

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, June 1, 1987 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 87/06/01

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, we give thanks for the bounty of our province: our land, our resources, and our people.

We pledge ourselves to act as good stewards on behalf of all Albertans.

Amen.

head: **PRESENTING PETITIONS**

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I move that the petition of Frederick L. Benini, Mervin L. Henkelman, Peter D. McKeen, David Starko, and Ronald C. Swist for the Federal Canadian Trust & Bond Corporation be now read and received.

[Motion carried]

head: **PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 93 I have taken under consideration the petition for the Federal Canadian Trust & Bond Corporation Act and have to report to the Assembly that Standing Order 86 has not been complied with. The Private Bills Committee has considered the matter of that petition and recommends to the Assembly that the provisions of Standing Order 86 be waived to permit the Bill to be dealt with once the proper advertising has been completed. I request the concurrence of the Assembly in this recommendation.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur with the recommendation?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I would request permission to give oral notice of motion and would ask that all hon. members provide unanimous consent in order to deal with this motion today:

Be it resolved that the Assembly congratulates the

Edmonton Oilers' players, coaches, management, and support staff for their fine achievement in winning their third Stanley Cup in four years.

[applause] In moving the motion, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to salute the hard work, dedication, and team spirit which have carried the Oilers to victory. While some of my colleagues who hail from a point south of here may feel their loyalties lie elsewhere, nevertheless I would ask all members, as proud Albertans, to join me in supporting the motion now before the House.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, it was the intention of our party to also bring forward congratulations to the Oilers, but we are pleased to join with the government in extending our congratulations, and we are both delighted and pleased to do so. It was a great series. A great team won the series, and we congratulate the Oilers: the players, the coaching staff, and the management. The Stanley Cup is where it belongs: here in Edmonton.

MR. TAYLOR: Just a moment to add the Liberal Party's congratulations also. As one Calgarian that spent 14 years trying to move to Edmonton, it was indeed great to see them mark my move to this area by winning the Stanley Cup. Thank you. It was indeed one of those rare occasions that I can support the Member for Fort McMurray, and I thank him for bringing it forward to the House.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I too wish to support the motion. As a former member of the Golden Bears hockey team, I think maybe I understand -- that was almost before you were born, Dick. I think it showed the character of a team; when they had to win they did win. But at the same time I say that, Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, I think we have to pay tribute to the Philadelphia Flyers, because this was a team -- and many of the boys are from western Canada -- that would not quit. And when I saw them miraculously being saved time after time by the goal post, I thought that possibly this would be an upset in the making. But it didn't happen, and the Oilers prevailed, and they are truly Stanley Cup champions.

MR. SPEAKER: Call for the question. All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, if any dare, please say no. The motion carries, let the record show unanimously. The Chair will be only too happy to write letters to both the Oilers and the Philadelphia Flyers.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 46  
Hotel Room Tax Act**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 46, the Hotel Room Tax Act.

Mr. Speaker, this brings forward the new tax in hotel accommodation which was announced in our budget on March 20. As I have advised the Assembly before, it provides for the special exemption for those bookings which took place before the date of the budget up to November 1, 1987, and as well speaks to the

exclusions in the legislation which provide protection for long-term accommodation and for various kinds of facilities, including student accommodation.

[Leave granted; Bill 46 read a first time]

**Bill 47  
Fuel Tax Act**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 47, which is the Fuel Tax Act.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, this was put forward as part of the fiscal plan in the budget of March 20, 1987. This tax, as all Albertans know, is necessary for us to balance the size of our deficit and to generate other revenues for the province. But it should be noted specifically that this tax does not apply to farmers or off-road vehicles and therefore is very selective in its application and of course is below that recommended by my colleagues in the ND Party across the way.

[Leave granted; Bill 47 read a first time]

**Bill 48  
Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 1987**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I also request leave to introduce Bill 48, the Tobacco Tax Amendment Act.

The Member for Edmonton Highlands may object to that of course.

MS BARRETT: So might your wife.

MR. JOHNSTON: That's right; she's up here.

Mr. Speaker, this tax is an increase on the tax imposed on tobacco, again as announced in the budget. I request leave to introduce this Bill.

[Leave granted; Bill 48 read a first time]

**Bill 49  
Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 1987**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I have a final tax Bill. This is Bill 49, the Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 1987, which I request leave to introduce. This is a money Bill, Mr. Speaker, and Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this is a combined Bill which reflects the tax initiatives in our fiscal plan for the personal and corporate tax adjustments. All hon. members have now had an opportunity to examine those proposals and will have an opportunity now again to debate the principles of this legislation. In a few words, on the personal tax side this increases the tax rates for individuals in this province, including the increase in the fundamental provincial rate, the application of a surtax, and the application of a flat tax. At the same time, the Act speaks to the changes in the corporate tax amendment, and the corporate tax increases as well affect the larger corporations where in fact a 4 percent increase is effected by this proposal.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, these tax legislations also deal with the petroleum royalty reduction, which has been extended to the end of 1987. As well, in response to an agreement -- the tax

agreement which this province has with the federal government -- this legislation, both on the personal and corporate side, also reflects those common adjustments which are found in the corporate proposals to make our Act uniform with the federal legislation. Moreover, more on a routine basis there are adjustments which again in terms of tax harmony with other provinces and with the federal government speak to the question of interest and interest charged and overpayments and underpayments by taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of Bill 49.

[Leave granted; Bill 49 read a first time]

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report for the Alberta Electric Energy Marketing Agency for the year 1986-87 and to file with the Assembly five copies of the press conference we had today kicking off National Transportation Week.

**head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Culture.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, 14 energetic grades 5 and 6 students from the I.L. Peretz school in my constituency who are in the members' gallery. They are accompanied by two teachers Mrs. Nasim and Mrs. Sahian, and parents Mr. Cyril Nasim, Mrs. Linda Horowitz, Ms Yvonne Greenbaum, Mr. Joe Chackowicz, and Mr. Don Johnson, who is the bus driver. I had a chance to meet with these students just before we entered the Assembly, and they have some interesting and very intelligent questions. I'd ask them all to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Member for Edmonton Centre, it's a pleasure today to introduce to you and indeed to all Members of the Legislative Assembly, 17 grades 10 to 12 students from St. Joseph high school in the constituency of Edmonton Centre. They're accompanied by teacher Mrs. Lynn Smarsh, and they're seated in the members' gallery as well. I'd ask that they rise and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, seated in the public gallery are 23 students from the Laurier Heights school in the Edmonton Glenora constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Esther Woodrow, and I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, I would like to introduce a prominent farmer from the Athabasca area. He's been very active on many boards, and his name is Brian McCutcheon. I'm not sure which gallery he's in, but I would like him to rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

## head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

## Department of the Environment

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, Albertans are indeed fortunate to have a veritable wealth of natural beauty at our doorsteps. It is our heritage, and it is a trust we do not take lightly. This past weekend marked the beginning of Environment Week. Environment Week affords us an opportunity each year to take stock of what we have, to appreciate the many wonderful natural resources this province possesses, and to renew our commitment to safeguarding these treasures for future generations.

We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated people, the Environment Week Association of Alberta, who co-ordinate activities and promote awareness of and appreciation for our environment. The theme for this year's celebration is: Our Environment -- The Home We Share. I feel this is particularly appropriate because our environment is truly the home we share. It is the air we breathe, our rivers and lakes, our cities and our rural lands and the life that they sustain. It is also the way they are connected and the effects they have on each other. This interdependence, this sharing of responsibility, is a cornerstone of Alberta Environment's mission.

I'd like to commend the fine work that the Environment Week Association has done in encouraging and co-ordinating hundreds of events throughout the province. I'd also like to thank the many municipalities, industries, environmental interest groups, and community leagues that are helping to make Environment Week '87 such a great success by organizing events and raising environmental awareness throughout Alberta. In particular, my thanks to my colleagues the Hon. Don Sparrow and the Hon. Norm Weiss, who have given Environment Week their personal support and have directed their staff at Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and Recreation and Parks to contribute in a major way to Environment Week.

I encourage all hon. members to find time in their very busy schedules to get involved in celebrating Environment Week. I want all Albertans to appreciate and acknowledge our environment, the home we share.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in replying to the ministerial announcement, I don't think I can disagree with any of the words and any of the sentiment here. The only thing I would hope, though, is that the government would back up the nice words with some prosecutions in the future. I would say to the minister and to this government that anybody that studies these and looks at the recent polls done in Canada, the United States, and other places in the world -- one of the major issues for people in the future will be our environment. People are not going to accept shoddy work done with our environment, and they will not accept it from governments in the future.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that I couldn't agree more with what was said in here, but because of these sentiments, we're going to expect much more environmental concern, much more prosecution, and much more work done on the environment. Frankly, this government's record in the past in environmental matters has not been one that we should write home about. But recognizing now that we have again, Mr. Speaker, some nice words, we will be watching to make sure that those words are actually put into practice. One of the things I want to see very quickly in this House is some charges laid in the recent Calgary case, which we were led to believe would be coming from this

government.

## head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

## Proposed Labour Legislation

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my first question to the Minister of Labour. Today is the first anniversary of the Gainers labour dispute. As much as any single event can cause the need for Albertans to look at labour laws, it was this one particular event, and I would suggest that it will unfortunately be a historical strike. But it showed to almost all Albertans that we need to restore the balance required for harmonious labour relations. My question to this minister: on this anniversary will the minister advise whether the government will introduce such legislation during the current sitting of this House?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, in the preamble the hon. Leader of the Opposition tried to relate the whole matter to the Gainers dispute. I would point out once more -- and this is for the umpteenth time -- that the initiation of the review of our labour legislation was not related to the dispute on 66th Street, that it was announced prior to that dispute's starting, and that it was a long-term review of what has happened in the past to try and develop labour legislation for the future. The legislation will be introduced at this sitting of the Legislature.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. We would hope that this is going to be fair legislation, but by the record of this government I'll hold my breath until I see it. But one of the questions I want to ask this minister has to do with replacement workers. Surely this is one of the major causes of labour problems in this province, and it should be obvious to most people. My question simply to the minister is: can he update us, and have they decided to curb the use of replacement workers and 24-hour lockouts?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member won't go blue in the face waiting. He will have the legislation in a short period of time, and then he will be able to see what's in it.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. We've been told this legislation was coming last session, this session, and we're waiting for it patiently, but I think people want to know.

I want to be a little more specific, though, in terms of replacement workers. It's an issue in the Zeidler Forest products dispute at Slave Lake. Now that the company has a replacement work force, they have no interest in negotiations and incentive whatever to bargain with their employees. Mr. Speaker, the minister said on April 28 that he would be getting in touch with the company if they got back to returning his phone calls. At least Mr. Campbell's secretary from Zeidlers had said that. Could the minister update us? Has he been successful finally in having a telephone conversation with Mr. Campbell, and has he been successful in organizing a meeting between the two groups?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I had a meeting with Mr. Campbell some time ago. Since then I've had a meeting with Mr. Pisak from the International Woodworkers of America. In fact, that was last week. But I did communicate with him some time in advance of that that in the meetings the Premier and I had with

Mr. Munro from Vancouver and Mr. Pisak and the subsequent meeting I had with Mr. Campbell, we could see little middle ground between the positions of the two parties, and therefore they would have to continue negotiating with each other with the assistance, if they wished, of a mediator from the department.

MR. MARTIN: Well, a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The problem is that there's a whole group of replacement workers in that plant, so the company refuses to negotiate. I would point out to the minister that today in B.C. we see what happens when a government attempts to balance the scale in favour of management. My question is: is that all the minister is going to do in this particular strike? He's not going to do anything else but say it's up to them and there's no more responsibility on this minister's behalf.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I had some discussions, as I said, with Mr. Pisak, and I made a commitment to Mr. Pisak as to what I was prepared to do, that I felt might be useful, and I will fulfill that commitment. The commitment was made to the International Woodworkers of America not to the Leader of the Opposition, and I will fulfill the commitment I made to the IWA negotiator in this instance.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, thank you. A supplementary to the minister, in fact, to the original question on the forthcoming report to the Legislature, which would be nice to get before the House prorogues and then have the whole summer to look at it. But could the minister let the House know whether or not the new Act will combine the Employment Standards Act with the Labour Act or whether it will be in two separate Acts, as it is now?

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry; it's clearly anticipatory, and that was a difficulty with the lead question from the Leader of the Opposition.

Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

### Health Care Cuts

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Last Thursday the minister met with the Advisory Council on Women's Issues, and following the meeting we were led to believe they suggested that the government may have gone too far in cutting some contraceptive services and that he would ask his cabinet colleagues to consider making some changes in the government's hit list for medicare cuts.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this was encouraging; at least there's some movement. Now, noticing the minister's new flexibility, would he consider putting this whole package of cuts on hold while the cabinet reviews its position?

MR. M. MOORE: First of all, Mr. Speaker, the meeting of last week with the women's council was a very useful one from two points of view: it gave myself and two of my cabinet colleagues an opportunity to understand firsthand what the concerns were that had been expressed to members of the women's council, and it also gave us an opportunity to provide to the council information about what had actually occurred and what was being proposed, rather than having to draw that information through

the media, much of which was not portrayed exactly as it was. So it was a sharing of information in both directions, which was very useful.

The commitment that I made was that I would bring forward to a cabinet meeting at some future time the concerns they had expressed. But I did not make any commitment to reconsider, only to ensure that cabinet colleagues were aware of the concerns that were expressed by the women's council.

I wish to advise the hon. leader of the Opposition again, Mr. Speaker, that these changes to the health care insurance plan were all fully discussed in our cabinet and caucus for some weeks and months prior to the implementation. We believe very strongly today, as I did two weeks ago when we announced them, that they are fair and across the board, no great imposition on any one individual, and that we still have the very best health care insurance plan in Alberta that exists anywhere in Canada.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister may well have discussed it with cabinet and caucus. It may be a shock to them, but they don't represent all the people of Alberta. These cuts of two weeks ago were unfair towards women, and that's what he's been hearing. Instead of talking to the caucus, why didn't the minister consult with the women and their organizations before implementing these cuts, not after?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the changes that were made to the health care insurance plan were not designed nor were they an attack on any one particular group of people. I had consultations with a wide variety of people before the announcements were made, and I think they are fair and reasonable right across the board.

MR. MARTIN: Well, if that's the case, Mr. Speaker, would the minister tell us, besides the cabinet and the caucus, what formal women's groups did he sit down and talk about these cuts with? Would he fill us in on that?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think a number of the professional groups have made representations to us, including the Alberta Medical Association and the association of chiropractors and physiotherapists and a lot of others who are in the health care business who have a good understanding of the needs of both males and females when it comes to health care.

It wasn't our intent to try to seek out various groups that may represent some narrower point of view to have discussions in this regard. We wanted to meet with organizations and groups of people who would have a broad perspective in the whole area of what was covered by our health care insurance plan. We did that, and I think if the hon. Leader of the Opposition would care to look at what exists in other provinces, he will find that the provisions of the health care insurance plan here are still on balance the best of any in Canada.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I expect that women are going to find it rather amazing that they're considered a narrower group and that the AMA represents them. That's what I was asking about: which women's groups he consulted with. But given that the minister has made at least a small retreat on the sterilization issue, would he not agree to have now a public hearing process before he brings any of the cuts so people have a right to express their viewpoints on this matter?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I find these questions rather

strange. The people who are elected in this province to deal with such matters and debate issues of this nature are the 82 MLAs that sit in this Legislative Assembly. Unfortunately, even though I had asked in this Legislature at least five times in the last three months to have the Leader of the Opposition and his party make some suggestions with respect to the health care insurance plan, they made absolutely none. They made absolutely none. The *Hansard* record will show that I've asked on several occasions, and I've received absolutely nothing.

So all I can conclude is that the Leader of the Opposition is really not interested in running a health care insurance plan within the budget we have. He's only interested in waiting until after we make the decisions and then complaining about them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Edmonton Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, if the minister refuses to reconsider these regressive steps, will he at least commit to the House that public health and community services are given immediately more direction and resources in order to meet the present and growing need?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, in discussing this matter last week, I indicated that a recent report, which I hope members opposite now have a copy of, called *In Trouble -- A Way Out*, which was done for the directors of Alberta's community health system, indicates that the best direction to go in providing better, more timely information and counseling, particularly for teenagers, is through community-based clinics and through the education system as opposed to increasing the amount or the frequency of billings through doctors' offices. Indeed, the report indicates that most teenagers simply will not visit the family doctor for these purposes. I've indicated, and so has my colleague the Minister of Community and Occupational Health, that it's our view that we ought to try and put more resources in this direction. Now, for example, 80 percent of the funding of the family and community support services program -- a program the hon. member would be familiar with having sat on a city council -- does come from the provincial government. There's nothing to prevent a very substantial portion of those dollars from going into counseling.

The Minister of Community and Occupational Health has been discussing both with the municipalities involved in the family and community support services program and with the local health units their priorities in this area. We can't have it both ways. Members opposite oftentimes ask us to leave the flexibility in the local community. That's what we've done in this regard, but we're now asking them to take a second look at where they're putting these funds to see if more of it can't be put into the area we're talking about.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister of health. Is the minister giving any consideration to making the patients sign the claim form for the dual purpose of, number one, making sure that the service has been rendered and, number two, making the patient aware of how much the service costs?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been talking about that for several months and have not yet had any success in getting an agreement with the Alberta Medical Association that such a system could be worked out. I'm confident it could be if we had co-operation from all parties. There is, however, some

optimism. The association of physical therapists, during the course of discussing their fee schedules and a number of other matters, did make a commitment to me to involve themselves in an attempt at putting together a trial project that would have everyone who visits a physiotherapist in fact sign the bill, acknowledge the costs, and know what it is. If we can put that in place and make it work there, I'm confident we can move it over into the medical community as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, followed by Clover Bar.

### Agricultural Assistance

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Agriculture. Certainly with the farmers facing a crisis here in this province with world grain subsidies lowering our own prices and the fact that one out of every three jobs in Alberta depends on the agricultural sector, I was quite disappointed to find that the Premier and his three western colleagues have been unable to provide any new approaches or new ideas as to just how we're going to solve our problem. The first question, Mr. Speaker -- I noticed you poised to get up there. I thought . . . The Prime Minister has stated that the federal government will not be forthcoming with additional direct aid for farmers. Can the minister tell this Assembly: outside of maybe accessing the lottery funds, has he any idea just what he's going to do for the farmers this summer?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, firstly, may I correct the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, because the Prime Minister did not indicate that. The Prime Minister indicated that he wished to have a period of time to do a thorough assessment as to the needs of the agricultural sector prior to committing himself to an additional special grains program. And again, contrary to what the hon. minister has just suggested, the Premiers did come forward with a number of worthwhile suggestions by way of communiqués after the Western Premiers' Conference in Humboldt. A number of those suggestions related to an additional special grains payout for the upcoming crop year. In addition to that, they discussed such topics as red meat stabilization, greater efficiencies within our transportation system, and further soil conservation and research. So contrary to what the hon. member said, there was a great deal of worthwhile work completed and a number of good suggestions forthcoming from the Western Premiers' Conference.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the question. My question was what this government was going to do to help farm incomes this summer. Could the minister tell the House whether or not he would at least go so far as to tell the federal government that setting up a second debt review board is not that much help? And would he indeed ask the Farm Credit Corporation to reinstate their old policy that just expired a few months ago of not doing any foreclosures on anyone holding a Farm Credit Corporation loan? Could he at least go that far, for at least one year before the Farm Credit Corporation will foreclose on farms?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we've made a number of recommendations to the federal government as it relates to the Farm Credit Corporation, one of which is that we've indicated on a consistent basis that they should drop their interest rate on loans

overall to 9 percent. But we acknowledge that we have a big responsibility as it relates to agriculture, because of the importance that it does play to our province. That is why our Provincial Treasurer was so forthcoming in his support for the agricultural sector in the budget that was recently tabled in this House. If one looks at it, we have a continuation of the 14-cent differential for farmers as it relates to fuel, which costs somewhere in the vicinity of \$97 million and a forgone tax revenue of some \$40 million because they don't pay the 5-cent tax. In addition to that, we've got the worthwhile \$2 billion program, a program that's unmatched anywhere in the world, as it relates to establishing strict criteria for the credit needs of the agricultural sector.

Just recently we had the opportunity too, Mr. Speaker, to announce the establishment of a tripartite program for the sugar beet producers in southern Alberta, which is an extension of our \$15 million commitment through tripartite stabilization programs. In addition to that, we've continued on with a number of worthwhile research projects, one in the hon. Member for Vegreville's constituency, whereby we've committed an additional \$2 million in conjunction with the federal government whereby we're doing research for soil and conservation.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on for a period of time as it relates to our commitment. It's unparalleled by any province throughout this great country of ours.

MR. TAYLOR: I don't know what button I pushed, Mr. Speaker, but I nearly got drowned there. I'm sure he forgot one other scheme, and that is helping out the Minister of Energy by force-feeding oil to the cows.

Mr. Speaker, I'm interested in knowing whether or not the minister is working jointly with the federal government in a scheme whereby we could guarantee the grain farmers an income that was equal to 75 percent of the average of their last five years' income.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, there is the Western Grain Stabilization Act, which takes into account the fluctuations and does provide some security to the grain sector. We acknowledge that we should go even further. Let me indicate to the hon. member -- I would hope that it's not misunderstood -- that we acknowledge the difficulties the agricultural sector is facing, and that is why we are doing exactly as the hon. member has suggested. We are working with other provincial governments and the federal government, in furtherance to our national agricultural strategy, in developing proposals such as equity financing for the agricultural sector, further examination of more responsive areas to be better in helping with the credit needs of agriculture. We are doing a considerable amount of work acknowledging the severe difficulties that agriculture is facing.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the farmers are concerned. They'd like to see that cash cow that the minister is working on come fresh this year. Now, would the minister be able to let the House know just what progress he is making towards a suggestion that we had made earlier in the year -- and now many other farm groups are talking about it, including the Wheat Pool -- which is an income stabilization plan, rather than subsidies, something very similar to the negative income tax that he said he was looking into? Has he had anything further to report on that method of stabilizing income?

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we've made some progress

in that area, not as it specifically relates to the suggestion brought forward by the hon. member, because as I indicated to him in previous times, that falls more directly under federal jurisdiction. If he's taken the opportunity to read the comprehensive report that was tabled by our associate minister as it relates to hail and crop insurance, he will see that there are a number of specific recommendations in that report. One deals with revenue or cost of production insurance, which we're hoping will reach a positive conclusion in the talks that we are having with the federal government and other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, this is in addition to what the federal government has done, and they have contributed millions of dollars to our grain sector. As the hon. member is aware, the \$1 billion is unparalleled throughout the history of this country. In addition to that, they have close to a \$1 billion deficit in the western grain stabilization account now, because they also acknowledge the difficulties that the grain sector is facing.

MR. FOX: I'm sure the minister's words make all of the farmers in Alberta feel much better. But I'm wondering: in view of the fact that this government has committed money to a tripartite stabilization plan for sugar beets and for red meat producers and came up with money to help livestock producers when the drought was serious, how does the minister justify this government's refusal to contribute to a deficiency payment for grain producers this year?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the hon. Member for Vegreville has said, we haven't refused, and we have been consistent in our support for the grain sector because the grain sector receives greater support than the livestock sector does on a per capita basis, not only in this province but throughout Canada. Our farm fuel allowance is much more beneficial to the grain sector. Our farm credit stability program: again, of direct benefit to the grain sector.

We are supporting the grain sector, Mr. Speaker, and we have not excluded the possibility of direct support through a deficiency payment. We have indicated that we are not about to commit ourselves to it until we've had an opportunity to thoroughly examine the pros and the cons of participating in that. Unlike the hon. member, we want to give serious and thorough thought prior to jumping into making a decision. We don't want to make a decision in a vacuum. [interjections]

DR. BUCK: My question is also to the Minister of Agriculture and is a continuation of the question the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon asked. In the minister's monitoring of the group that was in Ottawa meeting with the federal minister, where the group was looking at \$2.6 million, is the minister any place close to getting a commitment as to when some funding will be available through the federal government for the farmers of Alberta?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I haven't had a chance yet to meet with some of the individuals who did meet with our federal counterparts, but I am doing so this week. I am meeting with the president of Unifarm during the course of this week to gain the benefit of his insights as to that meeting. In addition to that, we're doing some work in conjunction with Unifarm in coming forward with figures as to what will be required as to the exact amounts for a deficiency payment to keep their income stabilized.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister or the Provincial Treasurer. Is the government looking at any type of program of possibly allowing interest to accumulate for three years on the farm credit stability program? Because of the time of crunch they're in now, that interest could accumulate for three years and be applied to the principle.

MR. ELZINGA: At this present time, no, Mr. Speaker, we are not. But I should indicate, as I have indicated to the hon. member in the past, that we are on an ongoing basis continually assessing our programs to make sure they are as responsive as possible and that we can in a very practical way afford the continued support to the agricultural sector.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is he also looking at the possibility of reducing rates? On a \$200,000 loan at 9 percent the interest is \$18,000. If that were reduced to 3 percent, that is \$12,000, which will keep most farm families alive and put bread on the table. Is the minister looking at this alternative?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I indicated earlier to the hon. member, that we are on a continuous basis assessing our programs to make sure they are responsive to the agricultural sector. But I would throw it back to the hon. member. I would challenge him to show me a lending institution that will offer secured capital funding for a period of 20 years at the rate of 9 percent. It's a substantial commitment or the part of this government whereby we are guaranteeing the loans so that the agricultural sector will have that secured credit for a period of 20 years at 9 percent. If we find that we do have additional resources, we can reassess it. But all I can do is offer the hon. member the assurance that we are going to reassess our agricultural programs as best we can so that they are responsive to the concerns of individual farmers.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm suggesting to the minister that it doesn't have to be on a 20-year basis. It can be on an interim basis because of the financial situation as it is.

My final supplementary is to the minister of economic development. Because the minister comes from a small town, can he indicate what monitoring is going on in the minister's department or in the Provincial Treasurer's or the Minister of Agriculture's department as to what effect the downturn in the agricultural economy is having on small-town Alberta?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, very careful monitoring is going on. Through our regional small business offices, which are located strategically throughout the province, we maintain close contact in terms of information with respect to the impact of the downturn in grain prices on the economies of all parts of the province, and it does vary throughout the province. Some areas have a greater cattle population and a greater predominance in terms of feeding up the grain to cattle and hogs, where others tend to concentrate on grain. Also, in some areas certain communities have other sources of economic strength, such as the forestry industry or oil and gas. But we do monitor very closely the economic situation throughout the province. [interjection]

MR. SPEAKER: No, out of order. Sorry. Thank you.  
Westlock-Sturgeon, supplementary.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister again

on the interest. The minister is quite correct in pointing out that a 20-year loan at 9 percent is an attractive one, but also the Member for Clover Bar has pointed out how hard it is to make interest payments, particularly if you have no taxable income. Couldn't the minister at least consider adding to the loan the interest charges for those farmers that are not in a position to pay income tax; in other words, capitalizing the interest, which extends the loan a measly few months at the end of the 20 years?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, a good many of those individuals that did roll over their loans into our new \$2 billion program did exactly that to allow them the opportunity for additional payments.

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer North, followed by Vegreville, followed by Edmonton Meadowlark.

### Pharmaceutical Research Agreement

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Technology, Research, and Telecommunications. SynPhar Laboratories recently announced a joint venture agreement between Dr. Ronald Micetich, a U of A researcher, and the Taiho Pharmaceutical Co. of Japan. I'm just wondering if the minister had to come up with any investment dollars to see this venture come to pass. If so, how many dollars?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Red Deer North the answer is that there was no investment by the provincial government in the SynPhar Laboratories joint venture between Taiho Pharmaceutical of Japan and Dr. Micetich. I would indicate that that is the first Japanese joint venture pharmaceutical company to come to Canada, and we consider it a very major development for Alberta.

MR. DAY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Regardless of the fact that there are no government dollars involved, is the minister not concerned that this venture is going to conflict with work being done by Chembiomed Ltd., which does have considerable government investment?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, no. The Chembiomed company has, as a foundation of its initiative, the work of Dr. Raymond Lemieux. The connection between the two would be the fact that over a number of years there have been a variety of spin-offs and developments at our university in the area of pharmaceuticals. So if we can put it this way, Chembiomed is a lightning-rod company and therefore is attracting attention to Alberta and to Alberta researchers. There is not a competitive relationship, I would suggest; rather it is more likely to be and I believe it to be a complementary relationship between the two companies.

MR. DAY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister explain how he believes this development between a university researcher and a Japanese firm is going to benefit either the U of A specifically or Alberta generally?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in addition to the joint venture, Taiho Pharmaceutical has agreed to set up a foundation in Alberta, the purpose of which will be a fund in the amount of \$50,000 per annum to fund exchanges between Japanese univer-

sities and Alberta, particularly the University of Alberta. The very significant advantage of that is that this area is a very expensive one in which to do research. More and more large projects, I believe, will be developed in a number of different centres at the same time on a complementary co-operative basis. This, if you will, is the beginning of a network, and I think it's very important for that reason.

The other advantage to the University of Alberta is that it does provide graduate students at the University of Alberta with the most up-to-date access to research that is available in Japan, and that will come about through the exchange of professors using the fund that has been established by the foundation.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If this is such a good-news story and if no funding was required from the government, can the minister tell us what factors did contribute to Taiho choosing Alberta as its point of entry?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, first of all, there is, as I mentioned earlier, the pioneer work of Dr. Raymond Lemieux, which has established in the area of chemistry and biochemistry and radiating into pharmaceuticals the renown and fame, if you will, of the researchers at the University of Alberta. I would be remiss if I didn't compliment the Deputy Premier, Hon. David Russell, who has played a role by having gone to Japan, and among others, when he was visiting there, he visited the president of Taiho Pharmaceutical, Mr. Kobayashi. Additionally, the Agent General in Japan, Mr. Ivan Bumstead, has been very active, working with this file for several years.

So it's been a combination of a number of events, I suspect that the recent announcement by President Nakasone of Japan, which is causing their attitudes somewhat to change and to try to move outward and establish branches and joint ventures elsewhere, has been a factor.

Finally, I would want to commend the Consul General of Japan, Mr. Funakoshi, here in Alberta for his participation and support of this particular venture.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister saying then to this Legislature that \$50,000 for exchanges and attracting a few graduate students and maybe a few projects is enough return for the kind of indirect and direct investment we make through our university projects such as these when millions upon million of dollars can be made by the spin-off projects and the spin-off developments? There are no guarantees that these projects and these developments will take place in Alberta and create jobs here and create economic development here. They can go back to Japan; they can go anywhere.

MR. YOUNG: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Meadowlark is slightly steamed this afternoon. It's too bad it's the wrong kind of steam. Mr. Speaker, let's be very clear, Taiho Pharmaceutical started out in 1963 with assets in the range of \$1 million. Today Taiho Pharmaceutical has assets in the range of \$500 million. Taiho Pharmaceutical is undertaking the joint venture just simply to do research, putting into Alberta approximately \$2 million per year. The president, Mr. Kobayashi, made it very clear to me that they intend to establish a manufacturing facility in Alberta and that even . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Is there anything in writing -- signed?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, there were at least 30 signatures on five different agreements, and they provide . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, with due respect, when a member asks a supplementary and then is foolish enough to start asking another question in the midst of the minister's response, all we're going to do is keep spurning on and out the time of question period, and we have another four or five people who'd like to get in. Therefore, the Chair recognizes Vegreville, followed by Edmonton Meadowlark, if there's time.

### Report of ADC Review Committee

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. This government's response to the alarming number of foreclosures and bankruptcies on Alberta farms was to promise a review of the Agricultural Development Corporation. Hearings were held around the province over the winter, and many farmers took part in these hearings, expecting that meaningful changes would be made before it was too late. My question to the associate minister: does she stand by her statement in the House of May 22, when she said, "We do not have the ADC Review Committee's report at this time in our caucus"? Is she saying that the rural caucus of the Conservative Party has not seen the recommendations of this review committee?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FOX: Well, I'd like to know for the sake of farmers in Alberta what the delay is. These hearings were completed almost three months ago, and it's certainly an urgent situation. Will the minister explain what on earth has happened to the recommendations of this committee if they haven't yet been presented to the Tory caucus?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, the problem of finance in rural Alberta, particularly in agriculture, is very difficult and very complicated. We're looking at new and innovative ways of financing agriculture, and it entails a lot of discussions between groups that may be involved and other governments, too, because what we're looking at impacts all across Canada.

MR. FOX: Will the minister try and explain the delay to us a little further? I'm wondering: is it the case that this government is waiting until after the session is over so that the report can be introduced and be spared the scrutiny of opposition examination?

MRS. CRIPPS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FOX: Is it the government's intention then that a large number of the cases that are currently being foreclosed and quitclaimed through the ADC would go through the mill and fall by the wayside before any meaningful changes are recommended by this government?

MRS. CRIPPS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a supplemental. People are losing their farms while this committee wanders around trying to



make up its mind. Could the minister tell the House whether she would be willing to suspend any foreclosures until the committee's report comes in?

MRS. CRIPPS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Meadowlark. Edmonton Meadowlark, second time of asking.

### AGT Commercial Enterprises

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications, who in response to my question regarding a decision on unfair competition by AGT in the audio equipment sales industry said, and I quote *Hansard*, May 11, 1987:

I can say that in terms of a final decision with respect to audio . . . I made that final decision and communicated it some time ago,

thereby inferring that he was getting AGT out of that area of commercial enterprise. If that's the case, could the minister please indicate why personnel from AGT were at a pre-tender meeting last week to discuss information regarding an intercom system for a school in Mundare? Who's running that department?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I will check for the hon. member as to who is running the corporation. It is a commission board which runs the corporation.

MR. MITCHELL: The minister indicated at that time as well that the decision with respect to audio "will bear watching to see how well it is executed." Is the minister now admitting here that this is the first step that he will take to watch to see how well it is executed? Has he done nothing else to ensure that this Mundare incident wouldn't have happened last week?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I've continued to have consultations and reviews, and I will continue to do that. I indicated as well, in responding earlier, that there were some gray areas between the audio and telecommunications activities. I am not familiar, and I don't think that it is reasonable to expect that I would be familiar, with every tender that AGT might possibly look at. But I will be happy to look into the matter and determine in fact what kind of a tender it is.

MR. MITCHELL: The minister should be aware of whether or not his directives are being complied with. What steps is the minister taking to ensure that AGT can't simply decide to invest in a product, make a major investment -- whoops -- decide to reverse that decision on direction from the minister, and then waste all the money that's been invested to get us into that product in the first place?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I believe, if I understood the question properly, that the assurance the hon. member is seeking is in the very nature of the structure. I have the responsibility, as the representative of the government and the owner, for very broad policy direction. There are, to develop that further, commissioners of Alberta Government Telephones to whom report administrative staff. The operational questions are clearly responsibilities of administrative staff.

MR. MITCHELL: Is the minister actually saying then that a decision to be in audio equipment or not to be in audio equipment is strictly an operational decision, when in fact he has stated clearly in this House that he has asked that corporation not to be in it and they're continuing to be in it? Could he please clarify the distinction between administrative and broad-brush policy decisions that he's talking about?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the problem seems to be not whether we be or not be but whether we be answering question number three or question number two. My response that I just gave to the preceding question was one of a broader nature than the hon. member asked. Now he's asking about a policy direction, and I already have given that answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Glengarry.

### Toxic Waste Sites

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Minister of the Environment. Some weeks ago Mr. Carl Primus, who was then assistant deputy minister of environmental protection services, publicly restated the minister's ongoing policy of not revealing the exact locations of waste sites, at least until after the legislative sessions ends. For this he was given what I believe bureaucrats call a lateral demotion. Considering this reverse reward for open honesty, can the minister explain how his refusal to allow an assistant deputy minister to speak on behalf of his section agrees with the minister's promises of an open and informative Environment department?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker on April 14, I believe it was, I responded to several questions with respect to locations of certain possible hazardous waste sites, and I also filed information on that particular day. The individual in question certainly did not fulfill what the hon. member talked about in the first part of his question.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. Concerning the shortlist of 15 toxic waste sites, can the minister confirm, deny, or explain the assertion of Mr. Primus that in compiling the shortlist the department excluded those sites which might show up on municipal and industrial surveys, and this means that some of the potentially most dangerous sites could have been excluded from that list?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's not my intent to comment on what another individual may have said. I think that my position and the position of the government with respect to the location of the sites that were requested as a result of the Help End Landfill Pollution program are clearly written here in *Hansard*, and in fact as I recall, April 14 I tabled certain information and made it public.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. None of them consisted of clear answers from the minister.

Is it possible and indeed is it the case that the old Uniroyal site where Agent Orange and pentachlorophenol were produced was on the longer list of sites but was, for reasons I just mentioned, excluded from the shortlist of 15?

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we have the unanimous consent of the House to complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Hon. minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I have said now on a number of occasions, both inside and outside the House, we had received 76 inputs from the people of Alberta with respect to our public appeal under the Help End Landfill Pollution program, and some 61 were dealt with, as I explained earlier, nearly two months ago I guess now, and some 15 were dealt with by way of the statement that I made in the House on that particular day in April, including a listing of location and a map as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. How does the minister justify refusing to immediately give the public the whole truth about all of these sites so that they not only can make their own judgments based on complete and accurate information but perhaps could even supplement the information the minister has now, because it might jog their memory?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, again now, to be quite redundant, I have provided information to the House, provided information to the public of Alberta with respect to a certain number of sites. I've repeated time and time again that that information was based on what we had to that period of time, and I indicated as well that upon further review and more specific site location, I will be bringing more information available. Basically, in response to a question as to when we might be doing that, I indicated approximately the first week of July. The reason the first week of July was selected is that phase 1 of the help eliminate landfill pollution program, which is the inventory side of the program, is due in my view -- I requested information by the last day of June. So within a matter of several days after assembling the information for the inventory, I indicated I would provide that information.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since the first part of July is coming up quite fast and the minister must have most of his investigation finished, can the minister tell the House whether or not in the case of some unreported dumps he or his department is considering any prosecutions?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, again now, to be redundant -- I guess this is about the fifth time we've dealt with this -- there are three phases to the help eliminate landfill pollution program. All members will recall that phase 1, which is the inventory, appealed to the citizens of Alberta to basically go through their memories and try and find a dump, a landfill, that may have been located in the province of Alberta in the decades prior to the 1970s. We've asked them to go back and search their memories, to go through the 1960s, the 1950s, the 1940s, and back. In addition to that, we've sent out letters to all the municipalities in the province of Alberta and some 500 to 600 industries in the province of Alberta asking them to go through those records as well. Phase 1 is the inventory side.

Phase 2, in essence, will be a required evaluation on sites if we believe that there is in fact the possibility -- I underline the word "possibility" -- of a toxic or a hazardous waste site, and phase 3 of the program would be the mitigation side of the program. That's been stated now repeatedly, been advertised in every paper in the province of Alberta and by way of letters, as I

indicated, to all the municipalities and industries in our province.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to the introduction of guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

### head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, this is a special occasion for me today as it's the first time I've had an opportunity to welcome to the Assembly a group of students from the totally awesome constituency of Calgary Forest Lawn.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, 31 grades 7 to 9 students from Sir Wilfrid Laurier school. They're accompanied by two teachers, Mr. John Wyndham and Miss Shelley Rudolph. I ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

### head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

### ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION 1987-88 ESTIMATES OF PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

#### Department of Recreation and Parks

MR. GOGO: The first estimates to be called today are vote 1, Kananaskis Country recreation development on page 12, followed by vote 2, municipal recreation/tourism areas on page 14. Would members indicating they have questions please indicate to the Chair.

The minister is the Hon. Norm Weiss, Minister of Recreation and Parks. Hon. minister, do you have any opening comments to the committee?

MR. WEISS: Well, thank you. Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'd like to provide some background regarding these requests for funds from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Basically, the two projects before this Assembly are linked to what I refer to as a common goal, and that goal is the building of a significant heritage for all Albertans.

The development and operation of Kananaskis Country and the municipal recreation/tourism areas program are significant contributions to a legacy of heritage resources for the future. Kananaskis Country is a unique and shining example of heritage preservation. It provides a diverse range of recreational opportunities in what I believe is and term as one of the most spectacular natural landscapes in the world. To those who've had the opportunity to share in it and see it, I'm sure you would agree, and I'm sure the hon. member for Canmore would echo

those sentiments -- Banff-Cochrane; pardon me. I'm referring to the Canmore Nordic Centre when I speak of that specifically. Its existence has been treasured and appreciated by Albertans and visitors alike. It is a special resource which emphasizes access for all, in particular with special facilities designed for the disabled, the elderly, families, and individuals. It is truly a world-class, multi-use, year-round recreation facility for all to enjoy. And I specifically refer, Mr. Chairman, that it's a year-round use, because so often we think about parks and recreation facilities as being limited to one season.

The Heritage Savings Trust Fund has supported Kananaskis Country development since 1978. To the end of the 1986-87 fiscal year, approximately \$221 million has been allocated in total, and some portion of that funding, \$9 million, was expended in 1986-87.

Kananaskis Country is undoubtedly encouraging Albertans and others to spend more of their leisure time in Alberta. Visitor use of the area is continually rising. Specifically, in the summer of 1985 -- and I go back to 1985 to make some comparisons here -- over 2.3 million people visited the area. That was a 14 percent increase over the previous year. And last year some 3 [million]-plus people visited the area. That doesn't include, Mr. Chairman and all hon. members of the Assembly, the people that used the Kananaskis facilities at Mount Allan and those in the hon. member's constituency of the Canmore Nordic Centre. So if one were to take those numbers as well, it would be in the high 3 million-plus category. So certainly it has seen significant gains in increase in usage.

As well, some 92,000 people participated in what we term special interpretative programs, and 57,000 rounds of golf were played at the golf course. William Watson Lodge, a facility I've had the opportunity to expound on in the Assembly before, is a special mountain holiday facility for the handicapped and the elderly. Last year it was booked to capacity, and with the extension and addition of the facilities to some 80 units plus, it also is booked to capacity for this year as well. There's no doubt of the value or the significance of Kananaskis Country as a heritage resource to this province.

Now, the request before this Assembly for allocation of some \$3.861 million from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund provides completion of the alpine village infrastructure at Ribbon Creek. I emphasize to all hon. members, Mr. Chairman, that it provides for the completion of the alpine village infrastructure. These projects were approved in the '86-87 budget and are ongoing in the '87-88 fiscal year.

The second portion of the requested funding, as you indicated earlier, Mr. Chairman, refers to some \$2 million under the municipal recreation/tourism areas program, and if I may shorten it down I'll use the term MRTA program. This provides capital grants to municipalities for development and upgrading of outdoor recreation facilities as a means of creating new recreation and tourism opportunities for Albertans. The MRTA program also provides long-term support through operational grants from the General Revenue Fund for completed projects.

I'd appreciate the questions, but before I do, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to have an opportunity just to finish with a few remarks.

This program, Mr. Chairman, is tremendously well received and well supported by Albertans. The grants of up to \$100,000 per capital project are basically what I refer to as seed money. Development projects are identified by the municipality, and we work very closely with the municipality in developing them. The sites often have local historical or natural heritage significance. The MRT grant covers moneys that allow for a sig-

nificant portion of costs, but they do not pay for the full facility. The community residents take tremendous initiative to complete the projects. They involve volunteers and donations in kind, as well as many of their own funds.

We do not have an exact measure of public involvement, but we do know that there is significant reciprocal investment by the communities involved. Estimates show that the government investment is matched or exceeded in most all cases by private contributions to many of these projects. So all in all one could see that it's not just the \$100,000 seed money, as I referred to, but an overall investment of many hundreds of thousands of dollars to upgrade and develop and build these facilities to be used by all Albertans and specifically operated by the municipalities. All Albertans benefit from the existence of new or enhanced parks and recreational facilities, but those who participate in the projects reap an even greater demand and reward. They tell us of a tremendous sense of ownership, a stewardship of pride in the parks which they have personally helped to build for their use.

The MRTA program is truly a seed program, as I've said, and it works from the grass roots up. Beyond creating new tourism opportunities, this program provides job opportunities and enhances business opportunities within local communities. The private sector is involved from day one. In 1987 and '88, with a total commitment of \$2 million, it is estimated that 28 of 41 eligible constituencies will receive MRTA funding. Together with the program's predecessor, the municipal recreation areas program, some 40 of the 41 eligible constituencies will have received funding since 1981. Thus, Mr. Chairman, nearly every corner of the province has benefited from these programs since their inception and will, of course, be ensured in perpetuity of ongoing maintenance as well.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to note that these projects are identified in the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund 1985 annual report as quality-of-life initiatives. They contribute to the quality of life by making recreational opportunities more available and more accessible for all Albertans. These projects build on our heritage resource base, adding to the legacy we'll leave for future generations of all Albertans. As I've said once before, Mr. Chairman, in particular to the members of the Assembly, it's most encouraging to note the private-sector involvement, because they're a key and a catalyst to assist in these programs and the development. We're very proud of what has happened in the municipalities, proud of our partnership, proud of the overall involvement, and especially proud of the Assembly to have given their initial support and their ongoing commitment to the development in these areas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Chairman, I hear the words the minister is speaking, and I guess if the Minister of Recreation and Parks isn't going to say all these wonderful things about what his department is doing, I don't know who we could expect to hear those words from. Nonetheless, he's only provided one particular side of the story. I don't hear how this department establishes its priorities. When the minister talks about its spending in Kananaskis Country, I don't hear how this fits in with the larger provincial park system in Alberta. I don't hear how money that's going into this particular park affects spending in other areas of his department, in other areas of the province, because as the minister in his comments indicated -- \$221 million was a figure I believe he quoted in Kananaskis Country recreation development. I would guess that's most of

the spending, but there's lots of other spending that's gone into Kananaskis through perhaps a variety of programs in addition to the ones he specifically mentioned in transportation, utilities perhaps. I would guess, based on some documentation I've had a chance to review, that \$221 million is close. I gathered it was closer to \$250 million, but I'm not going to dispute those specific dollars with the minister other than to say that it's a tremendous amount of money to be invested in one particular park in southwest Alberta.

I would say to the minister and to members of the Assembly that when you invest that kind of money, I'd like to know on what basis it has a relationship to other spending in his department. I am of the opinion, Mr. Chairman -- and I think the facts will bear it out -- that that kind of money into this one project, albeit a wonderful one and one the minister takes great pride in, has meant that we've lost opportunities in other parts of the province and that it has skewed from being balanced development of our provincial park system in Alberta to an unbalanced development of the park system. There are things that this minister could do to rectify the situation, and I'll make some suggestions this afternoon. But quite frankly, I think the way this government has gone about the amount of money it's invested in Kananaskis in combination with the small amounts of money it's realizing on its leases of properties in that park has led to some unfortunate priorities, and I'm sorry to say that the rest of the park system in Alberta has suffered.

So what I want to do is take a look at what this government has done for its \$220 million and some in Kananaskis. I asked the minister, when he appeared before the committee, to go into detail about the Ribbon Creek development. I just want to say for the record so that it's clear to all members exactly how much this government is putting into Kananaskis, particularly the Ribbon Creek development . . . Let's start with that one. First of all, the province agrees to underwrite 75 percent of the operating costs of the resort association. The resort association is made up of, I believe, the three hotels that are operating in the Ribbon Creek area, and together they have formed an association. This provincial government is underwriting 75 percent of their costs including their marketing costs for the first two years of operation of that association. Then that subsidy decreases annually in 5 percent increments until the 15th year when the province's share of the contributions stabilizes at 25 percent.

Now, perhaps this is in the interests of tourism and perhaps it's going to have some of the desired effects, but let's just take a look at what those dollar figures are estimated to be: in the fiscal year 1986-87 somewhere in excess of three-quarters of a million dollars. In this fiscal year it will be the same amount, next year close to \$600,000, and as I said, that will decrease in 5 percent increments. So this government is making a tremendous investment of public dollars into the cost of this particular resort association's operating costs. Now I ask then: where is this notion of the private sector doing this job? If this is the provincial government making these kinds of expenditures, where is this argument I keep hearing from the other side that we should leave it to the private sector to do the job which the private sector does so well? If that is the case, where is the rationale for this kind of public investment? Mr. Chairman, not only are there some operating funds from his department, this minister's government has also provided a loan guarantee. So those who are owners of this hotel at Ribbon Creek -- the provincial government has guaranteed up to 50 percent of any loss incurred by a lender on loans made to finance the capital costs of that development.

But it goes on. This government, this minister, is providing an infrastructure at no cost to the developers, including all utility services, as I understand it, which include water, sanitary sewer, propane, and storm drainage in order to satisfy the requirements of the hotel. There is AGT telephone service; there are Trans-Alta Utilities electrical service linkups; there's landscaping, roadways, surface parking lots, site lighting, directional signage, pedestrian paths and trails, and recreational facilities. There is assistance to the developer to construct underground parking stalls. And in addition to all of the above, this government is designing, creating, and landscaping the common area of the village and the construction of a day lodge, much of which is in the votes here today.

Then I ask myself: there is all of this public investment reaching into the millions of dollars -- many, many millions of dollars -- and I'd like to know what the other side of the ledger is. And to his credit, the minister of recreation tabled in this Assembly the lease with Kananaskis Alpine Resort Inc. In this lease it spells out what the province is recovering in the way of income for all these millions of dollars of public investment. Let's take the first day of May 1986. The annual rent payable to the province by this lessee is \$4,200 -- \$4,200, and that goes on for 15 years. After that the provincial government gets an increase in the rent it receives from this lessee. It goes to the sum of \$5,250 for each and every year for the following 15-year period, rising again in the following 15-year period to \$6,550 per year, and in the last five-year period of the term, the annual rental payable is \$7,090 per year.

Well, Mr. Chairman, where do these rents reflect the public costs in Kananaskis Country? I mean, I hear this government talk about the separation of the public and the private sector and how the private sector can do things so well. Well, no wonder; in this case they can do well. With that kind of subsidy from the public purse, anybody could do well. They can't help but do well. It's just that these rents bear no relationship to the cost the public is investing through the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

I don't like millions of dollars going into a park for which this government feels it has no responsibility to the taxpayers for that money they've spent in trying to recover any of that investment through the lease agreement. That's what I object to, and there are a lot of Albertans here in this province who object to it as well. Now, what does it mean? Mr. Chairman, as well, I could go into the lease agreement with the operators at Nakiska. But it's the same story: massive public investment; minimal return through the lease to the public. In fact, the minister said he had no intention to get anything back. They're not looking for a return on these investments. Well, I ask, why not? In view of the fact that they've put these millions of dollars into this particular park, why would they not want to receive more money back from them, given there's a large number of people visiting that park? In view of the public investment that goes into it, why would they not try and get some better investment back?

Furthermore, why would they not try to at least establish some equity with other businesses in the area who have to compete with these operations? I mean, here we have the government providing an infrastructure to a private lessee and not asking to recover that investment in that infrastructure, whereas, for example, you have operators not many miles away who run hotels, who run ski operations, and have to finance all of those expenses. So where is the equity with others in the private sector?

The Alberta Opportunity Company, for example, just a year

ago put into receivership a man, Bob Lyon, who was running Lyon Mountain ski resort. And why did he go into receivership? Because he had to finance the cost of the infrastructure for his ski hill. But that relationship is not in existence with the operator at Nakiska. The lease there bears no relationship to the infrastructure which the public has put into that resort and for which the public is not asking for any return on that investment. So I ask: where's the equity? There's a double standard here in the way this government treats one operator to another or one business to the other.

But more importantly, Mr. Chairman, this province is severely lacking in its overall total parks system in comparison to other provinces, and this is where I have other concerns about the overall direction of this department; for example, the number of parks in Alberta, the number of hectares. We have 320,000 hectares of park area in Alberta, compared to Saskatchewan which has 573,000 hectares, compared to British Columbia which has 4.6 million hectares in their provincial parks system. Then, of course, there's poor old Manitoba. Everybody in this government here is fond of criticizing Manitoba. Manitoba has 1.4 million hectares in its provincial parks system. Alberta? Three hundred and twenty thousand hectares. We're hardly over half of what they have in Saskatchewan, and here we have only 320,000 hectares in Alberta.

Instead of making investments in the entire parks system throughout Alberta, what this government has done has chosen instead to make investments in big, expensive golf courses for which they get no return, for ski hills for which they get no return, and for hotels for which they get no return. If they at least in their leases got some return in money back into the department, then they could go about spending it in order to develop the total system. But no, they're not doing that. Instead, they're making cutbacks all over the province. They're dropping recreation areas; 23 of them are going to be divested or closed in Alberta this year -- cutbacks all over Alberta. In addition, there are another 11 areas in Alberta that are being turned into only part-time, seasonally operated park operations.

So all over Alberta parks are being closed, recreation areas are being closed. They're going to part-time operation or seasonal operation, and no attempt is being made to even catch up with what other provinces are doing. We're just simply falling further and further and further behind because of, in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, distorted priorities within the government department. It's a very nice park. I've been out there. It's lovely; there are lots of people out there. But they did not have to invest those dollars that they've invested in that particular park or, having invested them, did not have to sign leases that brought back such a small return to the public purse. There were other priorities this government could have followed and should have followed.

We don't even have a provincial parks system yet in Alberta, and there are potentially hundreds of areas in Alberta that would warrant and benefit from a provincial parks designation and protection. But there's this sense or this idea, it seems, that if you've got a park in Alberta, you've got to plow millions and millions of dollars into it before it has any value as a tourist attraction or any value as a park. That's not true. You can provide lots of parks in this province without having to go the same model that Kananaskis has followed, where millions of dollars are invested and plowed into that park. It doesn't need to follow that same kind of development in order to have a decent parks system in this province.

Mr. Chairman, these investments in Kananaskis are certainly

very, very nice, but I come back to my opening comments: how does this department establish its priorities both in its spending and in the kinds of income it realizes or attempts to realize from its lease agreements? I just don't feel that this government has really followed any kind of responsible fiscal policy in the way it has conducted its investments or pursued the model of development that it has in Kananaskis Country.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like the opportunity to respond briefly, and I would indicate to all other members who wish to get in on this that I will try to hush or curtail my remarks so they'll have an opportunity to do so as well. But I feel that in fairness to the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View I should present the other side. When I say the "other side," it's because he's referred to it that way. He said I came up with one side; he came up with one side. Well, maybe the old story about there being the two sides and then there's the truth might prevail in this case. I wouldn't say that the minister or the hon. member would mislead or would unintentionally express some remarks that were not appropriate, but I think it has to be fair to respond because he's talked specifically about the provincial parks system and how it doesn't fit in and we don't have priorities.

I think he should keep in mind that the particular vote as referred to under Kananaskis really was a special program that was first set up and approved by the Assembly, and funds would be allocated under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. It wasn't under a special project. When the hon. member refers that he guesses it would be some \$250 million, Mr. Chairman, I don't look at that as a guess at all. I don't deal with guesstimates. We deal with facts and the facts are as were presented. It's some \$221 million, as I would indicate, and of course we're looking at \$3.861 million for this year.

When he talks about the comparison -- yes, we don't have as many dollars as we would like to have in the overall budget system that was approved by this Assembly, where there's some \$98 million specifically for the Department of Recreation and Parks and some \$13 million specifically to the overall Kananaskis. I don't believe there are any lost opportunities nor have any parks suffered, nor will they -- and I'll come back to that, Mr. Chairman.

The suggestions that he's made I really don't follow. I'm pleased he would alert the Assembly that the funding through the resort association is diminishing and reaches a point when it will be self-sufficient. I think it was important that the operating expense re the village at Ribbon Creek was set up that way to handle it, and with regard to the loan guarantee, as was indicated about the loss, I'd like to reassure the member that I don't think he's going to have to ever deal with that. Thank goodness we had the foresight and made the commitment to go ahead with the development as we did, because I understand that right now, Mr. Chairman, they're already booking in their third year -- and I emphasize that: third year bookings to date are being taken at this facility. Had we not gone ahead with it, those would have been lost tourism dollars, lost revenues, and lost income to Alberta.

The annual income is predicted at some \$4,200. Yes, he's correct, Mr. Chairman, and all hon. members. It's certainly no secret. As was indicated, I have filed the information and made it available. But I would suggest that the hon. member really lacks the business expertise or the foresight in dealing or negotiating with the private sector. First of all, this was a private proposal call that everybody had an opportunity to compete and come forth. If it was such a steal, I'm embarrassed to ask why

then would the hon. member not have applied if he felt it was such a steal. I didn't see it or look at it as such a steal. We had to encourage and help to bring other people along to develop this. In particular, as we've tried to maintain what I think is one of the most important aspects of the overall development, we are still owners. All members of the Assembly will appreciate that we own that particular resource, the land itself, and the overall area, and that we want to maintain that as an important part of being responsible as the stewards for that resource.

The economic spinoffs to the member's community of Calgary and area are certainly ongoing, and I'm sure all hon. members would support with regard to what was involved with the private sector, the contractors, and the ongoing development that has taken place in the way of the unemployment issues it has addressed as well.

The mass of public investment -- yes, we have provided a large amount of dollars or block funding to provide for this. But we're trying to provide a first-class facility for all Albertans, involving the private sector but by not doing it on our own. We had a commitment as well to provide these facilities and hoped we'd get them in place for the Olympics. That's exactly what has taken place. But the legacy is there and will be there then for future Albertans and all to enjoy by having them in place. If we had turned around and given up the stewardship of the resource and said to the developer, "Go ahead; you can buy this for ongoing rates," anything may or may not have happened. We believe that we've got to have a first on-hands approach to dealing with it. We believe we have selected good, responsible people for working with, and as far as the overall Kananaskis village, we believe that is the way to do it. I'm very confident of the management, the team, the players, and personnel who are involved in this, and I would like to assure the hon. members of the Assembly that by putting this in place -- as the hon. member said, we have no plan -- but by putting this in place, we'll ensure that that's exactly what will happen.

The hon. member referred to a specific development that has failed because it wasn't of a like quality or a like investment and we didn't treat it on a similar basis. I think it should be pointed out that the failure was really as a result of other factors, and it was a different type of development. I wouldn't want to take up the time debating it at this time, but I would welcome the opportunity to sit with the hon. member firsthand and show him that I personally was involved to see if it could be resurrected or saved and that the financing structure could or would have assisted if all things had been equal, as was pointed out by the hon. member, but certainly they were not. There are some other factors such as underfinancing, undercapitalization, and management problems that entered into that as well. I don't think it's important to take the members' time to specifically be involved in it.

The parks comparison -- it's very interesting that the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View would take and use the term "hectares." I guess I'm still from the old school; I refer to acres. If one were to just take in such overall parks as the Willmore Wilderness area, the federal parks systems that we have the benefit and the advantage of sharing and using within our province, Kananaskis Country in its some thousands of square miles as well, and then convert it all back to hectares, I'm sure the hon. member would be more than impressed to find that we in all probability exceed them all.

But it isn't the size we're looking for, sir; it's the quality. It's what's within those parks that's important. It's what's in Kananaskis, with the development that we have, to be able to attract the 3 million-plus visitors and to be able to look for

projected increases as well. It's the type of facilities that we have in place with all our parks: the infrastructure. Yes, there is great expense developed in putting in the washrooms, as was indicated in previous discussions and debates, and the cost with regard to the sand. But thank goodness that those decisions were made, because if they had not been, you and I as taxpayers -- and I say we can have anything we want as long as we're prepared to pay for it out of our tax dollars. Those investments saved your and my tax dollars in having to rebuild or replace some of these facilities, and in particular such things as the two examples I use with regard to the sand and washrooms.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

So if you were to take the overall parks -- and I would encourage the hon. member to come with me; I would welcome showing him some of the ones we're working on -- I don't believe we have any parks that do not meet the standards. It's coincidental that we are used as a role model by many provinces as to just what we have. I'd like to point out though, having had the opportunity of visiting some of the federal areas where they maybe spend \$23 million or \$24 million annually operating a park, we do the same thing on a budget of some \$20 million less for a park of similar size.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that might not sound like a fair comparison, but if we can do something at \$3 million and do it just as effectively and just as good, I think that's a good saving of your and my tax dollars that I referred to. And I know two specific examples, when I use those exact dollars that I refer to in the federal system in relation to our provincial system, and that one might be able to compare the parks in our province.

The 23 recreation areas that were referred to -- it should be pointed out to the Assembly, Mr. Chairman, that the closure of those 23 recreation areas, if they were all to close, would have resulted in only 4 percent of the annual users of the parks. That really is a very small number: 4 percent of the users use those 23 facilities. But to show our overall co-operation in working with municipalities and recreation groups and the strong relationship that our recreation consultants and our people have within the communities and with the Members of the Legislative Assembly, I could report to the Assembly that as of today 17 of those 23 sites were negotiating with municipalities, service groups, and others to retain and keep open.

Now, one might then question the decision, Mr. Chairman. Why close them if others feel that they should be open or operational? The purpose of establishing recreation areas was to provide access or areas to local groups and organizations. But we've looked at it and said, "Look, we have to be realists as well as to how we can best deliver these services." I personally believe, as a liaison person for my constituency and as a member of this government, that quite often -- and I say quite often -- the private sector or the municipalities can do a lot better job than we can as government. I can't envision or look at spending our dollars in picking up garbage and looking after a site that can be best administered, controlled, or serviced by a neighbouring municipality that takes pride in the ownership and developing similar to what we're doing in the municipal recreation/tourism area.

Yes, some parks are going to be closed under seasonal-based operations. When I say "closed," they'll be closed in the fact that while maybe they'll be operated seasonally, they won't have a full complement of staff. I think that goes back to the planning the hon. member referred to. It's a tough decision to

say no. It's a tough decision to have to say no to your family when they come back for more dollars. But in this case I think it's a wise decision to look at the overall use, the facilities.

Let me use as an example the provincial park located in my constituency, Gregoire provincial park. It's a park that has not had full seasonal operation in that we don't have a full complement of staff maintaining or maiming this all year round. The park is utilized by people who go ice fishing, who come out to the park on a Sunday, but it isn't necessary, Mr. Chairman, to always have clear, clean, paved roads in wintertime, with great expense of snow removal, extensive maintenance, and grounds people on site. These are just common, ordinary facts and decisions that we must look at and be practical: how would we allocate or spend our own money? I've tried to apply that rule fairly and equitably in making those decisions. And if I've created some enemies and have created some people who are dissatisfied with those decisions, I'll accept that. But not once -- and I say this many, many times -- will I lower my principles to be a politician. I'll treat all fairly with regard to the overall decisions we make within our department.

And the department are answering those decisions fairly and wisely, to see how we can best administer the dollars we have, and we're going to be responsible for those. We believe, too, Mr. Chairman, that if one were to come out and look at some of the parks -- and I realize it isn't specifically under the vote, but the hon. member's referred to it so I have the opportunity to respond to that directly. I would like him to see some of the parks that we're improving and upgrading and working on.

Parks wear out, Mr. Chairman. We accept that responsibility to maintain and update them, and we will continue to do so on an ongoing basis. We believe we have the policies in place. We believe we have the team in place through our department, and we believe we have the commitment of this Assembly to follow it up and carry out that action plan. I take strong exception to the remark that we have no plan and we don't have any priorities. I believe we've got them, and I believe we can deliver those programs. Some people will suffer, yes, but I don't think it's going to be a hardship, and we won't see parks close, that people will not want to be able to look at other services and facilities.

I see some great things and some good programs yet that we're going to deliver on. I had the opportunity with the Hon. Dennis Anderson recently just to be down at the Tyrrell museum field station, and opened that in our Dinosaur Provincial Park -- a tremendous facility, just an ongoing upgrading commitment that we have and others that we'll be working on and coming to the Assembly.

I would hope all hon. members would look at the votes seriously, objectively. I accept the criticism where it's fair criticism, but I also defend the department in the decisions that we've made to date in these two expenditures, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Calgary Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and a nice try to the Hon. Norm, who indicates that he will accept criticism where it's fair criticism. He is just about to accept more criticism, in that event.

It's funny how the government failures jump out at any reasonable observer. In that regard, both the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View and I have been on this case, as mem-

bers of the heritage trust fund committee, and we intend to keep on it, because the defalcations and errors of the government here have been extremely spectacular, to say the least.

Now, we've heard the glowing words of the minister in introducing these votes. He referred to facilities for the handicapped and other worthy policy objectives. However, he glossed over the reality that the expenses here in vote 1 are for the infrastructure of a village, the primary beneficiary of which is going to be a private-enterprise undertaking. The arrangement with the provincial government was originally entered into by the Financial Trustco company. We're all aware of the significant benefits that that company realized by flipping the projects almost immediately to private investors for a quick profit. In the meantime, after we the people of this province spent over \$50 million directly and indirectly through the building of the golf course, through the building of the ski hill, and through the undertakings of expenditure with respect to the Ribbon Creek development that are the subject of this particular vote, we find, as has been noted and as I never tire of lamenting over, a return of \$4,200 a year on the lease to the people of this province, ballooning, I must add in fairness, to \$10,000 in the year 2051.

The minister has referred to the fabulous success of the hotel developments. We apparently have three years of reservations at the present time. Well, a success of that kind of nature, in light of the minimal return to the province on the leases, simply means to me, Mr. Chairman, that the province left a lot of money on the table. It's like a stock going to a large premium upon going public. "Why is the deal so hard to make if it was so fabulous?" the minister had asked. Well, I would assume that the average potential investor in the project didn't realize that the government was going to give it away, and I suspect there was a tremendous amount of hesitancy in dealing with a facility at Mount Allan in light of the very evident error of building the ski hill at that facility.

The minister has referred to the influx of tourist dollars, and that's something we'd certainly all like to see, but I wonder whether he has any indication of where these reservations are coming from. Are they Calgary people who are using those facilities or are they tourists from Europe or Japan? How many of them are there, and just what kind of value are we getting when we break down the expenditure in that particular area in relation to other potential uses? I am concerned at what this very miserable business deal means with respect to the business acumen of the government. A Tory government, if anything, is supposed to be a business government. However, my inclination is to hope to be in on the deal the next time that one is available, if this is what we're going to be seeing.

Now, I have some questions that I would like to address to the minister. I just want to seek confirmation that the whole of this vote, the \$3.861 million, is in fact pursuant to the arrangement with respect to the building of the hotels, with respect to those undertakings, and that there is no separate expenditure relating to other infrastructures in the area. And I was wondering whether we might just have a -- it's by way of a related question: that if any expenditures fall outside that category, what would the expenses be before? How much more will be spent? We have now spent a very significant sum. The expenditures last year were in the range of \$9.5 million, I believe, for that particular project. How much more?

We have the question of the resort association expense, the 75 percent share of the provincial government. Is that included in this particular vote? Will we have an ongoing expense next year for the Heritage Savings Trust Fund of the 75 percent share

that year and as an ongoing obligation through the heritage trust fund?

There's reference here to construction contracts. With whom are these construction contracts, if the minister might advise? Is the firm of Mr. Al Olson involved in these contracts as well? We are aware that he is the contractor for at least the main hotel at the Ribbon Creek area and, I understand, at least one second smaller one. So do we see Mr. Al Olson appearing here again?

Are any more hotels planned for the area? Are there going to be any more deals of this nature, and can I be the first to know? Will there be any private accommodations for any of the investors in that area by way of deals to utilize staff accommodation and facilities, or otherwise?

I would also like to express some sympathy for the concept that we do look into establishing more provincial parks. It's my understanding that at the present time only about one-half of 1 percent of the land in this province consists of provincial parks in comparison to, for example, the Ontario experience of 5.3 percent -- whether in acres or hectares. There are, apparently, no conservation preserves in this province. I see the minister shaking his head in distress at that, and I'd be very interested in hearing his comments. But it seems to me that overall, and particularly in relation to his earlier comments about the amount of parkland we have in the province, he referred to national parks. What we're really doing is piggybacking on the national parks system, and apparently the consultants for the federal government, in a recent report they released, expressed some distress at the failure of provincial governments in general -- and this provincial government included -- to fund and establish provincial parks, and to that extent the recommendation is to provide some funding for the government to run parks in the province in order to stimulate a little bit of enthusiasm.

I note a certain degree of discomfort -- and justifiable discomfort -- on the government benches, so by way of example might I refer to a recommendation of a committee established by this government some few years ago to establish a provincial park adjacent to the Waterton federal park. At that point of time we had a letter from the minister of tourism telling us what a wonderful assist this would be to tourism in the province. So what do we do? Do we establish a provincial park? No, we go and approve the drilling of a natural gas well there. Well, it didn't go ahead, but certainly no thanks to any sense of conservation by the provincial government. Some more provincial parks, please.

And while we're at it, I see the minister of manpower there absolutely engrossed in this particular subject, so perhaps I might address a question to the Minister of Recreation and Parks while he has the minister of manpower at his elbow there. The question is whether there are any plans to use any portion of the lottery funds available to this province for improving and assisting in the maintenance and establishment of an enhanced provincial park system.

Those are my comments. We want you to obey the law. "We'll see you in court," as they say.

MR. WEISS: May I respond briefly and thank the hon. member for his comments and his constructive criticism. I won't go into details with regards to some of the items, but I appreciated his comments with regards to facilities for the handicapped, in particular William Watson Lodge. Because while people have spoken specifically before and, too, have referred to the fact that we have no plan, this facility is a model. It was the first in the world. Others are looking at it and designing from it, so we

hope we've really set the stage.

Particularly, there was a high risk in the overall development of some of these facilities referred to by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo. I felt that in working together with these groups, yes, maybe we've minimized risk, but we've also increased development and allowed them to proceed, which they never would have. Keep in mind, once again, that this is on our land; this isn't freehold land where they've gone out and carried the mortgage, and we've insisted upon that. I don't believe anything's been left on the table, and it's nice to see that there will hopefully be a good profit margin or a profit return. That's means a strong, viable operation. A strong economic climate creates more jobs and certainly assures that we have good ongoing facilities and amenities for years to come in the area.

A very valid point with regards to tourism. I will undertake to try and provide for the hon. member with regards to where these bookings are coming from. I'll try and ascertain that. I can't undertake to guarantee that to the hon. member because maybe that isn't available to me. As far as the overall usage through the park, we do have those statistics, and I would be prepared to provide them; I have once before to the Assembly.

The question that he referred to with regards to the \$3.861 million I think is very reasonable. I'd like to point out that except for some possible work that may be needed to complete this overall area in '88-89, this will likely be the last Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund request for work presently under way. The reason for that, Mr. Chairman, is that the ongoing management of Kananaskis Country, which was previously financed by and through the heritage fund, was transferred to the General Revenue Fund effective April 1, 1987, and I had indicated that in my estimates. So any future dollars that may be required would be requested through the General Revenue Fund, and I don't think the Provincial Treasurer is going to be too lax in any major expenditure or any major way.

In fairness, the ongoing operation then will be maintained through the regular funding process, and we won't be coming back and asking for extra dollars, as was indicated by the member. In fairness to the contractors and to the contractor on-site, the hon. member has referred to: what about future work? As I've indicated, the work will be such areas as the road work, the hard and soft landscaping, underground work in the village centre, and the maintenance area. All this work will be handled under the normal procedure as outlined, I'm sure, many, many times through the Assembly through the hon. member for public works. It would be under public tender, and that will be in all cases. This is the only way to treat anybody fairly, so I would ask the hon. member to alert all his constituents who are involved in the contracting business that their name could be put on the list if it were going out by mail. We don't look for invitational tenders. We put it in the paper, and they'll have an opportunity to compete as anybody else will.

As far as any new hotels, I don't envision any at this time. I would be glad to keep the member's name on a list, and I would encourage the member if he would like to perhaps update it. If he wanted to resign his seat, maybe we could even encourage the hotel to be built sooner. I don't know if he wants to take that opportunity though.

The member has raised a fair question and wants to have a specific answer as it relates to staff facilities and accommodation as part of the overall agreements. There will be some staff dormitory type of accommodations but not individual houses being put up for this. These will be shared on a joint basis, operated in conjunction, and controlled through the association.



That's another key ingredient of the association working in that manner, where they in turn will assess the fees that will be coming back forth with regards to the utilities and other costs.

I'd ask the hon. member to bear with me, because specifically with regards to wilderness areas or new areas I had made an announcement recently with regards to the ecological areas. I'm very high on what we're doing in this with the advisory committee that reports through and to me. Specifically, we'll be filing to the Assembly the annual report in the next few days. I've just reviewed it myself and have gone over it with the committee. We've made an announcement with some four sites just recently, have two more on the way, and we hope to have others. As far as being finalized very shortly, I'm working very closely with the minister from forestry, and we believe we're going to succeed in this area. I think if you look at the overall efforts in the last year, you'll applaud them, hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, and will be very pleased to see what's happened in that particular area.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Hidden Creek?

MR. WEISS: I'd love to address that issue with him at another time.

I think the amount of area that has been set aside -- in particular acreage in reserve, such as Hidden Creek and other areas -- for potential park use will far exceed any other province as far as what we've got specifically in the north and south areas and our Eastern Slopes. Significant areas have been set aside for potential future recreation areas, and at this time I don't see an awful lot of these areas being fully integrated as parks where they would need the infrastructure but would be retained in those states at this time until such further uses were recognized.

The last item that was referred to by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo relates to the funding of dollars. That decision should be best answered by the minister to my left. I'll bypass that by the minister, too, over to the left, who is responsible for it, of course, and has spoken to the Assembly on many occasions as reviewing it. I would encourage the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, though, to read his mail, to be aware of the number of groups that specifically, through recreation and sports groups and cultural groups as well, have indicated to me in correspondence, and to the hon. minister for career development as well as the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, their need to see this funding continue and what it represents and means to them for the development of our athletes, both at the amateur level and of course on the recreation side. I would encourage the ongoing support in this particular field because it's an area I believe strongly in, that I'm committed to, as well as the department's overall commitment.

But as far as actually taking dollars and saying that they should be put into building parks, I don't believe this department should have any more priority or any more preferential treatment given out to the vast number of groups that are in need of support for dollar funding. I believe the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee is the group that specifically should be used to help develop and build our parks system. In particular, and I refer to an urban parks programs which is really a complementary-type program to this, I would hope that the hon. member would support and perhaps come forth with a recommendation, as we previously have requested, through the Heritage Savings Trust Fund so see that program extended and expanded to other communities as well.

The overall lottery funding would not be enough to even sup-

port the level of funding that we're looking at that was allocated, for example, to the major park in Kananaskis Country -- some \$221 million. If you're dealing with a \$110 million surplus, it would build half a park. I believe there are other, better uses it could be put to, not at the expense . . . When I say, "To the lesser importance to what I believe is in the overall development of recreation and parks," I believe specifically it can be addressed in another area.

So with those remarks, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to other questions that may come from hon. members.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Red Deer South.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recognize this afternoon that we have strayed considerably from time to time from the subject matter in front of us, that being the capital projects division of the heritage trust fund and, specifically, Recreation and Parks.

I, too, want to offer my brief comments on the Alberta parks that have been discussed this afternoon. As an individual that's camped right across this country and throughout the United States and throughout the world, I want to say that our parks take a backseat to none; they're second to none. They're extremely well kept, they're extremely clean, and they have very hospitable and co-operative employees around the parks on an ongoing basis. And I might note that I've certainly had many opportunities where I've been able to sit around a campfire and exchange thoughts with people from throughout the world that are enjoying our parks. It's safe to say that they're quick to share my viewpoint that our parks are second to none.

I want to also take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate and thank the minister for his efforts and support for Kananaskis Country, in seeing the project through to completion. I don't think it's something that'll ever be fully completed. We look forward to ongoing development and progress as the years go on, but certainly this minister has picked up and carried the ball forward.

I think it would be helpful at this point to reflect back and review the initial thrust of the heritage trust fund. There were three principle objectives within the trust fund when it was initially set out some 10-plus years ago. The first initiative, of course, was to save for the future, and we've done that. We have a trust fund that's worth in excess of \$15 billion today, so we have saved for the future. Secondly, it was to strengthen and diversify the economy. Again, during the past 10 years we've invested over \$6 billion in diversifying the economy and have been very successful there as well. But lastly, and I think one of the most important parts of the trust fund's initial objectives, was to improve the quality of life in Alberta today as well as into the future. To improve the quality of life -- and of course this is where Recreation and Parks comes into play, and Kananaskis Country, and I'm glad the minister did touch on urban parks. There's an awful lot of success stories in the heritage trust fund, but I think right near the top of the list are urban parks and Kananaskis park. I'm surprised to hear so much negative rhetoric on such a success story. I can't understand why people would want to critique what I see as an overwhelming success story.

Let's talk about, just briefly, the economic benefits, the three million tourists that are going through there already -- three million tourists through Kananaskis park. We've talked about building upon our natural strengths, and we've recognized here

in Alberta that we have some tremendous potential in tourism. I was delighted to see the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Recreation and Parks get together to kick off Nakiska with their I think imaginative and creative initiative of bringing in some stars from Hollywood, and that gave us millions of dollars worth of advertising around the world. What a way to kick it off! And it's exciting to hear that the new facilities there are already booked up for three years into the future.

One of the things that's really excited me about Kananaskis is that to me it reflects what I see as the ultimate objective of this trust fund, and that's something for future generations. Having two young daughters, I often reflect upon them and think about what kind of a legacy we are going to be leaving them in the future. I've already touched on urban parks, and we're certainly proud of ours in Red Deer, Mr. Minister, but Kananaskis is something that my kids, I know, will be able to enjoy, as will their kids. And again, what an accomplishment: 1,600 square miles of parks. It's hard for me to even fathom that we could afford to set that kind of land aside here in Alberta -- 1,600 square miles.

Look at the facilities that we've developed there, and we've developed them with a great deal of sensitivity to the environment. We've developed them so that we're not damaging our wildlife -- we're in fact enhancing the wildlife in that particular area -- but they've been developed to allow all Albertans to enjoy them. I know that my neighbours have come back from many happy holidays at Kananaskis park already, and they speak of the facilities, the day facilities as well as the camping facilities, that are available to them at such a reasonable cost. We have the golf course, a world-class golf course, and yes, it's an important part of that facility. Again, try to book a time there; it shows you what a success story that is. The trail systems for hiking and cross-country skiing and bicycling -- it's interesting to note that we've even been able to accommodate snowmobilers in there. So often there's a real clash between hikers and cross-country skiers and snowmobilers, but I suppose it's in part reflective of the size that we're able to meet such a diverse range of interests.

I'm only sorry that the Member for Calgary Buffalo and the Member for Calgary Mountain View, who are on the standing committee of the heritage trust fund, weren't able to join us when we took a couple of days out to tour the facilities that are there. Perhaps if they had seen them firsthand, it would have given them a better appreciation for just how well these facilities are being utilized by tourists and by Albertans.

The William Watson Lodge itself for me made the whole trip worth while. The minister has touched on it already, but I want to touch on it again. This particular facility was established and built for, first of all, the disabled, and secondly, our senior citizens, on an availability basis. And again, what a success story there. This particular facility is managed -- or I should say the assistant manager is a young man, around his early 20s. This particular individual is 100 percent blind and has been since the age of 12, and it's indicative of the whole philosophy behind this facility and who is able to utilize it. This young man, to start with, is able to find his way around the facilities there himself, totally on his own. He's able to make bookings; that is to say, people can phone in, he can answer the phone, and he can confirm their room and room number and dates and everything else, even with his handicap.

But the really outstanding story with this particular young man is that he's a cross-country skier. Now, some of you might think that cross-country skiing isn't necessarily a good sport for

the blind, but I want you to know that there's an awful lot of them out there using these particular facilities. The only problem that it posed for this individual, when I talked to him about it, was that he doesn't like to cross-country ski during the day because he's inclined to run into people. But at nighttime or early in the morning when it's still dark, he goes out on his own, and he has over 25 kilometres of cross-country ski trails memorized.

We've taken some of the natural beauty that this province has to offer and we've opened it up to the disabled. The facilities that are at William Watson Lodge are a tremendous asset, and they just opened up totally new horizons for the handicapped at a very affordable price. The units up there, which they've had to expand upon a couple of times now, are all geared and built to accommodate the handicapped. They can go from their hotel unit down to the lake -- all wheelchair accessible. A number of trails throughout are wheelchair accessible, so we've opened up a whole new world for handicapped Albertans that might not otherwise be there.

I just want to conclude by touching on one concern I had when I saw the Ribbon Creek development, Mr. Minister, and I saw the ski hill. As a skier and a person that has young children, I really regretted that we weren't able to accommodate skiers right on the hill. I know it's close, and I know there are shuttle services over, but as a person that takes his young daughter skiing, I know one of the first things we look for is on-hill accommodation so that when dad gets tired out and can't keep up with the kids anymore, he can at least go back to the hotel room. I would hope that somewhere down the road there are still some possibilities for on-hill accommodation, because I think that's something that's very badly needed here in Alberta. There's limited on-hill accommodation at Sunshine, but that's it.

Other than that, Mr. Chairman, I want to conclude by again congratulating the minister. I certainly share his enthusiasm for this Kananaskis Country. I know that our parks overall are in capable hands. I've already touched on the high standards that are there and how proud I am of Alberta parks. I know they're in good hands with this minister, and I look forward to the completion of Kananaskis Country.

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. Member for Red Deer South: thanks for his kind words and encouragement. We'll try and live up to those expectations. I'm pleased the hon. member, though, would notice and in particular pay attention to what we refer to as the quality of life, life health styles, because we believe that's very important. We have the hon. minister for hospitals and health care addressing many issues, and I'm sure if people would follow in, in the recreation field in particular, it would be what I term preventive medicine. It would be in all probability an area where we could save or reduce health care costs. And I encourage each member, as we did through last week in Canada's Fitweek, to continue for the next 53 weeks and not just -- or 51 weeks; there are only 52 in the year -- to continue in those programs and hopefully help to reduce our costs as well.

I would extend an invitation formally to the hon. members for Calgary Mountain View and Calgary Buffalo to accompany you, sir, as the chairman of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee, along with other members, to take a tour of Kananaskis Country. I've written to you, sir, and hopefully, you'd be able to accommodate that in the summer months. Generally, your period of visitations has been in a very cold period of time when you've not maybe had the opportunity to see

some of the summer facilities in place and as well give the members an opportunity to see firsthand the facilities and in particular the use. So I hope that can be accomplished and would encourage them to do so.

I certainly take as a suggestion and welcome your remarks as it refers to the accommodation on-site, particularly for those in the recreation field. It's one we've not been able to address, one that we're looking at. Hopefully, we'll be able to come back at a later date, and not just as it relates to this particular area but to other areas, with the request that facilities such as you refer to could be put in place and developed, once again, where there are private users and private facilities that they, too, would have the opportunity to take advantage of. I refer to such a developer as, say, over in the Fortress Mountain area, where he's most anxious and desirable to see such a facility take place to meet the needs of what he believes is required to be competitive in this recreation field.

So it's an area that I strongly believe in and hope that I'd get the hon. member's support as well as members of the Assembly. So with those few remarks as a response, I look forward to hearing if any other members have any questions or concerns, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Chairman, it seems we have an awful lot of the politicians in the province right now giving some great speeches on the need for jobs. I hear these same politicians giving some really great speeches on the need to encourage the development of our tourist industry, secondary industry, and they are very concerned about our third-largest industry. Unfortunately, I hear some of these same politicians criticizing Kananaskis Country, and to me it seems like it's quite a success story. I just wonder if the minister could tell us: how many jobs can we expect, say, from the three hotels in Kananaskis Country over the next 10 years? How many jobs can we expect from the ski hill? How many jobs can we expect from the golf course? How many tourists over the next 10 years can we expect in these facilities -- the ski hill, the golf course, the trails, the hotels -- and how many dollars are they going to leave behind in the province of Alberta?

I've heard a little talk about the Kananaskis hotels, Ribbon Creek and Kananaskis Village, and I remember that project well. I remember it had a lot of problems. We had the Sterling Group come in, and they worked on it for, I guess, over a year. Spent over half a million dollars. I think it was approaching \$700 million in the engineering/planning cost, a fantastic cost. And they were collapsing on it; they couldn't put the package together. Then our new Premier, Don Getty, got in, and he was able to get Financial Trustco to pull this dam thing together and get us out. We were talking of spending \$30 million to build that hotel and talking about operating it ourselves with -- I guess we'd have unionized staff with unionized hours. We'd have the usual type of thing with a government bureaucracy running it. I can just see one of the government bureaucrats there being the bellhop in one of these hotels or behind the bar. I can just try to picture that.

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

I wonder if the minister could also advise us: is that coming in at a cost anywhere near that \$30 million we projected? Or is it going to come in a little bit cheaper, after we were able to negotiate a deal with Financial Trustco? Those are things I'd like

hear a little bit about.

As a Calgary MLA, I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank the minister, his department, the minister before him, and everybody involved in getting Kananaskis Country developed. I think the benefits accruing back to our tourist industry are sure going to be appreciated by this MLA and the area of the province that I represent. [some applause]

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wish more members would join with the Provincial Treasurer in his applause for the hon. Member for Calgary Millican's astute findings. I say "astute findings" because quite often I find myself not agreeing with the hon. member, and we often find ourselves at the opposite end of even the odd little wager we've been known to cover between the south and the north with regards to hockey teams, and I of course am on the winning end at this time.

I mentioned earlier that I would only deal with facts as it related to the Member for Calgary Mountain View, and I'm unprepared at this time to specifically report to the Assembly and to the hon. member the exact number of employment opportunities that are being provided through the facilities that were mentioned by the member, in particular the three hotels and Ski Kananaskis and, of course, the Canmore Nordic Centre along with the other facilities in the area. I can assure him, though, that just in a quick calculation it in all probability will be in excess of 1,000. But I would undertake to provide that more specifically to the hon. member, because I do know that seasonal employment, for example, in the golf course is much higher than what it is in other periods and off-periods. So those numbers fluctuate.

But the big point that the hon. member has brought out in two areas in particular is with regards to the overall year-round use that's being provided in the area, and that's a significant point and a key that I mentioned in my opening remarks but was not picked up on, and the hon. member brings it out. The year-round use of not just the area but of the facilities that are being developed within it just means more job opportunities, more economic dollars, as was mentioned, in particular the millions of dollars in benefit to the area of the Calgary core. It's just phenomenal.

But the other major point mentioned by the hon. member was the operation of the hotel, Mr. Chairman, to point out that it isn't going to be operated by the provincial government and our dollars; it's going to be operated by the private sector. And as I've indicated before, I believe they can in all probability provide and do a much better job. The cost, all and all, will be -- at this point it's projected we'll be under.

Two specific examples of cost and dollars in the area that we were involved in through funding, of course, were the Canmore Nordic Centre, that the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane is very familiar with, as well as the Mount Allan facility. Both came in, in total, under budget. Phenomenal to think that we could do it and deliver those facilities. So I am very confident that we will be able to maintain that objective and would thank the hon. Member for Calgary Millican once again for bringing out those facts as it relates to the ongoing use and to the cost and the operation and thank him for his kind words and comments as it relates to the overall department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know,

I've got a few comments lined up here, but I just can't resist replying to the minister, who was bragging about some of the contracts coming in under budget. I guess you should be able to in a society where the economy is in such bad shape that people are willing to undercut each other for the bids to try to get the lowest possible contract -- that's just in the last couple of years -- and to do it on the backs of the working poor who have to do it at low and miserable wages.

ANHON. MEMBER: It creates jobs, Alex, creates jobs.

MR. McEACHERN: Yeah, sure. At what cost to the people and the economy?

In any case, I'm going to start a little bit with Kananaskis. I was on the standing committee on the heritage trust fund, and the two-day tour that was taken there -- I went the one day; I couldn't get away the other day. I must admit I felt a little uneasy about spending a day touring a luxury course and being paid for it at taxpayers' expense. But I thought, "Well, I'd better go down and have a bit of a look at it anyway," since I'd spent a number of years criticizing the extravagant waste of money that went into that golf course and the surrounding park. Sure, it's a beautiful park; it's a wonderful facility. But if you think about it in terms of the whole province, why did we put so many of the dollars -- over \$200 million -- into that park when other areas of the province have had to get along with a lot less? The project started out at some \$40 million, and then within a short time something got out of hand -- planners got out of hand or whatever -- and we end up with an over \$200 million project.

Yes, it's beautiful, and it would be very nice to visit it, and I probably will take relatives down, that sort of thing, enjoy the park. But I've still got a certain unease about it. This project was done not in the boom times; it was started in the boom times, but by the time the government got halfway into the project, the boom times were well over. I reminded members of this House the other day that 1983-84 would have been a deficit year if it hadn't been for the extra money coming out of the heritage trust fund; the same with '85-86. And still we went ahead with that project on a luxury scale that has not been matched anywhere else in the province in terms of facilities. You can talk about attracting visitors all you like, but like the Member for Calgary Buffalo, I wonder where some of them are coming from. Sure, some of them are coming from Alberta, some of them are coming from abroad, other parts of Canada; that's great. But there are a lot of people in my riding of Edmonton Kingsway that are not going to get down there. There are lots of people that are lining up at food banks instead, people that don't have cars.

The minister said that the provincial government has co-operated with the municipal facilities when we're talking about shutting down some of the parks, and he was saying that some of the municipal governments will be picking up the tabs for the ongoing operation of some of the parks, these 23 parks that the provincial government is pulling out of. Yes, that's true; you co-operate with the municipalities to a certain extent. But when I raised the question the other day about the need for little parks off the river valley, for instance in Edmonton, I was told, "Oh, that's out of order, and you shouldn't be talking about that here." But we need to co-operate on all three levels, and I'm glad you raised that because I think it gives me a chance to get back in on that point.

I think the provincial government obviously should be co-operating with the municipal governments and the federal gov-

ernment in terms of park policies, and I know you do to a certain extent. So I think it's appropriate in this forum to say that cities need little local parks in their own communities as well as lovely big Capital City Park in the city of Edmonton. I'm sure you won't just tell me that I'm out of order and that I should raise it elsewhere, because I know you're concerned about parks in a more general sense than perhaps our discussion the other day on that Capital City Park.

This strong co-operation with the municipal and federal governments raises just a question in my mind. There was some headline in the paper the other day -- I didn't even get to read all of the article -- something about a federal report on parks, and would appreciate a comment from the minister in regard to the federal committee that was making some recommendations about provincial governments taking over federal parks or operating federal parks. It reminds me of the comments by a couple of members of this government that perhaps we should be doing more economic development in the Jasper park area, and I guess I would appreciate some comments from the minister on those things.

To go back to Kananaskis for just a moment. The visit to Kananaskis left me with an overwhelming impression that if there were any cost to be incurred in developing something, then the Alberta government was expected to either pay for it or participate in it; you know: the road, the infrastructures, that sort of thing, the common building for these three hotels that are going up. The common-use facility at the centre is going to be built by the Alberta government. The hotels, with some backing from the Alberta government in terms of loan guarantees, will be built by private enterprise. So it seemed like anything that was really going to cost money and have no return, specifically, on it was being picked up by the Alberta government, while anything that looked like it might bring in some money was sometimes even partly paid for by the Alberta government but handed over to private enterprise so that they could, of course, make some money out of it, and it seems to me a little unfair. It seems to me in some way that if we're going to put a lot of money into that park, we should have made some fairly specific plans for getting something back out of some aspects of it, some kind of equity partnership perhaps with some of those other companies or whatever. But in any case, that issue should be addressed more carefully than it has been in the past, I think.

It bothers me a bit that I got a notice the other day inviting me -- and to bring my spouse if I wanted -- to tour Kananaskis for a couple of days. You mentioned it just now. I don't think we should be doing that. I would suggest that if the members of the standing committee on the heritage trust fund need another trip to the park -- and most of them have been there; I was the only one of the three of us from our party who took the one day to go -- then we should go down ourselves at our own expense. Or if it's really felt necessary, that the standing committee doesn't understand what the park's all about and you really need to take some people down, then I've got a very specific suggestion.

The Member for Red Deer South was talking about the William Watson Lodge and what a wonderful facility it is. I happened to miss that day that the tour went there, but I'll take his word for it and assume that it's wonderful. In fact, I mentioned it to a person I happen to know who spends most of his life in a wheelchair, and he said, "Well, yeah, that's all very wonderful, but it's a long way from here. That's something the government can do, and we can't match that kind of extravagant, luxurious building in the Peace River country or in Edmonton." That was his implication, his reaction to my mentioning that lodge.

So I guess what I would suggest to the minister and the chairman of the heritage trust fund committee is that they might very seriously consider -- instead of taking their spouses and making this a nice outing for a couple of days, why shouldn't they decide to take some handicapped people from Edmonton or the north of Alberta that aren't likely ever to get down to see that wonderful lodge on their own? There are a lot of people in that category, and perhaps that would be a variation on the planned tour that would be interesting and helpful.

Just to change to vote 2 for a moment, I looked back at last year's statement, and I noticed that in 1985-86 there was no money in this category for municipal recreation and tourism areas, but in 1986-87 there was some \$4 million, and then in 1987-88 there's some \$2 million. So I guess I would ask the minister: are there any plans for next year with this particular vote in direction of park development? And if there was none in 1985-86, does that mean that the '86-87 allocation of \$4 million was a rather big injection -- because it was twice as big as this year's -- because there was an election year on and in fact this whole program is going to die next year if there's no more money being put in? Or is it just now a recognition that in fact the downturn in the revenues of the province is so great that you're going to have to cut back something that you had that would be an ongoing program rather than just a one-shot election thing?

Finally, looking at last year's document again -- and sometimes you have to do that to recognize the changes that take place; you know, those things that you might forget about if you hadn't thought to look back. There was a vote 3 last year, and that vote 3 was on urban parks, some \$4 million. The year prior to that there was a \$22 million allocation and overall -- I'm not sure over how many years -- an expenditure of \$62 million before that, so total expenditures of some \$90 million. There seems to have been a winding-down of that program. I guess I would just ask the minister to perhaps make a few comments on that. It was just five specific parks in five specific cities, but perhaps the minister could comment about the completion of that project. Will there be ongoing costs for the municipalities to pick up and that sort of thing?

Mr. Chairman, I guess that pretty well wraps up most of the comments I wanted to make, and I hope the minister will answer some of my questions before we run out of time today.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, one of the main articles in the lexicon of Conservative fallacies is the proposition that the people they call socialists are terrible businessmen, while they themselves are the very guardians of the ark of the covenant of business. Here again we have disproof of that proposition in the arrangements made with respect to Ribbon Creek and Nakiska in Kananaskis Country. The honourable gentleman, the Minister of Recreation and Parks, has said, "I'll never lower my principles to be a politician." Insofar as one of one's principles is that the people ought to have a fair return for their money, it would be practicality impossible to lower his principle on that when you consider what has happened here.

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View has gone through the amount of money that has been put into these two developments and the pathetic arrangements that have been made with the private operators to try and get some return for the public for all that money. Surely the only fair arrangement is one in which the return is proportionate to the capital invested after a fair charge has been made for the cost of operating. I ask the minister this: why could not the arrangements for these two

resorts have been made on the basis that bids be sought for operating the resorts, and then what was left over would be returned to those who had invested the money, proportionate to their investment?

It seems wholly insupportable that where we are talking about resorts which one gathers are successful in the markets, because we're told that they're signed up for three years -- I'm not quite sure whether that's Ribbon Creek or Nakiska or both -- that successful enterprises like this should not return to the public something other than the derisory rent of between \$4,000 and \$7,000 for each of the next 50 years. Mr. Chairman, it does seem to me that this is yet another instance of irresponsibility on the part of a Conservative government in just making it very easy for private capitalists in effect to suck the profit from the people's investment. I just want hon. members to know that if the picture really is as bad as it appears to be from the figures quoted here today, when we become government, we shall certainly do something about it.

But my main question is: why could not an alternative arrangement along the lines that I have suggested or some other arrangement which will in fact make a return to the people for the capital invested, instead of leaving all of that that can be made to the private operators, have been entered into in the first place?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, we may not get to the question as soon as I would have liked to have. In fairness to the members who have raised some concerns, I should have the opportunity to respond briefly.

To the Member for Edmonton Kingsway. He referred to the overall contracts, that it was easy to obtain people to complete this work because of the marketplace. Let's keep in mind that I think those were fair contracts, and I'm sure he wouldn't want to try and explain or rationalize to those who were working on the site that they should not have had a job and we should not have gone ahead with the building. Those were good jobs in tough times that a lot of people were very happy and very proud to have had.

I'm sure that when he refers to the possible expense about attending a tour of the facilities of Kananaskis Country and says that he can't really justify or rationalize that -- as a taxpayer I really don't see that as any different than a union member sitting at a meeting and charging for that either. When you refer to the fact about the costs of having to be paid to do that, I think that's part of our job: to go out and learn and seek and see where other things are happening.

As far as the overall decision about going, that is not my decision, sir; that's been my invitation through the director of Kananaskis Country through to your committee. You people will weigh that, make that decision. I'm hopeful that you would come. I really believe that if you were to see the William Watson Lodge firsthand and the area where it's at and to understand that it's a mountain setting -- it's not one that could be duplicated to be, for example, in the city of Edmonton, but there are other areas that it could be, and I accept that as fair criticism.

Keep in mind that the users pay approximately \$3 per day; it's very minimal. Most service groups -- our handicapped services will accommodate or try and get people from all parts of Alberta. And to you, sir: they are coming from all parts of Alberta. They come from the far north, the extreme south, east, and west to that facility. They use it extensively. They're

booked solid. We try and accommodate all the needs. It's just a tremendous facility. To just go in there and take a group down, as you suggest, would be very difficult because of the limited space that is there. I'm not trying to detract from your remarks, sir. I just really want you to see firsthand, and then I believe you'd understand it as well.

The recreation area use that was talked about. In particular, there's \$40-some million; I referred to some \$40 million as the overall development costs, and that was all that was projected. To all hon. members: please don't believe everything they may read through the media. It was never intended to only cost some \$40 million. That was an initial phase -- an initial design and detailed costs. It was always intended to go on and develop and improve and upgrade, and as the hon. Member for Red Deer South indicated and previous remarks of my own, in all probability we'd see ongoing commitments in development as time changes as well. The \$40 million was never a firm, committed fact that that's all it's going to cost, because there are many other amenities that have been developed, ongoing, that would have been over the initial \$40 million if that were to have been.

I certainly agree, though, with the hon. member when he refers to his constituents from Edmonton Kingsway's use being limited with regards to the overall park. I as a member for a northern constituency certainly echo that concern, have many times in the Assembly, will continue to do so, and would encourage all other hon. members to get behind and hopefully see -- and I would suggest that a resolution should come forth through the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to see an ongoing development of a Country North, or whatever it may be termed or called, that all hon. members for this area and their constituents have the opportunity to use. I think that's long-term plans and objectives, and when the economic realities are there, we'd hope to see that. But I'd encourage them to give that support for his and my constituents as well.

Interesting that he talks about small parks, I had the pleasure this morning, with the Hon. Les Young, the minister of technology and telecommunications, to be present at a cheque presentation for some \$2 million-plus to the city of Edmonton for the Capital City Park program, for their operating capital portion of small parks such as the Rundle Park and others. Those are the types of parks we're not going to restrict or control. It's that ongoing co-operation that you referred to with the levels of government through the city of Edmonton so that they will continue to work in the developing of these facilities.

The federal parks report is a very interesting one. I've not had the opportunity to comment, and I appreciated the hon. member raising it. The report is a federal report. I haven't had the opportunity to review it in its entirety. I look forward to it. It's very interesting in the fact that they would come back and suggest that the provincial government be involved in ongoing operations. We're not going to say that we should be the proprietors or stewards at this point whatsoever, but we feel that we'd like to have the opportunity to review it and work with them. And I believe that's what is being thrown out really: the opportunity to share that.

With regard to the Kananaskis Country costs and the infrastructure as it relates to -- the other hon. member is raising it about Ribbon Creek, and the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona has talked about use and getting money back and so forth. And yourself in particular, sir -- we can't really charge for that. Keep in mind that that's just not being used for the hotels there; that's going to be used by all the visitors to that particular site, some 3 million-plus, I could explain it very briefly

by saying that it's almost like a downtown core, downtown Edmonton, Who should pay for it? In this case, really, the government, through improvement district No. 5 -- and I guess I could be termed the honorary member in that case, as the minister -- is responsible for putting that in place. So that's really what we're doing with your dollars: developing that downtown core and that infrastructure to put this in place so that all citizens would have the opportunity and users of that facility.

The Member for Edmonton Strathcona. I appreciate his wisdom, his humour, and sometimes respect his knowledge. In this particular case, I won't agree with him fully when he refers to the fact that the return is based on capital investment and why could not bids be sent out on that particular basis. Yes, there were bid calls. We put it out for proposals at public tender; we were out there. We got nothing; we were sitting nowhere. It never would have occurred. Thank goodness this Assembly under the leadership of the former Premier took that step to get involved and get somebody going and get it. I'm not going to stand here either and say to the hon. member, "I believe that is the best economic return," but I believe that at the time it was the best return possible and was negotiated for the benefit of all members of this Assembly. I don't accept the word "irresponsibility," but the weighted costs, in total, balance it out -- our long-term benefit use. And the costs, as the hon. Member for Calgary Millican referred to, bear us none in the overall, ongoing operation. I believe it's to the benefit of all.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: ' Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, this Kananaskis Country -- the one word I could use to describe it is "breathtaking." The scenery is breathtaking, the contracts signed by the minister's department are breathtaking, and the minister's comments this afternoon are breathtaking.

And in view of the hour, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by the Member for Calgary Mountain View that we adjourn debate on this item. All in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carried.

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

MR. SPEAKER: Do you all agree with the report and the request for leave to sit again?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The House recessed at 5:29 p.m.]

