeed people are paying \$25 a day for room and board in that camp, and some are being paid as little as \$6 an hour. I guess if they're working an eight-hour day, that's \$48 in wages, and if you take off unemployment insurance, Canada pension plan, income tax, and then \$25 a day for the camp, there wouldn't be very much left for that employee. As a matter of fact, I don't think he'd have enough money to buy a package of cigarettes, and the taxes on that recently went up.

As I indicated earlier, I believe this project is a non-union project. They are hiring, I think, at the gate. Wage rates for certain classifications on that project you would think would be constant, but I guess some days if there are more people lined up at the gate for a job and there are more applications than they have jobs for, they turn around and differentiate between the wage rates of individuals on that project depending on the supply that shows up at the gate in the morning.

It's my understanding that there's about 25 percent unemployment in the Crowsnest Pass area. This minister made a commitment that most of that project would be done, and I believe in previous *Hansards* he stated that 90 percent of that project would be constructed by Albertans through supplies, job opportunities, and all those other things. I could be wrong on this -- I'll leave it to the minister to correct me -- but I understand that there's only about 5 percent local content on that job. Now if that's the case, something is wrong. It's been further brought to my attention -- and I haven't had the opportunity to verify it yet, but perhaps the minister could verify it for me -- that that project or parts of that project have been shut down by the occupational health and safety department here in the province of Alberta for safety infractions. Could the minister check that and see whether those allegations are true -- the phone calls that I'm getting, to answer those questions?

It's my understanding also that most of the equipment for

this project was brought in from Burma. Now mind you, I guess we've had numerous auction sales here in the province of Alberta lately. Many of the formerly prosperous employees and businessmen, whedier they were owner-operators or construction companies, have gone into receivership or total failure, and I guess we could term that bankruptcy. There's lots of equipment here in the province of Alberta to do that job, yet we're bringing in construction equipment from Burma, and I believe one of the infractions, one of the reasons the job was shut down, was because some of this equipment that was brought in from Burma was defective.

My concern is that if the minister is saving all this money for the taxpayers here in Alberta, is he doing it off the backs and out of the pockets of Albertans? Is this minister taking advantage of the unemployment here in the province of Alberta, getting that job going down there, and because of that unemployment using desperate, financially disabled Albertans to achieve this reduction in his expenditures? Is that what's happening here? Again, I think not just myself, the Official Opposition, but Albertans would like answers to those questions. And if there is anybody employed on that site who is a non-Canadian, could the minister bring that out in answering his question, because I also understand that there are some non-Canadians down on that job. We have thousands of unemployed tradesmen in this province, unemployed engineers, unemployment of all sorts. Or perhaps is the minister planning on jumping in bed with the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Career Development and Employment in a work for welfare program where we get a few more tax dollar savings for the province and the taxpayer here in the province of Alberta?

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Chairman, point of order.

MR. STRONG: Is this a point of order?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes. I think the hon. member should rephrase that last comment.

MR. STRONG: Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, I will have to examine the Blues before I retract anything.

MRS. OSTERMAN: I know you don't have a lot of [inaudible].

MR. STRONG: It's a heck of a lot longer than yours, Connie.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, did you want to conclude debate?

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. If I have the permission of the House to conclude the debate, I think I'll respond first of all to the last comment that was just made by the Member for St. Albert when he suggested that I was jumping into bed with the minister of social services and community health and the minister of career development. I'd like all members to know that that would be a most immoral act, and it's not something members on this side of the House would participate in at any given occasion or time. I would like all members to know as well that not only do I view this as immoral from my perspective, but I know the integrity of the Member for Three Hills, the minister of social services and community health. She is not only a very dignified lady and woman but a mother and

grandmother, and I know her children would respectfully ask that in fact the Member for St. Albert ask that those comments be eliminated from the record, and he might want to do that on Monday. I have no doubt at all that my colleague the minister of career development and manpower would feel exactly the same way, and will bring those comments to his attention Monday a.m.

Mr. Chairman, I've really appreciated the input of my colleagues today in the House. I think there were some really good comments made, some very significant comments that will help all of us better understand our commitment here in the province of Alberta toward the protection of the environment. I sincerely will look forward to the opportunity of responding to these issues and concerns made. I would like to give my commitment to the Member for Edmonton Glengarry, the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn, the Member for Calgary North West, the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, the Member for Calgary Millican, and the Member for St. Albert that I would be anxious to assist in clarifying any misunderstandings or providing information and taking under review a number of the very excellent suggestions that were made here this morning. It seemed to me that unfortunately we're probably not going to have within the time frame of this morning's business agenda an opportunity to do that, Mr. Chairman, so I'm really governed by you. On the one hand, I would sincerely ask for concurrence from the members of the House to approve the estimates of Alberta Environment and make an undertaking to get back in writing to all of the members. Should the members not afford that, I would look forward to coming back on another occasion to discuss the estimates of Alberta Environment, but I would prefer a positive response to the first suggestion.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the wish of the . . .
Member for Calgary Mountain View.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: I hear the question being called, Mr. Chairman. I had a few questions to put to the minister, but in view of the hour I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I move 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 certain resolutions, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, on Monday and Tuesday evening it is intended that the House sit in Committee of Supply, and Monday afternoon we'll also be in Committee of Supply. The department on Monday afternoon will be the Tourism department, in the evening Career Development and Employment, and on Tuesday evening Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

[At 12:59 p.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

