

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Friday, June 5, 1987** 10:00 a.m.  
Date: 87/06/05

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**PRAYERS**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 53****Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Act**

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill introduces a new bargaining structure for the Alberta construction industry after extensive consultations with the owners of construction, the building trades unions, and the construction contractors.

It also provides, on a one-time only basis, a mechanism to initiate bargaining to achieve a negotiated settlement. It is my sincere hope that during the term of the agreement, the parties will have the opportunity to rebuild their relationships.

[Leave granted; Bill 53 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table copies of the audited report of the Northern Alberta children's hospital financial statements for the year ended March 31, 1987.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Medicine Hat College as required by statute.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am filing the appropriate number of copies today of the 1986 annual report of the Alberta Association of Architects and the 1986-87 annual report of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, and Geophysicists.

MR. SPEAKER: Recreation and Parks, followed by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this morning to table four copies of the fourth annual report of the

Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves.

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to file with the Assembly a number of documents flowing from my recent trip to Ontario to talk about western coal: first of all, the Ontario Select Committee on the Environment, First Report, 1987, Acid Rain in Ontario; secondly, Stelco Inc. total annual coal requirements, June 2, 1987; and a speech from John McAllister, vice-president of raw materials for Dofasco Inc., An Overview of the Users of Metallurgical Coal in Canada, May 18; finally, Ontario Hydro Fuels Division, Fuel Supply Activities, 1986.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SPEAKER: St. Albert.

MR. STRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, two individuals that I've known for a significant period of time. One, Mr. Vair Clendenning, is business manager and financial secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The other is Mr. Robert Blakely, who, as well as being a legal counsel in the city of Edmonton, is a president of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry, Local 488, Edmonton. They're visiting with us today, Mr. Speaker. They're seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, 21 students from grade 6 from the Prince Charles school in the constituency of Kingsway. I had the pleasure of visiting these students in their school about a month ago. I welcome them to a return visit here to the Legislative Assembly. They're accompanied by their teacher Mr. Barry Onishenko. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly, even though I can't see them up there in the members' gallery.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce a friend and also the nephew of the hon. Member for Redwater-Andrew, a friend and a colleague of all of ours, Mr. Barry Basaraba from the constituency of Calgary Shaw. I'd ask him to rise and receive the warm welcome of the members of the Assembly.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, from the MD of Acadia and Special Areas in the constituency of Chinook, a group of responsible citizens are meeting with the Department of the Environment this morning and are in the members' gallery across. Would you please rise and receive the recognition of the House.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Department of Social Services**

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that during the week of June 7 to 13, Alberta is

celebrating its second annual Senior Citizens' Week. It is a time when all of us, young and old, will pay tribute to our pioneers and older citizens.

The theme of Senior Citizens' Week is "Active Seniors in the Community," and the purpose is to increase appreciation of older persons and the contribution which they make to their communities, their families, and each other. The week is sponsored and developed by the Provincial Senior Citizens' Advisory Council under the able chairmanship of the Member for Highwood. All during the week, seniors' groups will be highlighting their community involvement, and on Monday my colleague from Highwood will be introducing a number of community leaders to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans value the solid foundation our senior citizens have built for us. The government has demonstrated appreciation for the contribution of seniors through a number of significant programs over the last 16 years. Today I would encourage all hon. members to recognize the valuable role that senior citizens continue to play in our society. Our older citizens must be integrated into all our community activities. It is to the credit of senior citizens that they recognize they must take the lead role in making this happen. That, Mr. Speaker, is what Senior Citizens' Week is all about. Active seniors in the community deserve our support and our thanks.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, again it's one of those statements that would be hard to disagree with. It was like the minister's statement on environment last week. It's a very nice statement, and I agree with all of it, but I think statements are easy to give. I guess we look for action on this side of the House.

For instance, I notice that one of the things that happened from her colleague was a nursing home increase. That certainly had an impact on how senior citizens might want to live. I notice also that we should be passing on the CPP disability increases to the low-income elderly. If we were to do that, that would be of some help to people. If we were to extend our home care program, that would have a significant impact on our old people.

I could go on and on about a number of programs that we think would help the elderly, Mr. Speaker. Now that we have this nice flowery statement, we will watch for action that will come from this government to actually help senior citizens, rather than platitudes.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Constitutional Accord

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier. I think it's becoming clear that Albertans are united in their feeling that they would like to learn more about the new Constitutional Accord. More importantly, I believe they would like the kind of consideration of future implications which can only come from an open public hearing process. I noticed the government is prepared to hold, as I said, public hearings on the labour review, public ambulance, and various other things, but on something as basic as our Constitution, this Premier has said no to public hearings. Now, my question to the Premier: has he decided to recognize the fact that not all the wisdom of the world is in this room at this particular time and that Albertans want the rights that other provinces are going to have, to have public hearings on this accord?

MR. GETTY: I certainly have always recognized that fact, and the opposition makes it clear to me every day, as a matter of fact. Mr. Speaker, obviously Albertans have an opportunity to give their views and their feelings to their MLAs. That's the role of an MLA, surely, to discuss matters with their constituents and then represent them here in open public debate.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this Premier has a very selective role for MLAs. What will happen is that no matter what the MLAs hear, this Premier will pull caucus discipline on them, and they'll all have to vote like sheep on his side of the House. That's what everybody knows. My question to the Premier: what kind of public debate is this on something as basic as the country's Constitution?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's taken years to develop our parliamentary system, which is where debate takes place on major matters facing a province or a country. That's exactly what we're going to do.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this Premier is going to pay a price for this, I can assure you of that. My question to the Premier: does he not recognize that there are many people who care deeply about the future of our province and our country, who may have a perspective on this agreement that may be different from his own? It's called democracy. Is this what he's afraid of?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, democracy is here. This is the main symbol of democracy in our nation, whether it's Parliament or the Legislature. That is democracy. This is where democracy is manifested. Certainly I'll be doing it with my constituents. I'll be having M L A meetings in my constituency. I'll be talking to them. I'll be getting phone calls, letters, full discussion, and representing them here.

MR. MARTIN: Isn't that interesting, because yesterday the Premier said he wouldn't change, no matter what, unless there were a horrible mistake. Well, what's the point of going out? You're not going to listen. There's more to being an M L A than talking; there's something called listening, Mr. Premier. There's a certain irony in the situation; I wonder if the Premier appreciates it. Albertans will be forced to approach a federal forum to convince the federal MPs and Senators of their concerns, hoping that they will talk to the Alberta government. I ask the question: how can the Premier allow this to happen?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the people of Alberta elected a government to make decisions and then put those decisions in place. That's exactly what we intend to do.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, is the Premier not aware that this is not like any other day-to-day Legislature decision? If the people of Alberta don't like a schools Act, they vote the government out; they can get a new schools Act. In the case of a Constitution, it's one time. If they don't like it, they can vote this government out -- which they will do -- but they can't change it because it's already been done. It needs broader, wider debate in this province.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it would be very difficult to find a question in what the hon. member just said, but I will respond to him. That is the place for debate. This is where people are rep-

resented. This is what our democracy is all about.

MR. MITCHELL: This is not the place for irreversible decisions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GETTY: We give him the courtesy of listening to him, and he can't sit there and return that same courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, this is the place for debate. There's no question that in amending a Constitution, there is put in place, through our democratic system, a series of processes that you must go through. We are going through them. We intend to go through them deliberately and take all the time that people need. But we have decided as a government, and we are going to put that decision into place.

MR. SCHUMACHER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. In 1982, I believe, was the last time our Constitution was changed. I was wondering whether there was any demand for public hearings or any public hearings held in this province. I don't recall any demand coming from the NDP in 1982 when there wasn't a cooked-up kitchen deal.

MR. SPEAKER: The question [inaudible], hon. member.

MR. GETTY: I don't recall either, Mr. Speaker, and I know that this constitutional agreement is superior to that one.

MR. MITCHELL: Maybe you should understand the precedents.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, hon. Member for Edmonton Meadowlark.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the Premier, and it's in terms of the timing of the federal hearings from the Parliament of Canada and the passing of the resolution in the Legislature of Alberta. Is there any type of co-ordination going on in terms of those hearings, and when we will pass the Bill for the resolution in this Assembly? Has any fixed date or schedule been established at this time?

MR. GETTY: No, there hasn't, Mr. Speaker, and understandably so. We only signed the document on Wednesday at noon hour. I would like, though, to have the resolution, which is an identical resolution, placed before the House for all members to see as quickly as possible and then give as much time as possible for them to consider it and consider it with their constituents so that they can represent them here in the Legislature.

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

### Coal Marketing

MR. MARTIN: Yes, I'd also like to direct my second question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that the Premier is meeting this month with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Premiers of Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia regarding the western coal initiative. The western coal initiative seeks to create thousands of jobs in western Canada, and of course also in Ontario, through the use of Alberta coal by cen-

tral Canadian industries. My question to the Premier: will he advise whether the Alberta government has any new proposals or initiatives to present to this meeting?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that meeting is coming later in June, and of course we would naturally make our positions clear in the meeting. We do have ministerial and official meetings going on as well to make sure that as much possible groundwork is laid for decisions to be made at that meeting.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier must be aware that transportation infrastructure and transportation costs are a major stumbling block towards the development of Ontario markets for our coal. My question to the Premier: will he advise the Assembly what inquiries he has made in regard to the issue of transportation initiatives relative to the competitiveness of Alberta coal in Ontario markets prior to his meeting on the 18th?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that's certainly something that the Premiers discussed at the first meeting on coal. I might say that the government has been working on coal sales to Ontario for a long period of time with success and then problems with Ontario's commitment to nuclear energy. In any event, on the matter of transportation initiatives, the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade, with responsibility for transportation, may well wish to supplement my answer.

MR. FOX: He takes too long.

MR. SHABEN: It's important.

Mr. Speaker, one of the key aspects of being able to competitively move coal into Ontario markets, bearing in mind that right now a certain quantity of coal does move into Ontario -- I believe it's about a million tonnes a year. We've commissioned some studies on how we might improve and lower transportation costs, and one of the exciting outcomes of that preliminary review has been our suggestion that we look at ways of redesigning the trains that move coal to Ontario markets. Traditionally and historically trains are about one mile long, and they can handle, with present technology of rolling stock, a certain amount of tonnage per train. We've asked our consultants to look at redesigning a train; that is, designing a system that can increase the tonnage on a mile-long train.

We've been informed, as a result of this examination, that it's possible to increase the amount of coal that can be hauled by a unit train by between 35 and 40 percent, which would significantly lower the transportation cost. We are pursuing that aspect of the transportation component, which is key to being competitive in the Ontario market, as well as other aspects of handling the coal at the Lakehead and at the destination.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of new developments that I think may be significant. Last week the Ontario government disallowed the banking proposal on sulphur dioxide emissions. Previously Ontario Hydro was allowed to carry forward unused permit capacity from one year to the next. Now this is outlawed; I think it has some implication. My question to the Premier: has he investigated the extent to which Alberta can take advantage of these new regulations in selling especially our low-sulphur coal to Ontario Hydro?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I haven't personally investigated

that, no. But there is no question that the commitment amongst the Premiers, including Premier Peterson of Ontario obviously, that we reached in order that we would all work together to ensure increased markets for western coal into eastern Canada will manifest itself in many ways in government decisions.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The other interesting event is that last month the Ontario Legislative Assembly select committee issued its first report. One of the recommendations, which I think is significant: it recommends that the Ontario government investigate opportunities for increasing the economic attractiveness of western Canadian coal to facilitate further reductions in sulphur dioxide emissions. I'm first of all asking the Premier if he is aware of that? If he is, what particular recommendation are we making in regard to their particular report?

MR. GETTY: I would only say, Mr. Speaker, that that's just evidence of the success of the meetings we're having.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister of economic development: how far has the government moved in supporting local research, Alberta research, in removing water from the coal prior to shipment or in creating a slurry for pipeline transmission?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta government's support to coal research has been in place for a number of years, and that continues with respect to examining ways of improving the Btu content of coal so that it can be competitive and attractive to other markets, not just the Ontario markets. We have also, as the hon. member is aware, done some research through the Research Council and the coal research activities of the government in coal slurry activities, either in slurry with methanol or in other combinations, and that work continues.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister of economic development. Of the two basic varieties of coal we have in the province, which coal is it that we are looking at exporting to Ontario, the plains coal or the mountain coal?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the nature of the discussions that are being held are western Canadian discussions involving our province, through the Premier and the Minister of Energy, and Saskatchewan and British Columbia. So the potential for exporting a variety of coals is being examined, and there are different factors that enter into the economics of each.

For example, as has been properly identified, the nature of Alberta's coal being low-sulphur coal makes it very attractive for generation of power. As well the higher Btu content mountain coal is attractive, obviously, because of its heating value. So there is this co-ordinated effort between the three provinces to improve market access into Ontario.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

MR. BRADLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. Has he had any discussions with Ontario relating to a joint research initiative which would look at utilizing low-sulphur western coal, particularly Alberta coal?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We have reached an agreement in principle between myself and the Premier of Ontario that we would finance jointly research into coal to see if we can't upgrade along the lines that the Minister of Economic Development and Trade mentioned -- the number of Btus in a fixed amount of coal and therefore carry more Btus at one time.

I might say, all members should avail themselves, if they can, of the superb Coal Research Centre, which is located in Devon, not too far from Edmonton. They would find, I think, that the large investment there and the dollars that are going through there will pay off very well in the future for Alberta. They would find the experiments that are being conducted to be very interesting indeed.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, may I designate the main question to the Member for Calgary Buffalo.

### **Constitutional Accord** *(continued)*

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is to the Premier. I hope he will understand when I say that what's wrong with the Premier's approach to constitutional reform is that he's approved rules which favour the defence when we now have the ball, and we need rules which favour the offence. We need to score a touchdown. We don't need obstacles to constitutional and Senate reform such as the unanimity requirement, which virtually ends the possibility of reform. We need rules which make it easier, and that means seven out of 10 Premiers.

Now, will the Premier advise this House what reasons he has for optimism in light of the fact that he simply has an agreement to talk? When we saw the failure of the aboriginal agreement . . .

MR. SPEAKER: We must finish the question some time, hon. member.

MR. CHUMIR: What reasons does he have for optimism in light of the fact that he couldn't get an agreement on the aboriginal arrangement, and he has only got the agreement of one western . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's remarkable that the question is raised today, because the question was raised and answered yesterday. But I will deal with it again, and that is the concern that it is impossible to obtain unanimity in constitutional matters. The Liberal Party's, as I understand it, position is that they're beat right now. They admit defeat. You can't get Senate reform. That's their position, fine.

But let me say this, because as I said, I dealt with it yesterday: unanimity has been reached on many things. It has been reached in the past on such things as Canada Pension Plan and unemployment insurance, but more recently we have unanimously agreed, for instance, on the Edmonton declaration here in Alberta. We've unanimously agreed on new immigration matters. We have unanimously agreed on . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect, hon. Premier, I think the Member for Calgary Buffalo should be able to read the reply

yesterday to the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. Supplementary question.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, our interest and the interest of this province is in Senate reform. Can the Premier tell us which of the Premiers has advised him that they will in fact support the initiative of Senate reform? Is he basing his views on some concrete evidence, or is it simply woolly-headed optimism?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, answering the first question, it's obvious virtually all Premiers are committed to Senate reform. The Prime Minister, as he said on the television just after signing, recognizes the concern of the west for Senate reform, pledged to call the meeting as quickly as possible to start the process, and at that time made a commitment to place his initial views on Senate reform before the first ministers' meeting on the Constitution. Now, all the Premiers feel that the current Senate is not effective. It doesn't work, and they wish to reform it. With that feeling, plus the commitment to have meetings now entrenched in the Constitution, on Senate reform -- all governments of Canada for the first time in 120 years must deal with Senate reform -- it's obvious to me that we are going to get Senate reform.

MR. CHUMIR: It's amazing the interference which arises when they hear questions they don't like, Mr. Speaker. We're hitting a raw nerve, because they've fumbled the ball, but it's still loose and there's time to recover.

What events does the Premier, in his wildest imagination, expect are going to charm the Premiers into supporting Senate reform when their level of comfort with the system is actually going to be increased now that they have the control of the patronage appointments to the Senate?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, there would be several reasons. First of all, because I have confidence in the rightness, I guess is the word, of the Triple E option and that we can sell it. There's no question in my mind that people want an effective Senate. Secondly, they want an elected Senate. The debate will be whether it's equal or not. Now, in at least two places in the Constitution that I filed yesterday, we confirmed the constitutional equality of provinces. We're laying the groundwork for this debate, plus the fact that we have been able to meet and agree unanimously on many important matters having to do with the Constitution. I think the groundwork is laid. Then there is one more very powerful factor, and that is the people of Canada. The people of Canada want Senate reform, and when the people want it, the governments have to recognize that.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, if we want it, let's make it easier rather than harder. Let's make the rules simpler to accomplish. Will the Premier leave himself open to accomplishing Senate reform by supporting an amendment to the current formula so that Senate reform can be achieved through the approval of seven provinces rather than the unanimous 10, which is almost impossible to get?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've pointed out, it isn't impossible to get. We've just got it. I was starting a list there, and you asked me not to repeat it two days in a row. I think it would have been possible to have Senate reform contained under the seven provinces/50 percent basis. Frankly, I don't think that's right. I know there's a knee-jerk reaction from the Liber-

als on this, but I don't think you build a country correctly when you try and get yourself some grouping together of a certain number of provinces and jam something down the throat of 50 percent of the population. I don't think that's the way to build a nation. Those kinds of changes usually breed discontent. I would much rather put my faith in the correctness of the option we are proposing and be able to convince people that we should unanimously adopt it and then make it work. That's the way I think it's going to happen.

Now, I understand the Liberal Party's concern about trying to knock holes in this accord, because their party is in such a shambles on this issue. And rather than supporting a positive thing for Canada -- for the first time in 120 years, this country has a Constitution made in Canada that all Canadians belong in. Rather than recognizing that, they have to cover up for the mess their party is in by trying to knock the constitutional amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just on one aspect of the unanimity factor. It seems to me somewhat unfair when people don't participate. I'm thinking specifically of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Has the Premier given any thought to looking at how they might become provinces and not in the unanimity rule which they were not part of?

MR. GETTY: Well, that concerned me, Mr. Speaker, and I understand their concern, but frankly if you are arguing for the principle of equality, you can't give a veto to one province and not another. I mean, the very basis of equality is that you're being treated equal as provinces, and therefore unanimity is a part of equality. For my part I see no reason in the world, when the people in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories feel that it's proper that they become provinces and carry that argument that there would be anybody around the table, as Premiers or the Prime Minister, who would want to in any way block that. We would support it as strongly as we support those matters that are important to Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Little Bow, leader of the Representative Party, followed by Stony Plain.

### Accountants Acts

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for the accountant Bills, 50, 51, and 52, presented yesterday. Could the minister indicate whether those Bills will be held over to the fall, and there will be discussion on them this summer?

DR. REID: I think, Mr. Speaker, I can indicate that the intention is to take them through this spring in view of the extensive discussions that have gone on with all three groups over the last period.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, could the minister indicate whether agreement has been reached by the three organizations with regards to auditing procedures, and is that not a matter of discussion in terms of conflict of the three organizations?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, on this occasion I think I could say that there is agreement between the three groups on the system

that has been developed. All three will take an active part in that system, and the definitions of "audit" and "review" will be based upon those currently accepted in the accounting profession and will be probably augmented in the regulations.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Stony Plain, followed by Edmonton Mill Woods.

### **Alberta Capital Bonds**

MR. HERON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Provincial Treasurer. Now that the final day for purchasing the Alberta capital savings bonds has passed, has the Provincial Treasurer compiled any data to determine the success of this issue?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to say that when the bond issue ended on Wednesday, the compilation of totals to date shows us to have raised in the Alberta market alone under the Alberta capital bonds \$906 million.

MR. HERON: Nearly a billion dollars. That certainly speaks for the success.

To determine perhaps a breakdown between the individual and the corporate investor, has the Provincial Treasurer any data to give us some feeling for the various registrations?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, we are still trying to determine first of all the total amount, and in fact when the numbers come in, it may well be that the total sales are above the \$906 million. However, preliminary information does show that the major response across Alberta has been from the small individual investor, the person who has a clear view of the future of this province, and they're the ones who are coming to the assistance of the province of Alberta. I should say, Mr. Speaker, that this is probably one of the largest provincial bond issues ever brought forward in the province's history and clearly ranks with any one of the large issues on a world market.

MR. HERON: A supplementary question. Given that we had some criticism of the rate, has the Provincial Treasurer now a comparative rate for bonds of similar risk and maturity?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as I've advised the House previously, although the market is somewhat uncertain right now, these bonds, priced at 8.5 percent, which are redeemable in six months if necessary, are in fact below the current three-year market for a similar kind of security. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it's in fact below what the current market is paying for these kinds of instruments. It simply indicates that the people do have a view of the future of this province, and they are in fact willing to invest in that future.

MR. HERON: A supplementary question. Certainly I don't think investors chase rates in this economy. It certainly must be a high confidence factor in the bonds.

Does the Provincial Treasurer have a breakdown of the various agencies who sold those bonds; for example, the credit union, Treasury Branch, banks, or local brokers?

MR. JOHNSTON: Again, Mr. Speaker, we're waiting for the registrar to provide this information to us next week some time. I can say, though, that the distribution was very wide right

across the province. I think it's been amazing assistance in terms of providing business to that financial services sector in this province, because everyone had an opportunity to participate and to sell, and I can assure you that it was one of the hot-test items on the market this past two-week period.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Meadowlark, followed by Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Treasurer please confirm that in order to raise practically \$1 billion in as short a period of time as he has done it, he would have to be above the market, and in fact it's not three-year money; it's one-year money, it's six-month money, and he is one percentage point above the competitive market for six-month money. That means that he has cost Albertans \$9 million in excess interest rate, plus probably \$1 million to \$2 million in administrative fees.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, order. This is a supplementary question, not a lecture. Please, Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark didn't understand the Constitution and clearly doesn't understand the financial markets either.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, to the Treasurer. This is a large amount of money to raise on very short notice, and it indicates that there are some people in Alberta who are very well off. It makes me wonder why the tax structure has got to the point where we have to decide to pick on people on welfare, we have to cut education, we have to cut . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. McEACHERN: This is the question. Why do we have to pick on ordinary people when in fact there is this kind of money available because we have such a lousy tax structure in this province?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, of course the member does beg debate, but I usually avoid that opportunity. What I can say, however, is that it is the result of the tax structure in this province; what I have contended all along. In fact, we have protected more disposable income in this province than any other province through a series of tax regimes which allows the individual worker in this province to save more money. As a result of that saving, essentially \$950 million, close to a billion dollars, has been saved and now reinvested back in this province.

Let's remember what happens when those interest cheques go out. Sure there's a cost attached here. Well, let's assume that it's \$1 billion at 8.5 percent. Even the Member for Calgary Buffalo can calculate that, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker. That comes to \$42 million, which will go back into the economy, which can either be reinvested in other forms of securities, other kinds of investments, which drives jobs in this province, or in fact can be a stimulative effect on the economy when those cheques start to flow. That money stays in this province, and the people are taking the risk with us for the future of this province. That is a very major statement of commendation for the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton Mill Woods, followed by Red Deer

North, followed by Edmonton Belmont.

### Postsecondary Education System

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Yesterday during the convocation ceremonies at the University of Alberta, the vice-president, academic, Dr. Peter Meekison, spoke of the need to restrict enrolment, saying, and I quote here:

We . . . do not have the capacity to deal with ever-increasing numbers of students, particularly in light of the size of our physical plant and the budgetary situation in which the university . . . finds itself.

He was referring to this government's 3 percent operating budget reduction and a vicious cut of 41 percent to the university's capital budget. Given this very disturbing situation, can the minister advise the House how many young Albertans' futures are you willing to sacrifice to the government's arbitrary budget target?

MR. RUSSELL: None, Mr. Speaker. And that was not the gist of the remarks of Vice-President Meekison during the convocation yesterday. I was very impressed by the presentation that Dr. Meekison presented to the assembly, well thought out, a logical determination for growth and size and standards at the University of Alberta. I believe that's the role of those institutions, to define those.

I hope the hon. member didn't infer in his question that the only postsecondary chances for young Albertans lies at the universities, because there are other elements to our superb system, in the technical schools and colleges. I think we'd all be doing our young people a disfavour if we held out the hope of universal university educations for all of them.

MR. GIBEAULT: A supplementary to the minister. Dr. Meekison further said:

We are faced with large classes, an increased student-teacher ratio, crowded libraries, crowded cafeterias, long lineups -- in other words, pressure on every part of the system.

How much more evidence does the minister need before the government takes action to reverse irreparable damage to the postsecondary system in general and the University of Alberta in particular?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I heard the same speech that the hon. member has read. Certainly I did not get that impression of a tale of woe. What Dr. Meekison presented was, in my view, a pattern for growth and size and quality that the university should address no matter what the fiscal situation is. Insofar as their ability to manage during this current fiscal year, all of us, I believe, have been impressed by the response of boards and governors to that particular challenge.

While I'm on my feet, I hope the hon. member was also briefed on the remarks of the president, when they referred to the doctorate given to our former colleague the hon. Horst Schmid for the outstanding work done by this government in the cultural and ethnic fields of community interest.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Given this government's rhetoric that we hear so much about, about diversifying the provincial economy -- often short on action but lots of rhetoric -- can he explain to the House how it is that the goal

of economic diversification is served by having fewer university graduates with inferior educations?

MR. RUSSELL: I really don't know how to start with that question. Let us start with the heritage fund for medical research, based on the two main campuses in the province.

MS BARRETT: We're talking about the skilled population.

MR. RUSSELL: Well, these are fairly skilled: 3,000 advanced scientists, a whole new industry, two new buildings -- just the beginning of it. The other aspects of high-tech economic diversification are well laid out in the document that has been prepared and distributed by my colleague the minister of economic development, but I guess the only worry I have about it is that a member of this Legislature could ask that kind of question about it.

MR. GIBEAULT: This government has a hard time getting used to an opposition, Mr. Speaker. That's unfortunate.

Is it the minister's intention now to see educational opportunities for young Albertans in this province restricted to the point where they can only aspire to one of his government's work-for-welfare jobs? Is that what he wants?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that my Capital Fund estimates are up later this morning on the order of business, because then we'll get a real chance to debate in dollar terms and investment exactly what this government is doing for the young people of this province and for their futures.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I wonder if he can inform the Assembly where Alberta ranks in per capita contributions to students in postsecondary education, including student loans?

MR. RUSSELL: First, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary Buffalo on the main question.

MR. CHUMIR: This is a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. A while ago the minister flew a trial balloon about the possible closure of law and medical schools in the province -- a lead balloon as far as they were concerned. What can the minister tell these institutions about the progress of those plans and about the general progress in rationalizing the system of advanced education in this province?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, my colleague said that there's a widely held opinion that society already has too many lawyers. That's not the reason we're engaging in this dialogue.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has raised a very important issue, and certainly it's not a new idea proposed by myself. I'm merely entering the dialogue. The University of Alberta has produced a well-thought-out document which proposes their role in the future, and we're trying to encourage other universities in the province to do the same. If we're going to make the best use of our resources, surely the boards of governors will want to address the issues of unnecessary duplication or unnecessary competition. We want our institutions within the system to complement each other, and so the question: how many schools of law, how many schools of medicine, how many schools of business administration do we need in one province if

our objective is excellence and quality?

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer North, followed by Edmonton Belmont, followed by Edmonton Meadowlark if there's time.

### Unemployment Statistics

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Career Development and Employment. Statistics Canada today has released figures that indicate that the unemployment rate in Alberta has dropped substantially from 11 percent in April to 9.6 percent in May. I wonder if the minister could identify for us any one circumstance that might have contributed to this decrease.

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before. Statistics Canada in my view does not provide absolute indications of what's happening in the economy, particularly when it comes to unemployment. We must keep in mind that no matter what the level of unemployment, whether it's a drop of 1 or 2 percent, there still are people that are unemployed, and we must recognize that when we look at these figures and when we look at them and see optimistic signs.

I must admit that I was quite startled this morning when I did see the dramatic drop in the rate of unemployment in this province. It has dropped 1.9 percent in unadjusted terms since the beginning of this year, and over the three months it has increased employment in this province by 25,000. I cannot say what any one factor, Mr. Speaker, has contributed to this factor. I have said that trending is very important in determining economic recovery, and I can certainly say that this is a very positive trend and leads us to believe that recovery in this province is on the way.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, the minister has recently mentioned in the Legislature the rising number of part-time workers in the labour force. I wonder if he could indicate to us today the relationship between part-time and full-time jobs created during this period.

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is indicative of Statistics Canada numbers in the past, particularly when you have an economic stagnant period in this province, that part-time employment is growing at the expense of full-time employment. I might say that this year there has been, again as indicated in Statistics Canada's numbers released today, an increase in 41,000 jobs over last year, created full-time jobs, and a drop of 5,000 part-time jobs that have been decreased as a result. This, too, is an indication of recovery: conversion of part-time jobs to full-time jobs.

MR. DAY: In light of the fact that during periods of high unemployment the unemployed tend to move to the major centres such as Edmonton and Calgary, can the minister advise us today as to trends in the major centres now in Alberta?

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, this was another very, very pleasing and surprising aspect of the Statistics Canada numbers released today. Of the seven major centres in the province, all seven of them had drops in their rates of unemployment from a full 4 percentage point drop in Medicine Hat to a 1.2 percent drop in Calgary and just under a 1 percent drop in Edmonton. So the statistics are consistent, and they're all consistently point-

ing to the fact that we could well be on the way to a significant recovery in this province. I would dare say that this recovery could lead us to having one of the strongest economies in the country.

MR. DAY: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Can he give us any figures which would reflect to what degree small businesses are involved in the recent reduction in employment?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, small business in Alberta plays a very substantial role in job creation. As a matter of fact, some 70 percent of all new jobs created are created by small business. I believe that this recovery is significant in the sense that government is downsizing in terms of new jobs being created in the public sector and that in fact while we're doing this, we are seeing a reduction in the rate of unemployment. That reinforces my faith and my colleagues' faith, Mr. Speaker, that job creation does come from the private sector.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Member for Edmonton Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the drop in the unemployment rate is cyclical in nature as opposed to the good stewardship of this government, what specific programs does this government have for unemployed Edmontonians, who now account for almost 40 percent of unemployed Albertans?

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had this dialogue before, the Member for Edmonton Belmont and myself. We both have a concern for the rate of unemployment in the major centres and particularly in the city of Edmonton. The last time he asked me that question, the unemployment rate in the city of Edmonton was on the rise. The last couple of months, back-to-back months, and particularly this month, are leading us to believe that the unemployment rate is dropping in Edmonton. Certainly on the other side of it, as I've indicated, there are still people unemployed in this province, and we as a government will not rest until we do, to the extent possible, what we can for the highest rate of employment in this province.

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

### head: ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville, followed by the Member for Cardston.

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

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to



introduce to you and to members of the Assembly today, 44 grades 5 and 6 students from the Mundare school in the heart of the Vegreville constituency. They are accompanied by two teachers, Vicki Morozuk and Diane Wyton; two parents, Maryette Kowal and Faye Ewanchyshyn; and their bus driver Dan Warawa. I would ask them to stand in the public gallery and receive the warm welcome of the members of the Assembly.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce to you and to the Assembly, 11 grade 5 students from the Cardston elementary school who are visiting here in Edmonton to participate in the provincial speech festival. They are accompanied by two teachers, Mrs. Karen Lea-Cox and Mr. Blaine Hogg, and one parent, Mrs. Darlene Nelson. They are seated in the members gallery. Would they please rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor will now attend upon the Assembly.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: **ROYAL ASSENT**

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

[The Honourable W. Helen Hunley, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, took her place upon the Throne]

HER HONOUR: Please be seated.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has, at its present sittings, passed certain Bills to which, and in the name of the Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

ACTING CLERK: Your Honour, the following are the titles of the Bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

No.	Title
1	Department of Culture Amendment Act, 1987
7	Alberta Agricultural Research Institute Act
11	Historical Resources Amendment Act, 1987
33	Alberta Cultural Heritage Amendment Act, 1987
38	Appropriation Act, 1987

[The Lieutenant Governor indicated her assent]

ACTING CLERK: In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these Bills.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

[The Lieutenant Governor left the House]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

15. Moved by Mr. Johnston:

Be it resolved that the messages of Her Honour the

Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the 1987-88 Capital Fund estimates, and all matters connected therewith be referred to Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Committee of Supply please come to order. The committee will be considering the capital fund estimates, 1987-88, beginning on page 5 of Capital Fund Estimates. I understand the Government House Leader will commence with Advanced Education. That is vote 2 in the estimates.

### **1987-88 Alberta Capital Fund Estimates**

#### **Advanced Education**

#### **2 – Construction of Postsecondary Education Facilities**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister, do you have any opening comments on the estimates?

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I do. What we're asking for here is legislative approval to borrow just in excess of \$45 million to maintain our capital development program for the postsecondary system. Earlier in the question period today we did make reference to that system, and I believe it's important that everyone have a good understanding about the investment that is ongoing and continuing with respect to the capital facilities. I'll be pleased, of course, to answer any detailed questions, but there are some votes that I think probably deserve highlighting.

There are a number of major projects varying from small maintenance projects to larger ones, but there are three I'd like to mention particularly. At the University of Alberta the old Corbett Hall renovations, worth in total \$10.7 million, will be undertaken this year with the first vote of \$1 million. That's upgrading that old building to get some more use out of it particularly for physical and occupational therapy programs, which relates back a few years to the task force on the nursing home system in this province and our adoption of the recommendation there to provide more therapeutic and occupational and recreation programs in our nursing homes. So Corbett Hall is important in that regard because the renovations of that 60-year-old building have, I think, an important use insofar as programming is concerned.

Although it's not a major component of the money this year, the last payment on the physical education expansion for the University of Calgary is important because it's an Olympic facility. I had the opportunity to attend the first convocation of the University of Calgary at that building on Wednesday afternoon of this week. We cut the ribbon. The building's finished on time and under budget, so the people responsible for that deserve a great deal of credit. It's a magnificent facility and was an appropriate place to hold convocations this year.

MR. WRIGHT: What is it?

MR. RUSSELL: What is it? It's a series of gymnasias and sports medicine facilities. There are lecture halls and class-

rooms, offices for the staff, therapeutic rooms, courts for racquetball and squash, areas for the public by way of observation and participating spaces, weight lifting, aerobics. There's a climbing wall for training climbers. It's just a magnificent facility. The main gym is three gyms in one, a clear span, and then there are other small gymnasia throughout the building. I think probably hon. members might be interested to know that under our matching incentive and endowment fund that particular facility attracted two cheques while I was there, one for \$1 million from a private citizen in Alberta to endow a fund which will be matched on a two-for-one basis for ongoing programs in the buildings, and that's a pretty magnificent contribution by, as a matter of fact, Mr. John Simpson, a former Olympic competitor in equestrian sports. The endowment was given in memory of his father, a pioneer Alberta contractor. The Max Bell Foundation also contributed \$200,000 for the same purposes. So those are kind of nice things that happened around that particular project.

Moving to another part of the province, to Grande Prairie, this vote asks for the first element of money to go forward with phase 2 of the Grande Prairie Regional College. It will be a \$30.5 million project. Those of you who've visited that facility know that it's much needed and will provide academic facilities and support facilities for college students in that region of the province. In a similar vein, the Lloydminster campus for Lakeland College is contained in this vote. It will be a \$22.5 million project and will establish a campus for 500 students in Lloydminster as part of the Lakeland College development.

There are other votes of lesser amounts, but, notwithstanding that, equally important to the institutions that are involved. The two hospital based schools of nursing, for example, are going to get roughly \$2 million between the two of them -- the Foothills and Royal Alex -- in upgrading and library facilities. Olds College is getting some money to do some much-needed upgrading work on a residence that needs some important maintenance work. Mount Royal College in Calgary will get the last, I hope, segment of money required for their phase 2 expansion. Again, particularly the southern Alberta MLAs should try and get a chance to see that facility; it's pretty magnificent. Lakeland College also is getting \$1.9 million towards the rebuilding of the Alumni Hall which was destroyed by fire. And very important for our rural MLAs, there's \$850,000 there for farm upgrading for Lakeland College.

The Cromdale campus of Grant MacEwan college in northeast Edmonton will get \$0.75 million to upgrade the facilities they're now in, and the Alberta College of Art is getting roughly \$0.75 million to carry out some important changes to their mechanical system with respect to the change of that use to the visual arts from the old lecture facilities that it was. We've got to put \$1.25 million into repair work at the main building of the University of Lethbridge campus. There are some structural defects related to soil conditions that are appearing there, and it's important that those be attended to. The other projects of note: at the University of Alberta the Arts building restoration will continue. A further \$2.1 million is needed this year for work there.

I've gone into some detail, Mr. Chairman, to give members an idea of the work that's going on on a geographic basis and also the nature and scope of the work to try and give an overall idea of the capital investment that is being done every year on an ongoing basis for the young people and other people who come back into the postsecondary system to upgrade their education or skills. So on that basis, Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased

to take questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods, followed by Edmonton Centre.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Chairman, in the debate here on vote 2, the construction of postsecondary education facilities, I'd like to make a few comments. One of course is the observation that overall the capital budget for postsecondary educational facilities is reduced here by 12.2 percent. I have to wonder in this time of economic downturn and especially when we have such a crying need for jobs in our province, particularly in the construction sector which is addressed by capital expenditures such as these, and in particular in the city of Edmonton -- we just discussed earlier in question period today the still very, very unacceptable rate of unemployment in the capital city, and what we are looking at here for Edmonton this year is that the university's capital budget is going to be cut 41 percent, Mr. Chairman.

The minister mentioned earlier that maybe not everybody should go to university anyway; maybe they should go to the colleges. Well, Grant MacEwan college here, vote 2.2.4 suggests a 67 percent reduction in their capital budget. So I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman, where these students are going to be housed. Obviously there won't be enough room at the university anymore, so perhaps they should go to the college. But where is the college going to house all these students when we reduce their capital budget 67 percent? And I really wonder if we're not being shortsighted here in looking at trying to upgrade the infrastructure for our postsecondary institutions in this time of economic downturn when, as I said, that kind of expenditure could go a long way to creating the kinds of jobs particularly, as I mentioned, in the construction sector where they're so desperately needed. The minister has mentioned a number of projects that are going to be funded, and certainly those are worth while. As he has done, I've visited most of these institutions and certainly have seen the need for many of the upgrading projects he referred to.

A question I would put to the minister is in terms of the matching grant program, the two-for-one matching grant program for capital projects. We've heard recently, and he mentioned this in his press release the other day, that the program is fully subscribed. I wonder if he could advise us now: how could it be proper now for the institutions to be soliciting funds through this program on the basis that they will be matched if in fact that program has been fully subscribed? Can it be proper to continue to be soliciting funds from the private sector on the basis that they will be matched if in fact the program has been fully subscribed, as he has indicated to us? Certainly the general idea of encouraging private donations is a good one, and the matching program I think is to be commended. But I do have some concern that if in fact there is a specific limit on it of some nature and it has now been fully subscribed, is it really fair to continue to be soliciting donations on the basis that they will be matched if in fact they will not be?

Mr. Chairman, one of the other things I want to ask is: the minister has indicated a number of the projects that will be funded, but given the fact that this budget has now been substantially restricted, particularly to the universities -- a 30 percent cut overall -- I and I think members of the House and certainly Albertans with children who are going to the university perhaps or to the colleges would be interested to know what projects the institutions have submitted to the minister that are not being approved here. I suspect there is a long list of those

projects. Obviously the minister has made some judgments here, and I'm hoping they were good ones. But I'd like to know for myself: what were the other options the institutions put forward to the minister? What priorities did they give them? That could be quite interesting. It could indicate to us some of the other areas, some of the other challenges that still need to be met and give us a better idea of how far this \$45 million the minister is asking us to support here is going toward meeting the capital funding requirements of the institutions of the province.

In terms of hospital based nursing education, my colleague for Edmonton Centre will be making some further comments on that, so I will now look forward to the minister's response to those two queries on the matching grant program and the other projects that were submitted by the institutions that have not been approved for this vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It just seemed as I was looking over this vote, vote 2.3 of course, it's not a large amount of money overall in terms of the capital estimate but a huge, whopping increase in percentage, a 347.4 percent increase in hospital based nursing education. Now, I'm always rather frustrated and concerned when we have all kinds of spending, all kinds of programs the government announces without really linking it to the kinds of policy and the development of policy the government has. I'm sure it's there somewhere in some cabinet minister's mind.

The minister must obviously be aware -- as he was the former Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care -- that there is a great debate raging within the nursing community that's intensifying around the whole business of entry to practice. In fact, the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses and a host of other nurses associations concerned with standards of training for nurses have been exerting some good deal of pressure to work for the year 2000 when all nurses should have a baccalaureate education. Now, if that is indeed the policy which the AARN and others have been developing -- and we know of course it's divisive and there's a big debate around it -- certainly to be fair you'd think the government would at least provide a certain increase for university based nursing education toward a baccalaureate education as well as a percentage toward hospital based diploma programs as is here. But instead, Mr. Chairman, it looks as though the government, by this spending, is sending out a signal or message that the policy is that we support fully the diploma based nursing education and not the AARN and others' move toward baccalaureate education for nursing entry to practice even by the year 2000.

Now, I would submit that the question really does beg some further debate, as we've not to my knowledge had it in the Assembly. Certainly teachers, as we know, were never required to have a baccalaureate education but now are. There was a great kerfuffle and turmoil, but now all teachers have a university based education. Social workers used to be able to just have a diploma. Now social workers, I believe, in the province of Alberta all need a baccalaureate education. At least they do in other provinces; in fact in some cases even master's programs. There used to be a time, Mr. Chairman, when clergy could just come along and if the bishop sort of liked you he would just ordain you and you could go out to practise in some parish. But those days are gone now. Now you don't only need a baccalaureate education; you need a master's level to be ordained in the Anglican church, the United church, or any other church. So

the days of baccalaureate and further education for those professions -- and all in a sense are similar in terms of hands-on, people-oriented work.

Now, I'm not sure what architects need, Mr. Chairman. I think architects may just need a few little years beyond postsecondary education, but I'm sure architects too have upgraded their standards of training and background and there are certain requirements about entry to practice in architecture. So I think a case can well be made that nurses -- at least I'm hearing from those who are concerned about computer assisted nursing that's going to be coming in the next couple of years, all kinds of nursing, the long-term care setting that's going to require a certain expertise in terms of identifying and managing certain needs the elderly have. As the minister said, medical research is jumping ahead by leaps and bounds, so the nurses will need to be able to at least think critically in terms of some research around their own practice now that new developments impact on nursing. So there might well be a case that though we don't force all nurses now to go out and get a BSc or whatever, perhaps it would be a laudable goal that by the year 2000 like teachers, like social workers, like clergy, nurses too should have a baccalaureate education on entry to practice. If that is the case, then how in the world can the minister justify, it seems, turning the clock back or ignoring all that advice and saying, "Oh, no, we're going to up this hospital based nursing education by 347 percent."

Now, I know the schools at the Royal Alex and at the Foothills are good schools and probably need some upgrade in their capital, in their kitchens or libraries and so on like that. But as I say, this is sending out a signal to me and I think to many others -- in fact, one who I spoke to I think might have been at the convocation with the hon. minister yesterday, a very outspoken nurse with a doctorate at the university who looked at this right away and said, "The government is going in the wrong direction with this vote." So with that kind of information and advice coming to me, I think it's incumbent upon us who are concerned about these questions, Mr. Chairman, to raise them for the minister and get some sort of policy response in terms of how it parallels this kind of capital spending.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister.

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll deal with the issues raised by the Member for Edmonton Centre first with respect to the seeming large percentage increase in this subvote and the policy attached to it. I suppose the vote does look startling: a relatively small amount of money but still a huge percentage increase. It merely reflects what was done last year, which was almost nothing. So even a small amount of money, a relatively small amount, \$2 million, comes out as a percentage increase of several hundred percent. That's the reason for that.

It's broken down into \$1.4 million for the Foothills hospital. That's a fairly old building now, that School of Nursing, and they're doing some code upgrading, renovating, and repairing mechanical and electrical systems. A small amount of new teaching space will be constructed inside the present building, and the fire code upgrading is the last element of that project. At the Royal Alex they're getting renovations and new library space, and that learning resources centre is something they've had on their priority list for several years. So what we're really doing is putting some repair and upgrading money into an existing hospital based program that is in need of physical upgrading.

The policy that is embodied, I suppose partly, in the invest-

ment of capital funds is pretty clear. The government does not support the baccalaureate as the entrance level to nursing. Within the last two weeks my colleague the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care and myself co-signed many letters that went out to the field, to the various professions, giving them that decision. It came as a request from our health and occupations advisory committee, saying that this matter should be addressed. The nursing profession, of course, has been a subject of scrutiny and special committee study for many years in this Legislature, and really this confirms a decision that has been reviewed on many occasions.

As far as I know, it's not just an Alberta decision. When I held the portfolio of Hospitals and Medical Care, my memory is that it was a unanimous feeling of all provincial governments that a baccalaureate degree as a minimum entry for nursing was simply something that was unnecessary in the government sponsored health care field. The option, of course, has to be there, and there are spaces here for Albertans who want to attain a baccalaureate or a master's degree. Some of you know that there's pressure on now to establish a doctorate in nursing at the University of Alberta. We've tried to make it as clear as we can to the nursing profession, right from the CNA based in Winnipeg, the Canadian Nurses Association, through to our own provincial associations, that the objective of the Nurses Association vis-à-vis the baccalaureate is on a collision course with the view held by most provincial governments. I guess another way of putting it is that if the nurses persist down that route they will price themselves out the hospital-based health care system and will be replaced by other bedside nursing occupations. So it's a matter of economy. Those of you who have looked at the salary grids and the budgets for hospitals know what that means.

The member did refer to other styles of nursing that were available, not only the high tech, the computer-assisted nursing and the prepackaging of bedside materials that is being done now by computers and by automation, but also what is being done by nursing assistants. So while I'm not saying that the nurse won't always be essential in the hospital setting, if the present path followed by the CNA continues, their role will be condensed to one of supervisory or management positions, in my view, and they will be taken away in large numbers from bedside nursing. And in my view that would be a shame. The nurses I've talked to in the field I believe don't necessarily share that view, that a baccalaureate is necessary or that they are anxious to give up that bedside nursing, because that's where the human element of patient care occurs. But if the CNA persists, then the day will come when most of the nurses that are hired by hospital boards will be confined to management roles in offices at the ends of the wards.

With respect to the issues raised by the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods, referring again to the reduction and how that relates to the list of projects that might have been, there are two reasons for the reduction. In any capital budget you try and estimate, as the member is aware, the cash flow required, so that it may or may not reflect the value of work that is under way but it does reflect the cash that you believe will be required to get projects through their various stages of design or construction. Some years you may be finishing a very large building program but require a smaller cash flow, or vice versa -- be starting a small project and require proportionately a large amount of cash flow. So that's one of the reasons; one of the reasons is cash flow. The other reason is the government's efforts to reduce the total amount of the budget this year, including operating and capital, and so the borrowing requirements that support this par-

ticular capital vote have been -- we've tried to hold them at a minimum and still achieve some modicum of balance and go forward with the projects I listed which, in my view, create a good, balanced program across the province.

You asked me to identify some of the projects that might have gone ahead. Well, of course, every institution has its wish list, and they are virtually endless, I suppose. We could build forever. Some that come to mind: Grant MacEwan college, of course, would like a completely new downtown campus, and they're talking about something in the neighbourhood of \$100 million. So that's one that comes to mind. Lethbridge Community College would like a student union centre. Well, you can go on through the various institutions. Alberta College of Art is after additional classroom and library space. I'm going by memory now, but those are good examples of some of the projects that were not approved for this year.

The last issue raised by the member dealt with the solicitation of matching funds. And yes, I think it's proper. We're encouraging all of the boards to go out to solicit not only in Alberta but across the country. The commitment is there, that no matter what the cash flow is, we're going to match those funds. The capital and operating funds are matched on a one-on-one basis; the endowment funds are matched on a two-on-one basis, and when I released those figures last week in the news release, it indicated that the response in the first two years of this second phase of the program has literally been overwhelming. The total votes that we have in last year's budget and this year are short by at least \$22 million, and that shortage is growing. It's a nice problem to have.

I'm sure we'll be able to work out -- looking at the way the cash flow comes in from the donors, because some of these donations are made and pledged over a period of years -- that the requirements of the institution that receives them as to when they need those funds and the necessity of having to go back to the Provincial Treasurer for a special warrant or supplementary funding is something that has to be put together and worked out. But in no way would I want an oversubscription to this year's vote to reduce anybody's enthusiasm for canvassing, because it literally is a success story that I think has gone beyond anybody's wildest dreams.

Just in the last four-week period, I've been present where an individual came forward with a cheque for \$0.5 million to endow a chair in a special line of health care that he and his late wife had been interested in. A hospital-based foundation is coming forward with a similar amount of money, \$0.5 million, to endow another specialized medical chair. I mentioned the two that I saw yesterday, and that's just in this current period. And by the way, by coincidence those are all for the University of Calgary. The other institutions are having similar success. We sent some cheques out by way of matching dollars, over \$8.5 million, to each of the universities last week, so it's a good story. I guess the short answer to should we discourage the canvassing of contributions is definitely no.

MS LAING: I'd like to ask the minister about his commitment to a PhD in nursing, which he did mention a couple of minutes ago. I guess I would see that kind of program as a source of good research, and research done from people with a background in hands-on care. I've seen some research done by people who have gotten PhDs in other faculties, other areas that are now applying it to nursing, and it seems a most valuable and innovative type of research. So I'm wondering if he would have a commitment to that kind of research and study within the nurs-

ing field itself.

I think also that having a PhD in a nursing program means that not only will we have higher quality teachers here teaching in that faculty but also we will then generate teachers, and that's really important, so that the university here in Edmonton could be in fact a centre for training and research and teaching in the area of nursing education.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I listened very closely to the Minister of Advanced Education's comments in response to my query about the government position on the baccalaureate issue. And you know, I could follow it along in some measure, and then it seemed we got to the bottom line which -- if I heard him correctly; I'd like to examine the Blues -- really had very little to do with the kind of work they would be doing or the kinds of demands that would be upon them in the year 2000 or anything else. It had, I think, as the minister said, largely to do with the amount that provincial governments are willing to pay nurses, that in fact there was no point in having a baccalaureate nursing education because it was going to be too expensive, and provincial governments were not, through the hospital boards, prepared to pay for that kind of advanced education.

Well, that would be a comment I might expect from the Treasurer, but I am a bit alarmed to hear it coming from the Minister of Advanced Education, because if I can follow that thinking or that logic, I'm wondering -- [interjection] Sorry, Mr. Treasurer -- just how willing the minister is to go down this road of, say, completely deregulating a whole host of professions and their standards of training if in fact the marketplace or the institution which is going to hire them can do so at less cost than they will of the more highly trained personnel. My goodness, if this is the basis upon which the Minister of Advanced Education has his thinking, why not deregulate doctors or dentists? You could hire a whole host of people -- someone who might not have quite as much training -- and it would obviously then cost you a lot less?

What does this mean for the baccalaureate programs throughout this province anyway? Is the Minister of Advanced Education saying, "Well, we don't need anyone to have a bachelor's because in future economies there's just going to be less money to pay these people anyway, so we might as well have them all have less than that kind of expensive education"?

And then, Mr. Chairman, it's a point that's foolish anyway, because my understanding is that RNs are paid just a dollar or two more per hour than an RNA anyway. So to have a bachelor's in nursing is costing the hospital on average just a dollar or so more than the RNAs, and there isn't that much of a cost differential anyway. And in fact most hospitals would rather -- for liability reasons and other reasons -- have highly trained people that they can have some credibility around. So in fact to even have a baccalaureate education does not mean you're going to be a high-priced person on the labour market in any field either.

So as I say, it really concerns me. I think that from a fiscal point of view you can understand someone trying to lower standards and deregulate training for professional people because you want to have to pay them less, but for someone who has the stewardship of the advanced education of the people of this province and the professions and their training, it would seem to me to be a very, very weak argument to think that just because

of economic reasons they're going to be on some collision course and therefore they should not be enabled to improve levels of standards in training, at least toward a minimum requirement of baccalaureate to their nursing education. So if the minister wants to respond -- I know of many others who will.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask a delicate question, which is this. We all welcome the success of the appeal for donations and so on, and at the same we recognize that understandably there is a wish that there be more or less equal funding, where it's appropriate, between facilities, whether educational or medical, between Calgary and Edmonton. Yet at the same time, it's an economic fact that the per capita income in Calgary is higher, and particularly the pool of wealth is higher there. That's partly because of the large number of managerial people but also because of the head offices -- particularly of petroleum companies -- being there. So one would expect that there would be higher donations to Calgary institutions than to Edmonton ones in certain areas -- perhaps generally. The remarks the hon. minister made prompted my thought on that.

Would the government nonetheless feel that in allocation of funds, and bearing in mind the wish for relative equality, the donations should be disregarded, so that the facilities would be that much better, or would they be lumped in and the deficit supplied? Because either way there are some unpleasant consequences. If the government funding is reduced simply because there is a higher level of donation, that's a disincentive to a donation and so on. I haven't thought about it myself, Mr. Chairman, to any degree at all, but I wonder whether this is a problem that the minister would care to comment on.

On the other subject of discussion: hospital-based nursing versus the academic qualifications. I'm just wondering whether there isn't a false dichotomy here in that the two hospitals involved are those associated with the universities in the two areas. My question then is: are the steps to provide greater funding for hospital-based nursing education inconsistent with helping those who will attain degrees in nursing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member for Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A variety of comments and questions, some of them perhaps more properly to the Treasurer, but I think probably the Deputy Premier would know some of the answers anyway.

I guess a couple of sort of comments on some of the things that have been said so far first, before I get into some of my more general economic questions. I'm a little surprised at the statement that nurses shouldn't insist on a baccalaureate degree because it'll price them out of the market to be able to deliver health care. I think one should think very carefully about a statement as basic as that. There may be certain realities out there but there's always the constant need to improve and update the qualifications of people working in every area, it seems, as we gain more and more knowledge.

The other questions I wanted to get into on a fairly specific nature related to some comments made. It may be a nice problem to have that donations are coming in quite well under this endowment program, this two-for-one matching program. But it does seem to me to pose a couple of problems. One is that I believe the program was put forward with the idea that there would be some \$80 million spent over some five years under that program. Now, if it is already oversubscribed, that pushes

on that \$80,000 limit or requires the renegeing of fulfilling contracts that are made on the assumption that that commitment will be fulfilled for every dollar coming in. I suppose the minister might enlighten us that you maybe intend to stop at three years if it's all taken up by then or -- anyway, there is that problem, and I would appreciate a comment or two.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

There is another aspect of it that has potential for concern -- let's put it that way. If we continue to take in more and more chairs, for example, or some specific project designed essentially by somebody who wants to make a gift to the university, we not only tie up the \$500,000 that person gives us -- or that corporation, as the case may be -- we also tie up another million, because we're matching it two-for-one, and then a lot of the dollars that the Alberta government is giving to the university get tied up into very specific projects. I know that there is an endowment procedure and analysis on the part of the university and that they have control over whether or not the donation is acceptable, but I guess I would wonder at what point we have somebody else setting the agenda if we continue to move in that direction a lot. I'm not saying it's a bad direction to move in in any one individual case. I'm just saying that the Alberta government should be giving money to the universities and they should be deciding their priorities in a fairly straightforward concern about academic education and the role of a university in society with a great deal of academic freedom. I guess I would appreciate a few comments in that line.

I was looking at some numbers and analyzing some of the economics of this, and I guess I've got to wonder a little bit about why some projects are isolated out for capital projects consideration -- or Capital Fund consideration, I should say. I guess I'm still hung up on heritage trust fund capital projects. It would seem to be, as the legislation was passed in 1986, a response to the fact that we have a lot of capital projects we need to do and that with declining revenues it's important that we set up some manner of borrowing money. And I guess that's fair enough.

Just some questions about how some projects make it into the Capital Fund book, you might say, and get their money from that Capital Fund, when others do not. I mean, the budget itself has some \$1.2 billion in capital projects in it. Various departments have expenditures. In fact, \$64 million by Advanced Education in the budget is greater than the \$45 million in here for capital projects, I guess it's probably a fairly arbitrary decision, but perhaps if there is a rationale behind which ones are chosen and which ones are not the minister could enlighten us a little bit on that.

The indication of the budget speech was that there is some \$262 million outstanding debt as of March 31, 1987. I think that was a sort of projected number, and I wonder if the minister would be able to give us an update.

While commenting on that, perhaps as some background, a couple of points. The 1986-87 Capital Fund estimate was \$333 million, and it was estimated that because some projects did not go ahead as fast as expected and because of the freeze imposed in November of last year a some \$71 million reduction, or less expenditures, was made -- or at least was projected to be made -- for the last fiscal year. Just going back to the estimates in the Capital Fund estimates, the \$377 million then doesn't really jibe with the budget speech which says \$333 million nor, if you subtract \$71 million, do you get the two numbers to reconcile. So

I'm wondering -- I'm sure there's a logical explanation, but it left me a little bit wondering what is the case there.

Perhaps with those questions, I can wait for some answers and see if they answer the anomalies I've mentioned. I'd like some remarks on some of my concerns.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to deal in detail with the concern about nursing qualifications and also the other concerns that have been expressed about the matching endowment fund.

I'm a little bit concerned about the misunderstanding there seems to be about the nursing issue. It's not a question of lowering standards or saying that we won't accept something, because of course the support is there now for college or hospital-based schools' graduates to obtain their licence in the nursing profession and the educational facilities are there, whether it's at Mount Royal College for the diploma or the hospital-based schools of nursing, or wherever, or the special psychiatric nurses' course at the provincial hospital Ponoka. But the baccalaureate degrees, which are university based, in my understanding of it, are full, so there are lots of opportunities for a young person or anyone. I guess, to pursue whatever course they like. Whatever their graduation home is, they still have to meet those minimum professional standards in order to get licensed.

What the nursing association is saying to us is that even to be considered for licensing, notwithstanding the college-based or hospital-based diploma, the minimum standard is going to be a university baccalaureate, and in the evidence that's been presented to us, there appears to be no logical reason for that. It is like saying to an architect or an engineer running a professional office that every draftsman, every employee in the whole consulting firm, must have a university degree. And of course that would be unnecessary. And it is unnecessary in the nursing field. Certainly there's room for nurses with both kinds of qualifications to nurse in hospitals at the present time, one with the higher educational background than the other but both meeting those minimum levels of professional standards. What the CNA is saying is that there's no room for these people at all anymore; they're out of the picture, and only these are in. And we've seen no evidence to support that argument. I'd really have to challenge anyone who's been an inhabitant of a hospital bed or visited an emergency ward to try and tell that difference, because I defy anybody to tell the difference: the nurse with the diploma or the nurse with the degree.

Now, certainly many nurses want to go on into the higher levels of administration or specialized channels that are available, and for that they want not only a baccalaureate but perhaps a master's or even a doctorate. That presently is before us. It's been pending for several years now -- the approval of the doctorate degree in nursing for the University of Alberta -- and I've no doubt that that will be approved at the appropriate time. But by approving that or keeping the system in place for those baccalaureate nurses doesn't mean that we sweep the others out of the hospital system altogether. There is no reason why we would want to do that.

I don't know what the salary grid is now, but I know during the time when I had the hospitals portfolio that a young nurse graduating from a junior college with a 19-month diploma course could start at close to \$26,000 a year. Now, that's more than a teacher got with four years' university training. It's more

than a graduate engineer started, with four years' university training. So it is not a question that somehow the system is not paying its nurses well.

We went through three very painful nurses' strikes in this province, and the result of that I think was a level of remuneration for the nursing profession that is fair and certainly, in comparison with other professions which are all university based, very competitive. So that's not the question -- that we're underpaying those people. But the hospital system has to recognize that the majority of its costs or its budgets in the Canadian system relate to manpower, and if you take away that diploma- or college-based licence, they will be doing most of the people in that occupation a disservice, in my view. We've told everybody that's involved in the system that by letter within the last couple of weeks.

There seems to be a little bit of confusion about the matching endowment funds, and that's perhaps my fault for the way I described it, when I got carried away in saying that it's already oversubscribed. The first two-year votes are already oversubscribed, and this is a five-year program, so I suppose it's possible that the donations might fall off to nothing in the last three years and we'd come out all right. I hope that doesn't happen. But the Legislature has approved the votes for two years, and the total amount of those first two-year votes has been exceeded already, this far into our second year, by \$22 million. When I refer to a nice problem for a government to have, I think that's a good example of it.

The Member for Edmonton Strathcona brought up a really important point about equity and fairness in this and the fact that these funds are to be used to enrich the system, and I couldn't agree more. This year so far, with the cumulative donations that we've seen, it looks like the donations are running about equal between the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta. Some of the other institutions don't have the attractiveness for specialized endowments that those two major institutions have, but nonetheless they're out there in the marketplace and are competing for their share of endowments. I have to emphasize, as the hon. member suggested I should, that they are enrichment funds.

In my view, it would be wrong if the government in any way tried to take away their responsibility in providing adequate operating grants to the institutions by using the reason that you have all these endowment funds. The endowments are meant to enrich the institutions and are in addition to the operating grants provided by the government. We've got a study under way, as you know, to see if those operating grants are fair and equitable among the institutions, and if they're not, that will have to be corrected. But in the meantime we are encouraging the institutions themselves to go out and try and get those endowments and operating and capital funds.

How are priorities established? Or as the Member for Edmonton Kingsway raised, can the system be tilted or distorted? Again, it's an important question, because there's two levels at which expressions of opinion or approvals are given. First of all is when the university or the institution itself is approached by a donor voluntarily who says, "I would like to give you \$1 million for this; will you take it?" If it's really wild, of course, they have to say no. If it's semiwild, they'd like to maybe get it and send it up to our department to see if we'll approve it, and if it doesn't fit in logically with the total system, you would have to say no. My experience has been, however, that that hasn't happened yet and that in most cases the institutions have had a specific project in mind and go out and try and find a donor for it.

So the system seems to be working well, but there are those two check levels built into it.

The Member for Edmonton Kingsway also asked about the rationale of projects in or out and referred to the some \$60 million-odd and the \$43 million in this fund. I know this is going to sound confusing, so I'll try and do it carefully. There are two kinds of capital funds in the Department of Advanced Education. The one is called formula funding, and that really is a depreciation in equipment fund, if I could use that term. That's really what it is, and it's based on a formula which goes back to the inventory and age of equipment of the institution. There are ways in which you find a pool of money to put into the institution, but the capital funds that the Provincial Treasurer is trying to raise are really for major renovations or new capital projects in the purest sense of the word. And so the reason you see the two figures in the department is that it's the only way they have to bring those two votes together. So if you add the depreciation funds together with the capital funds, you'll get the \$65 million. If you take out the formula funding that I referred to, which is really part of the operating budget, then you're left with just the capital fund, which is left in here.

The same member also asked for an update of the total outstanding debt in this fund, and I've suggested that the Treasurer should answer that question when he returns. I don't have the details of that. But you already referred to two of the reasons why that seems to fluctuate, and that is the freeze that was put on last fall and the cash flow required according to the building progress made by some projects. Members will recall that we had an exceptionally good year last year for the construction industry for winter building, so the cash demands really exceeded our normal or average cash flow for this kind of climate.

Mr. Chairman, I think I've dealt with questions raised by the members.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you. I thought of another question after I sat down and so I would like to ask that. And I thank the minister for his very extensive answers to a couple of my concerns.

I don't think, though, that he quite answered the question on the capital fund. In fact, he said something that confused me a little bit. The \$64 million in capital expenditures for advanced education surely does not include the \$45 million from here because that's already been approved; otherwise, we wouldn't need to approve this one separately. So I think that was just a slight error in that analysis.

I'll expect the Treasurer then, if you could perhaps pass on the message to him, to answer my question about the numbers in his Budget Address. I'm just wondering if they still hold, and I asked about the anomaly of the \$33 million here and in his Budget Address compared to the \$377 million indicated in the capital expenditures for last year. And I guess it's something to do with the combination of the freeze, but yet there are some things that did go ahead. Because you had a good winter you could spend more, and so it's probably in that, but perhaps he could explain what happened there.

I have another question for him, and I guess again I could just ask you to have him take it on notice and maybe send me a written reply. I'm wondering if the \$262 million that they've indicated of the outstanding debt as of March 31, 1987, in the capital fund is included in the figures given on page 38 of the

Budget Address. He has a section in there called Change in Unmatured Debt in thousands of dollars, and indicates that there is some \$3.4 billion of debt accumulated as of December 31, 1986, which fits with the budget and the things we've heard. So I'm just wondering if the capital fund deficit is included in that deficit. It probably is.

And I guess the other question is: is any of the money, this \$262 million for the capital fund, coming from the heritage trust fund? The heritage trust fund is being used for a lot of different things at this stage, and I'm wondering if it's backing some of the loans for the agricultural farm credit stability program, the small business term assistance program, plus it is being used now for sort of the general deficit, as indicated by some questions I asked the other day about the short-term borrowings from that fund.

And so perhaps the Treasurer could shoot me off some answers on those questions. Thank you very much.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I've taken note, and I'm sure the record will show the questions raised by the hon. member. The Treasurer is not in the building at the moment, but he will be available to answer those questions before we finish the capital fund. Thank you for correcting the impression I gave vis-à-vis the depreciation funds. I think I said "take away from," and I should have said "add to." That's right; you're right there.

I guess if we're finished questions, the thing I want to leave . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, the Member for Edmonton Centre wanted to speak too.

MR. RUSSELL: Okay.

REV. ROBERTS: It's not often that we can get the minister in this kind of forum on this kind of question. But just as it pertains finally to the diploma versus the degree issue for nursing, I'm wondering if the minister therefore is saying that in fact there is no need for teachers throughout the province to have a Bachelor of Education. How in the world can you tell a teacher who has had a bachelor's program as opposed to one who just has a diploma from somewhere? I don't think any classroom kid could tell or other student could tell. So is the minister going to ask, before we deregulate other professions and turn the clock back -- I mean, it's the same kind of thinking, the same kind of logic, and perhaps the same kind of cost. You get a much cheaper teacher with one who has not had a BEd. The same with a social worker, a BSW I'm told is now almost normative, except in the child welfare aspect. And that's kind of odd, but why pursue that?

Also, before the House currently is the occupational therapy Act. Is the minister therefore saying that there's no need for occupational therapists throughout the province to all have, as it says in the Bill, a baccalaureate education before they can practise occupational therapy, like FT as well? So I just want to pursue the logic of the argument and see if the minister is in fact preparing to deregulate these other ones as well. And if not, why not, to be consistent?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member makes a good point, I guess, but he's suggesting that the clock be turned back with respect to those other professions. In the case of nursing, we've discussed at some length with representatives from the profession the objective, looking forward to the year 2000,

and we're saying that we don't agree with that objective, there's no evidence that it's necessary to do that, and that the status quo should be maintained. So that's the answer to that.

The last point I wanted to make, and I guess somebody should say it while we're talking about capital projects, is that the easiest part of a capital project is building it, finding the money to build it. Of course, these projects, nice as they are, are going to have to be maintained and filled with people, presumably, in the years to come, so future Legislatures are going to have the challenge of finding the bigger amounts of money as the years go by.

You ask if dollars came from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for this. It's my understanding that the Treasurer floated that capital bond issue this year to meet these requirements and that's going to be the source of this money.

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the vote?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Agreed to:

2.1 -- Universities	\$17,035,000
2.2 -- Public Colleges	\$26,220,000
2.3 -- Hospital-Based Nursing Education	\$2,085,000
2.4 -- Technical Institutes	--
Total Vote 2 -- Construction of Post-Secondary Education Facilities	\$45,340,000

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

## Hospitals and Medical Care

### 1 -- Construction of Hospitals and Nursing Homes

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 9. Hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, do you have any opening comments?

MR. M. MOORE: Yes. Mr. Chairman, this is a vote that provides funding, as hon. members know, for the construction of all of the active treatment hospitals throughout the province as well as auxiliary hospitals and nursing homes and does have a component as well with respect to assisting private-sector nursing homes and upgrading their facilities.

I could maybe just briefly go through some of the facilities that are currently under construction that these funds are being allocated to and make some comment. Firstly, with regard to the figure of \$19.26 million which is set aside for what's called minor construction projects, that amount of money is for upgrading and rehabilitation of existing hospitals, up to a maximum amount in any one hospital of \$1 million. It's mostly used for such things as replacement of equipment such as boilers or something like that or the upgrading of medical gas systems or the upgrading of hospitals to meet the fire code -- putting in new fire code facilities: heat-resistant doors and that sort of thing. It covers a great number of hospitals across the province, and we're still in fact reviewing the applications that have come in this year to obtain funding in that area.

The second major area is the major urban medical and referral centres, \$87.745 million. That involves some small amount



to the University of Alberta hospital. \$200,000; some small amount, compared to the size of the hospital, to the Foothills hospital in Calgary. \$1.242 million for some upgrading there; \$750,000 to the Calgary General hospital, which is planning and development funds with regard to the redevelopment of the Calgary General; \$912,000 to the Holy Cross hospital in Calgary, which is for the same purpose; and then a major amount, \$16.346 million, to the Rockyview General hospital. Then there is the Edmonton General, the Misericordia, the Royal Alex, the Charles Camshell: all with funds involved there of a smaller amount for purposes of planning for major upgrading programs. And then finally, the completion of the Grey Nuns Mill Woods hospital in Edmonton, \$36.127 million being budgeted this year, and the Peter Lougheed hospital in Calgary with \$30.021 million. So that's the total of the amount under major urban medical and referral centres.

Other referral centres refers to the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Grande Prairie, which is now complete. It's only shown on the estimates because of the change from last year to this year. The other two are the Lethbridge Regional hospital and the Medicine Hat and District hospital, with the Lethbridge Regional taking \$47.35 million of that amount and Medicine Hat taking \$6.034 million.

Under specialized active care we've got the W. W. Cross hospital in Edmonton, which is in the planning stage; the Glenrose hospital here, which is under construction, \$3.310 million. We've got Alberta Hospital Ponoka, with planning and some construction funds there, and the Northern Alberta Children's hospital, which is also planning funds that are allocated in this year's budget.

Then we've got community based hospital facilities of over 40 beds. There will be a start in construction of the St. Mary's hospital in Camrose this year, further planning and development funds for the Sturgeon General hospital in St. Albert, and the construction on the Wetaskiwin General hospital. Then there's a host of other community based facilities of over 40 beds; that amounts to almost \$20 million in construction costs.

Then, Mr. Chairman, there are rural community based hospitals of under 40 beds. A number of those throughout the province are in some process of planning or construction, and I could provide more details, if hon. members would like, in that regard.

Perhaps the best thing to do, just in concluding my comments here, would be to indicate those hospitals that are actually under construction this year as opposed to in the planning stage, and I've already mentioned the major urban ones. In addition to that, there is the Banff Mineral Springs hospital, which is now complete, but some funding was being provided in this fiscal year. It was opened last Friday in fact. There's the Blairmore hospital in the Crowsnest Pass, which will open on August 28 this year. There's the Claresholm-Willow Creek hospital, which is now under construction. The Leduc hospital, which will be opened, I guess, tomorrow. The Lethbridge Regional, which is under construction and will open in August of 1988. The Lloydminster hospital, which will open this year, and the McLennan Sacred Heart hospital, which will probably open about this time next year, and Medicine Hat, which is already open but there's additional work going on there and rehabilitation of the older portion of the hospital. Alberta Hospital Ponoka, which is ongoing and I've already mentioned. The Stettler General hospital, which is under construction.

There are a number that have been approved for planning and design and haven't actually gotten into the construction phase yet. They will be the Coaldale Community hospital, the

La Crete facility, the Raymond Municipal hospital addition of auxiliary beds, Wabasca-Desmarais, and some other very small projects under that particular vote.

Mr. Chairman, this year we've actually approved five new projects. The Bassano General hospital has been approved for renovation or replacement of the existing active care hospital with fewer beds than what they presently have and with the addition of 30 auxiliary beds. The Galahad hospital has been approved for conversion of 20 active care beds to auxiliary beds. In addition to that, there are two projects in Edmonton that have been approved. The St. Joseph's Auxiliary hospital has been approved for the planning and design of a new hospital, which will in all likelihood be on a different site. The Allan Gray Auxiliary hospital, again in Edmonton, has been approved for the addition of 52 beds to its 48-bed complement, for a total of 100 beds.

Mr. Chairman, that's an overview of what's included in this \$235.268 million capital fund.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member for Edmonton Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've been waiting for this vote and this discussion on the dollars allocated under the capital funds for construction of hospitals and nursing homes because I think there are some questions here that really beg a lot of answers. Particularly, despite the litany of construction and hospitals that the minister is proceeding with, we can clearly see that for most of the votes there's a great decrease in the percentage spent in capital funds from previous years. In fact, Mr. Chairman, it's also significant to note that some of the larger decreases come in the area of community based hospitals, the over 40 beds, and even a significant 5 percent reduction for rural community based hospital facilities. Now, this is kind of odd and ironic to me, insofar as I have heard the minister say over and over and over again about the government's firm and great commitment to the community and rural hospitals throughout the province, and yet this decrease in the vote in terms of capital construction coming through today.

The minister has also said over and over again -- I don't think he meant to mislead the Assembly or just try to smear the Official Opposition on the point, Mr. Chairman, because I have read the *Hansard* from 1985 when the former Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care made the argument that the community and rural based hospitals were 1 percent, 5 percent of the total hospital budget in the province, and I quite agreed with it. In fact, our party quite agrees with it. In fact, we feel that's one of the biggest bangs for the buck that this department has been spending, and that it's a very cogent policy to regionalize and ruralize the hospital system throughout the province. It's one that I've even said to editorial boards. I've said, "You're crazy, the fact that there's too much building in rural Alberta in terms of hospitals, community based hospitals." And the editorials of major city papers have criticized that. I've criticized them myself and said that they're all wrong on that and have felt some support for the policy of ruralizing and regionalizing the hospital system. So if the minister wants to know what the stated position of the Official Opposition is, that is it: that we fully support not only the superstructure but the infrastructure that the rural and community based hospital program is about.

The minister did say, in fact, Mr. Chairman . . . [interjection] If it is *Beauchesne* 327, you might want to refer to it. So much for the stated position of the Official Opposition that we ought to close hospitals throughout rural Alberta. I would chal-

lenge this minister, Mr. Chairman, any day of the week to table in this Assembly where there is any stated position of the Official Opposition to close rural hospitals in this province. Now, I think what he's getting confused with is -- I have in fact heard the leader of the Liberal Party say, you know, "They've got too many hospitals, too many beds in rural Alberta." And I said, "Come on, Nick; you really shouldn't make those kinds of comments." In fact he has, and he's been supported by other members of his caucus.

This caucus is very firm and clear about our stand on it, particularly as I've spoken about the issue with the former Member for Spirit River-Fairview, Mr. Gurnett, who has had a great deal of concern about the expansion of rural hospitals throughout the province. There was a bit of a concern that one hospital was built just outside of the riding which happened to be held by Grant Notley. But nonetheless, it is a policy and a program that we feel is integral if the province is going to be wise in its stewardship and spending of capital dollars on hospital construction.

Again, I say that it's been based largely on comments that were made in the House by the former minister around the figures of the percentages. I mean, my goodness, 5 or even 1 percent, I believe, of the total budget goes to hospitals of under 40 beds, and if that isn't a big bang for the buck for the communities and the services that this capital construction is providing in rural Alberta, then what is? There were some who suggested they should build skating rinks with the money, and we would certainly oppose that kind of policy of community leagues. We feel that really hospital construction and hospital policy throughout rural Alberta is very keen and very key to rural and community Alberta.

So, Mr. Chairman, then it comes to me today to see what is in the vote, which is a continued huge amount of spending for the urban and major referral centres in the cities and these decreases of some substantial proportion to the community and rural based hospitals. And I really have to ask the minister: what kind of mixed messages is he sending to the constituencies of the rural MLAs? I'm not going to take too long, because I know many rural MLAs will want to know, on behalf of their hospitals who continually need capital upgrading, equipment, and other needs in their hospitals. They will want to pressure the minister for more of the shrinking pie that is now available for capital needs in rural Alberta for their hospitals. In fact, Mr. Chairman, we have, I think, a continued wastage of money being spent in the major city hospitals which could well be taken and used more efficiently in the rural and community based hospitals. The whole hospital funding system, the fact that we have all kinds of money going to very expensive per day hospitals -- \$800 a day at the University hospital and others -- could well be spent by diversifying some of that money, by spreading it around the province more equitably and not with the faulty funding policies as we have for the major overbuilt city hospital sector in the province.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, it's odd that not only is the decrease here, but I've heard from many of the administrators and board chairmen and doctors in rural Alberta who are saying -- you know, they've had this 3 to 7 percent cutback in operating costs; now they're going to have less of a pie from which to apply for capital needs. Furthermore, the minister has said that he's not going to close hospital beds but he's going to convert them into long-term care beds in rural Alberta. Now, we know and any hospital administrator knows that for an active treatment patient you get \$300, \$350 a day for that bed. To convert

it to long-term care, you'd get \$100, \$150 a day for long-term care patients. So the whole budget of the hospital is going to be strained by decreasing capital, having to convert a number of beds to long-term care, and an overall decrease in operating. So it would seem to me that the minister really has some accounting to do in terms of what the real overall policy is to expand the rural and community based hospital system, to not just have the superstructure that is in there but to have the infrastructure that is necessary in an ongoing way to maximize the potential which they represent.

Now, in particular items, the minister quickly went over the facility, I think he called it, at La Crete. It's good to see the hon. MLA now in attendance. Maybe we could get some clarification about what that facility is about. There we have a Mennonite community, Mr. Chairman, which is some thousands of people, with a birthrate that's quite high, a school system that's quite expanding. All they need really is a prototypical hospital with, particularly, some neonatal and some birthing kinds of rooms and some other areas of medical need.

Yet I don't know; here I am, the Member for Edmonton Centre, getting all this mail from the good people of La Crete, Alberta. Now why are they sending letters to me and saying that they're quite unhappy with the kinds of mixed message that they're getting from both their current MLA and the government minister in terms of the meeting of their modest needs in La Crete, Alberta, a wonderful community? Even the doctors in the community are saying that it's one of the most underserved areas, for a medical facility, of any they've ever experienced. The community's gone ahead and had a kind of a feasibility study about what their real needs represent. My information of late is that the minister has just not abided by any of the recommendations. He did refer to a facility there. It would be good to hear from the minister of his support for the people of La Crete.

Now, I've heard also that the good people of La Crete, being Mennonites, don't vote, that they're not big voting people.

ANHON. MEMBER: That's not right.

REV. ROBERTS: Well, I looked at the figures last time. I think it's 10 percent of the community that voted, and I don't know whether that bears any relationship with the fact that they're not getting their medical needs met or what.

Now, there's a very interesting issue in the good community of Lethbridge, Mr. Chairman. I guess the minister rightly cited it not as a community based but certainly as a referral centre. Boy, that's a study in hospital board dynamics, to talk about those two hospitals, the Lethbridge Regional and the St Michael's hospital in Lethbridge, both with some capital construction needs. And it would be interesting to hear from the minister, if he wants to continue the . . . It's almost like Northern Ireland down there with this Roman Catholic hospital, St Michael's, and the Lethbridge, which has been promised, I take it -- again, under the former minister and others -- for a real upgrade as a regional hospital. Yet the competition and the envy and the fighting back and forth between the two hospitals -- you'd think that some real political leadership should come through and settle their differences.

The minister did refer to the \$47 million, I believe, that's going -- did he say \$47 million? -- which is exactly down the middle between the \$49 million which was, I think, promised and the \$44 million which they thought they were going to get. So what is the real final capital figure for the Lethbridge Regional hospital? Will it not in fact include the \$6 million that is

going to be needed to have the 305 beds that were forecast and that were needed for the Lethbridge Regional? I mean, let's clear up the situation, have some political will and determination in terms of really making it the regional hospital that it is, complementary to St. Michael's, and have for the \$6 million the 305 beds, not the 216 beds which the minister apparently a week or so ago had committed himself to.

Again, where is the commitment to the continuing development and expansion of hospitals in the cities and towns of rural Alberta?

Now, the minister has also spoken -- we've had quite a debate about cancer treatment centres. He made no mention today, though, in these capital votes about the fact that some communities -- for instance, Grande Prairie -- are really wanting a regional cancer centre out of their hospital there, linked up with the W. W. Cross. If the minister is very concerned about community based hospitals and the health care needs of rural Albertans in moving it out from the Cross Cancer to other centres, particularly like the Grande Prairie one, what's taking him so long to decide that there isn't enough capital money to invest in that kind of program in Grande Prairie and the other regional cancer centres that can be developed in that very cost-effective way?

My good friend from Athabasca-Lac La Biche will ask some questions about the Athabasca hospital. I'm told that they would certainly like to have much more expansion of their rehabilitation programs, the units of rehab medicine there, that in fact it's a great shortage. As we know, health care needs met by hospitals now include rehabilitation medicine, and that's another area that could be nicely expanded in and through the community hospitals, particularly the one in Athabasca.

Now, the minister himself might want to clear up -- I'm getting some confusing comments from people in his own riding about the status and the future of the Valleyview hospital. I take it there's an existing hospital nearby and that it's getting a capital upgrade of some million dollars. As well there's a new Valleyview hospital on the books. Now, I know it's in the minister's own riding and that he's going to have some real interesting comments there to make about the future of the Valleyview hospital and maybe some clarification so that the good people of his own constituency can know what they can expect there.

I visited that very nice new hospital in Cold Lake, Alberta, Mr. Chairman. I don't know why the Tory construction firm . . . I forget; what's the name of that construction firm that builds all those hospitals?

ANHON. MEMBER: Olson.

REV. ROBERTS: Oh, is it Olson? Whoever built it, it took some incredible length of time to complete this facility. It's certainly state of the art and had all the funding in place, but I don't know why the people of Cold Lake had to wait so long to get this facility on stream, given the very poor condition of the previous hospital there in Cold Lake. I know, of course, that the medical facilities on the base are quite notable and honourable, and the citizens of Cold Lake can be well served by getting that hospital up and going as soon as possible, if not already.

Maybe the minister could talk a bit about the kinds of capital dollars which would really go to a number of hospitals in rural Alberta that would help in their accreditation. Now, I'm not sure exactly -- I tried to do some research and haven't gotten it completed yet -- in terms of how many hospitals throughout the

province are not accredited under the national standards of accreditation. It would be very interesting to me, and I would really like to see this minister at this point in time use a number of capital dollars to assist those hospitals which really are not accredited and would like to be accredited to get the capital dollars they would need to upgrade whatever equipment and whatever units they would need to get that kind of accreditation from the national standards. Because you know, just to put in a building, have hospitals, people dressed in white, have a big H in the middle of town, and so on -- it's really not a hospital in every case. We need that accreditation standard on the wall which says that this is an accredited hospital. I think that should be a real priority. If those hospitals are not accredited, the capital dollars from this vote should go toward that as well as the need in rural and community based hospitals to have the kinds of equipment and specialized services which are going to in a sense really attract the physicians away from all these major downtown centres.

Now, the minister knows, and I know the people in the medical schools know, that they're really trying to develop programs to get physicians out of the main centres where they're all congregated and into the real areas of need in the community. But you know, it's still a problem. They get trained on all this fancy equipment, all these CAT scanners and all the radiological and lab equipment they've got. What is the minister doing in this capital vote to upgrade the equipment and the technology of a number of the hospitals in rural Alberta, to enable and assist and encourage physicians to therefore move out into practice in and through those hospitals?

Now, I know the good Member for West Yellowhead would have the Hinton and Jasper hospitals well heeled for that kind of equipment, but it would be good to see if the minister has any program, any policy, to further in capital ways the technology and equipment of the hospitals that would attract new and younger physicians to come and practise in and through those hospitals, which I'm told is an area of need.

So, Mr. Chairman, I guess what I'm really saying is that we need not with this vote begin to constrict or to restrict and limit the capital dollars. I mean, what we've got here with capital dollars is an investment. It's not expenditure out of operating and so on. I know it's going to have some operating implications, but it's an investment. If we're really serious about investing in the hospitals around the province, then we need not at this point limit and reduce by 49 percent the community hospital based facilities or by almost 5 percent the rural community based hospitals to give them shrinking pies of capital dollars but rather say, "Hey, listen. We're with you. We know what your needs are, and here is our investment in you and your facility" -- not just the superstructure that's there but, as I say, to build up the infrastructure, which is so important.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, I feel that the minister would do well if he could announce in the Assembly as soon as possible that he's got a new assistant deputy minister or perhaps some member of his department who would do nothing else but liaison with and help in a sort of a whole new policy development of expanding the infrastructure of hospitals throughout the province; that is, to get them away from the heavy concentration which exists already in Edmonton and Calgary. I think to have a set part of his department which would do nothing else but do that kind of diversification, with the capital assistance of increased capital dollars -- not the decrease which is showing here but increase it -- would be a great investment now and in the future of Alberta.

The minister said not too much about vote 1.7, to do with the auxiliary hospitals. Again I would congratulate the minister in his knowing that the real need in the province in terms of hospital care is the appalling shortage of auxiliary care beds throughout the province. Now, again we can only say that this is after 12 years of Conservative mismanagement of the hospital sector, where they can build all kinds of beds for certain purposes but they can so undervalue the health care needs of those needing long-term care, needing auxiliary care, so that we're at a stage today, 1987, in Alberta where I'm told that 500 elderly people are awaiting placement in long-term care. In fact, it's not 500; it's 612 as of the recent report by the district 24 . . . Six hundred and twelve Albertans who are awaiting placement in long-term care in auxiliary hospitals, many of whom are already in acute care hospital beds and costing a great deal there both in terms of dollars and their own emotional health. Many others in the community are trying to get in. It is the number one bottleneck in the system. And who is to blame? Who is responsible for that, Mr. Chairman?

I know that this minister is very much aware of that, and he is trying to do something about it. I remember asking him in Public Accounts Committee why even two years ago the amount set aside for auxiliary hospital construction was underexpended -- underexpended in this province, when we now sit at a day when the 600 beds that are short . . . Well, at least we're not going to underexpend this \$16 million which is allocated today and the 4.9 percent increase. I would suggest and submit though, Mr. Chairman, that that should be at least a 20 if not 25 percent increase in capital dollars, which would go into the construction of auxiliary hospital beds in this province and meet the need which is so glaring to everyone in the province who is aware of the situation today.

There is a real temptation here though, and I'm glad that I've been . . . It's been pointed out to me by many in the long-term care field, particularly the good people of district 24 and Good Samaritan and others, that there is a great deal of difference between an acute care hospital bed and a long-term care auxiliary hospital bed. For the minister or any other person of this government to think that you can house a person who is going to be in for a lengthy stay at an auxiliary hospital, up to a year or more, in a bed which was built for an acute care patient who was going to be in up to 10 days -- they are completely different sorts of beds. So I would caution the minister in his conversion from acute care to long-term care that it's not just a simple paper conversion. I remember backbenchers asking about this: well, can a hospital minister say, "We'll have certain beds for this today, and certain beds for that tomorrow"? It is not that way at all, and in fact I would submit that the proposed conversion of the old University hospital acute care beds into long-term care auxiliary beds is a great mistake.

If the minister can for another 20 percent of capital dollars build rather a facility for long-term care that is going to meet all the accredited standards for long-term care and auxiliary bed patients, then he should take that extra money and spend it on the top quality auxiliary hospital beds which are necessary and in fact travel -- as I know the minister has -- up to the Norwood Extended Care and see that within some of the existing facilities that are of some vintage, there is in the province of Alberta today an auxiliary care hospital which has a room with five beds in it. Five beds for auxiliary care patients, with one toilet. One toilet between five elderly people in an auxiliary care hospital in this province to me is shameful, Mr. Chairman, and I would hope that the minister is going to take some of this \$16 million

and get over there to the Norwood Extended Care and clean up that situation to where those elderly can be, as is commonly the point today, one elderly person for one auxiliary care room -- perhaps two but no more than two -- and they can share a toilet in that kind of room in that kind of setting and none of this five business which is currently going on in that kind of glaring way.

So a lot needs to be done there, and I'm encouraging the minister -- in fact, I would like this minister to be as bold as the Treasurer in saying, you know, that by 1990 we're going to have the deficit reduced to zero. This minister should come out with a statement and say that by 1989 there will be zero people on the waiting list for auxiliary care beds in this province. What is the target date that the minister has in mind to get this business under way? Because I tell you that if he doesn't, it will be the number one election issue which I will press in the next provincial election.

Then we come to vote 1.8. The minister glided over this. I just would like to ask some questions. He has spoken for over a year now about the poor private nursing home operators. You know, the owners and operators there, they are extended care. Consumers Gas of Ontario now are getting into the private nursing home industry. And they're so underfunded, and they need some capital improvement. Could the minister please in the House today tell us how much of this 187 percent increase for nursing homes is going to private nursing home owners and operators as opposed to the volunteering, not-for-profit nursing homes that are in the province? It's not clear in this, and I have not gotten the letter that the minister has mailed out to the nursing home operators who can be eligible for these grant moneys for capital construction, but I think we should be very clear about this. And if the minister is as firm about his commitment to private nursing home operators -- people who can make gold from the old -- and if he wants to give them another million dollars here as a great increase to some people who he thinks should continue to invest their way into their shareholders as well as try to meet the needs of elderly, then I think he should come clean and say exactly how much of this money is going to private nursing homes as opposed to the not-for-profit, voluntary nursing homes in the province.

With those comments, Mr. Chairman, I would beg some of the minister's responses.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to be able to support vote 1, construction of hospitals and nursing homes, for the capital fund estimates, 1987-88. I'd like, given the time left, to remark on behalf of the constituency I represent the appreciation to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care and the former Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care for the personal attention and concern and support that they and their department have provided to the needs of rural Albertans, particularly in the communities of Banff and Canmore.

Now, I listened to the so-called shadow critic from Edmonton Centre, who seems to have changed his tune from the day before.

MR. DAY: Again?

MR. STEVENS: Yes. Well, that's normal, as the Member for Red Deer North has pointed out. Yesterday we heard in debates words like "cover-up" and "sweetheart deal" and all the inflammatory comments that were made in this House yesterday by this member -- the kinds of comments one rarely hears. Today we hear a very flowery, well-prepared, thoughtful submission,

which is unusual for him. But it's quite amazing for a member to say that by having the best capital dollars, we would somehow find in a hospital immediate accreditation. Accreditation depends on so much more than the capital plant that is there. It depends on utilization; it depends on the procedures; it depends on the operational plans; it depends on the staff and their total approach to health care in their facility. It's far more than what the member has led the House to believe today.

Then he has challenged us. I think he said yesterday he was going to make this an issue, and he's saying today that he will make this an issue. Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to say that I made the hospital in Banff an issue in 1979, in 1982, and in 1986. I will table sometime next week the opposition by the New Democratic Party in this House to the hospital that was planned for and finally built in Banff to serve the needs of that community. I'll table that. It'll take me a few days to find it, but I look forward to finding it because I've used it in every election and I will use it again in 1988 or 1989 or 1990, as that hospital which opened last Friday continues to serve the needs of that community and the visitors to that community.

So when they say now, so glowingly in their change of heart, that they support rural hospitals, that really is humorous. They have constantly opposed this government's approach to decentralize and ensure that rural Albertans have their opportunity to have medical care facilities and services that are second to none.

I also will use the comments of the member with respect to our Edmonton constituents. Notice today that again he felt that we should not be building or supporting facilities in our major cities. Somehow we should not do those things; we should suddenly take those capital plants, I presume, shut them down and somehow move that funding out to rural Alberta. Very interesting double-talk today.

Mr. Chairman, last Friday I had the privilege of attending with the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care the opening of another rural hospital in Alberta. The hospital in Banff, which has served for so many years on the far side of the only bridge in the community, has been a centre for, sadly, acute care and trauma because of the Trans-Canada Highway, injuries and fatalities because of climbing accidents, because of skiing, cross-country or downhill, or the use of the lakes and rivers of our national parks. The hospital has been needed there for many years and has provided a wonderful service to the community and to our visitors to this province in that area.

Sadly, its time came due. Its mechanical plant was failing, and this government and the hospital board and the Sisters of St. Martha agreed that a new facility was required. I'm pleased that in this budget the final dollars are identified. The opening of the hospital on Friday was a success for hundreds of people who gathered there, not only the people who have worked on the construction, who will be working in the facility, but the chairman and the district board members, the Sisters of St. Martha -- one of whom came from Rome to participate in that opening -- and the senior citizens, many of whom will be able to share with their families the remaining days of their lives in dignity in this facility.

The facility -- which was 46 beds in the old Mineral Springs hospital, now a new special-purpose designed facility -- provides 40 acute care beds and 25 beds for auxiliary use. The minister provided happy news last Friday when he announced that the auxiliary beds would open this year, and in fact 13 beds will be available for occupancy on September 1 of this year. The hospital has not been designed for today; it's been designed

for today and tomorrow, just as the prototypical hospital in Canmore opened a year ago for the future and for the present needs of our people. The hospitals are occupied. They have equipment. Their staff are proud of them. The communities are proud of them.

So to hear comments made and now denied in the House today -- somehow the NDP are doing a flip-flop -- that they support rural hospitals when we've seen and I know I have seen in this House since 1979 their opposition to the plans for rural Alberta . . . I will be happy to bring those forward, and I'll send them over to the Member for Edmonton Centre. And I'll use them, as I indicated earlier.

ANHON. MEMBER: That was yesterday.

MR. STEVENS: That was yesterday's view. Of course, that's right; they've flipped to another approach now, as they see what their comments have done.

ANHON. MEMBER: Your nose is growing, Greg.

MR. STEVENS: My nose hasn't grown, but my pride has grown, and I will certainly use all of those statements, including the member two seats from you.

MR. MARTIN: Your hair's not growing, though.

MR. STEVENS: I wish my hair could grow. I'll have to go visit the hospital and have some transplanted. That's right.

Mr. Chairman, the hospital services in this province, whether they are in Edmonton or in Banff or in Canmore or any other part of our province, provide a community focus. In addition to the health care facilities that are there, in many cases there are services provided by volunteers. There's some concern that's been expressed by the member that we haven't provided enough equipment for the hospitals. My goodness, with all of the basic equipment now available and in addition voluntary groups and citizens wishing to provide additional support -- whether it's the ladies' auxiliary, whether it's the Rotary Club, whether it's a candy striper volunteer -- our hospitals provide a community focus for so much that can be done to add. Whether it's magazines or libraries, whether it can be a phone call, a visit, a volunteer shut-in service: all of those things are happening in our hospitals. The government's role is not to take the place of the volunteer, not to supplant the role of the family member. It seems that the NDP want to do all of those things. Thank goodness our government has provided the capital, provided the operating support, and our people are receiving the finest of service.

So it is with pride, Mr. Chairman, that I am able to rise today and thank the government of Alberta and the minister and his predecessor particularly for the incredible plant and operating support for two of the largest employers in my constituency, the Canmore and the Banff hospitals.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The Member for Banff-Cochrane: I really don't know where he gets his facts about the New Democrats being against rural hospitals. I've been a member of the party and been in caucus meetings for the last number of years, and at no time have I ever heard any member talk against having rural hospitals. I think if the

minister is wanting to put that as part of his political campaign in his riding, I think he's being very dishonest. And I think what we've seen federally as well with the federal Tories and their letters to their corporate fund-raisers is very much the same kind of lack of truthfulness from this party. I think the Member for Banff-Cochrane should apologize to this House for this real dishonesty, this partisan politics that he keeps playing with, the question of hospitalization.

What the New Democrats have been saying about rural hospitals is this: that we need to have multipurpose types of rural hospitals as opposed to trying to make them all similar types of hospitals where they really don't respond to the need of the local community. This is really what we've been saying, that we should have in some of our local rural hospitals multilevel care. I guess the Member for Banff-Cochrane is beyond that kind of logic.

For example, in my constituency of Athabasca-Lac La Biche, take the Boyle hospital. Now, the Boyle hospital has only been able to attract one doctor in the last number of years. However, it doesn't have at its facility enough multilevel care to make sure that people can access the hospital to its maximum.

MR. DAY: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Red Deer North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to cite *Beauchesne* 320, section (2), clearly listing a number of terms referred to since 1958 as being unparliamentary. When he suggested that the Member for Banff-Cochrane was being dishonest, "dishonest" is very clearly listed on page 106 of *Beauchesne*. I'd like to stand on that point of order and have the member retract his statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair will consider the point of order. Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Well, perhaps I should have said "misleading," which is what the Member for Banff-Cochrane was doing, basically misleading this House, and I will not apologize for that statement.

Continuing on the rural hospital issue, one of the things that we all as MLAs, both rural and urban, have to understand is that we do have in this province the best kind of specialists and specialization occurring in the large regional hospitals, like in the city of Edmonton and Calgary or Grande Prairie, and that when patients need extra care or surgical operations which are beyond the expertise of the local general practitioners, we need to ensure that the urban hospitals have the means and the money to ensure that those rural patients that are transported to our urban hospitals have the necessary funding to carry on that mandate. What I'm finding here with the 3 percent cutback right across Alberta is that it's really adversely affecting the care of rural patients who are coming to the urban hospitals here to get the specialized surgical procedures or care that are not available in rural Alberta.

So really, in the setting up of your priorities, Mr. Minister, you have failed to consider that by slashing 3 percent right across the board, without having first of all prioritized where the real care has to be given in terms of our very specialized medical procedures -- to cut 3 percent in urban hospitals is discriminatory against all Albertans. In rural Alberta in a small hospital like at Boyle or Athabasca a 3 percent cutback is a lot less than say 3 percent at the Royal Alex. I mean, we're talking about a lot less dollars, and they can rationalize those costs a lot more. There has not been the cutback or the layoffs in rural Alberta hospitals that there has been in urban hospitals. I think this is a point to be made.

I guess the time has expired, and I know that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, the Chair has had an opportunity to check the point of order raised by Red Deer North with regard to *Beauchesne* 320, page 111, the word "dishonest." The Chair doesn't have the Blues; the Chair believes to have heard correctly. The Chair would request that in the next 20 seconds the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche take the appropriate action, if the hon. member would agree with that.

MR. PIQUETTE: You're waiting for the Blues?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is not waiting for the Blues. The Chair is waiting for the hon. member.

Hon. Government House Leader.

MR. CRAWFORD: I move that the committee rise and report progress and request leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1988, a sum from the Alberta Capital Fund not exceeding the following for the department and the purpose indicated:

Advanced Education, \$45,340,000 for construction of postsecondary educational facilities.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 1:01 p.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]