

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, April 18, 1988 2:30 p.m.**
 Date: 88/04/18

[The House met at 2:30 p.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: **PRESENTING REPORTS BY
 STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 93, I have taken under consideration the petitions for Private Bills which have been received by the Assembly and wish to report that all those petitions have complied with Standing Orders 86 and 89 with the exception of the petition of LaVerne Erickson, Terrance Schlinder, Wesley Wikkerink, Douglas Madge, Gordon Cousins, and Raymond Schultz for the Rosebud School of the Arts Act; the petition of the city of Edmonton for the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton and St. John's Institute Repeal Act; the petition of Alistair Mackintosh for the Leslie Roy Peck Adoption Act; the petition of Victor Peter Hetmanzuk and Nestor Zenon Papish for the St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation at Calgary Tax Exemption Act.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice of my intention, following the completion of Routine Orders, to seek the unanimous consent of the Assembly under Standing Order 40 to move a motion marking Education Week in Alberta. I have copies of that motion here for all members.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 18
 Animal Protection Act**

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 18, a Bill relating to the Animal Protection Act.

This Bill updates and redefines distress as it relates to animals as well as updating the offences and penalties in reference to cruelty to animals.

[Leave granted; Bill 18 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 4**Warren S. Forest Bar Admission Act**

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 4, Warren S. Forest Bar Admission Act.

The purpose of the Bill is to permit the bar admission of a student at law who is not yet a Canadian citizen.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 4 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 5

**Patricia, Alejandra and
 Marcello Becerra Adoption Act**

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 5, the Patricia, Alejandra and Marcello Becerra Adoption Act.

The purpose of this Act is to provide for the adoption of adult children.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 5 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 1**Royal Canadian Legion Alberta Property Act**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 1, Royal Canadian Legion Alberta Property Act.

The purpose of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to consolidate previous legislation and to clarify the property holding powers of the Legion and its branches.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 1 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 2**Canada Olympic Park Transfer of Title Act**

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 2, Canada Olympic Park Transfer of Title Act.

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the use and ownership of lands of Canada Olympic Park.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 2 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 3

**Paul Mark and
 Cheryl-Lynne Mary Ibbotson Adoption Act**

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, the Paul Mark and Cheryl-Lynne Mary Ibbotson Adoption Act.

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the adoption of two adults.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 3 read a first time]

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill 18, the Animal Protection Act, be placed on the Orders of the Day under Government Bills and Orders for second reading.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to table the annual report for the year ended March 31, 1987, for the Alberta Department of Career Development and Employment.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, some 17 grades 5 and 6 students from the Princeton elementary school, located in the great constituency of Edmonton-Belmont. They are seated in the public gallery, accompanied by their teacher Don Geake. I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and the other members of the Assembly this afternoon, some 51 students from the grade 6 classes at Weinlos school in the constituency of Edmonton-Mill Woods. They are accompanied today by their teachers Mr. Sharpies and Mr. Foo, as well as parents Mrs. Turenne, Mrs. Shah, and Mrs. Abram.

I had a chance to visit with the students earlier, Mr. Speaker, *and* have a mock debate over the merits of introducing a new tax on chocolate bars. They're here today to observe the real debate, live. I'd ask them to stand now and receive the very warm welcome of the House.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the Hon. Neil Crawford I am pleased to introduce today a group of 57 students from the Avalon junior high school, grade 8, who with their teachers Mr. Mark Babin and Mrs. Heather Plaizier are in the members' gallery. I would ask that they rise and receive the cordial and warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Department of
Community and Occupational Health**

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, this is National Volunteer Week in Canada and throughout Alberta, and it is a pleasure for me to be able to recognize here in the Legislature the commitment of hundreds of thousands of Alberta volunteers and the contribution they make to communities across our province.

During the past two years, Mr. Speaker, I have had occasion to meet with and speak to hundreds of volunteers who have been working towards goals that are important to all of us, goals like bringing health to our communities, promoting healthy lifestyles, and working for the prevention of illness and accidents; in general, making life better for all Albertans, young and old.

These volunteers play a crucial role in caring for our fellow citizens. Mr. Speaker, I met this morning with the people in the Calgary meals on wheels and here in Edmonton with Operation Friendship. Operation Friendship's helping hands program provides assistance to dozens of individuals like Mr. Sam Jones, a gentleman in his 90s living in Pioneer Place. The helping hands volunteers assist Sam with his grocery shopping, and they help him get exercise by getting him outdoors as often as possible and accompanying him on his personal errands. They assist Sam in a meaningful way to maintain his health and stay as

proudly independent as he can.

There are other volunteers, Mr. Speaker, throughout our province, throughout cities, towns, and villages around Alberta. I think of members of the Keep in Touch of Lethbridge Society who make daily phone calls to elderly and disabled members of the community. And who can forget, Mr. Speaker, the success achieved by over 12,000 Olympic volunteers who staged the best ever Olympic Winter Games in Calgary in February? They represented communities around Alberta and throughout Canada.

These are but a few examples, Mr. Speaker, but I ask for the support of all hon. members to recognize and appreciate the hard work, commitment, compassion, and generous spirit of our province's volunteers during this National Volunteer Week.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, of course, all of us on both sides of the House would certainly recognize and appreciate, as the minister says, the hard work, commitment, compassion, and generous spirit of our province's volunteers during National Volunteer Week. Of course, all of us on both sides of the House recognize that it's a very important role volunteers in our province play. But I want to say to this government: we may be stretching the limits of volunteerism, if we look at the recent social policy document that was brought in. Volunteers want to do something positive; they want to add something to the society. They do not want to be involved -- if you talk to the volunteers -- because of government neglect or lack of government policy and cutbacks and such things as food banks.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that this government, instead of -- not necessarily -- praising would allow volunteers to do the things they want to do. But let's not make volunteers have to cover the things that aren't done by government, and I think the Food Bank is a very good example of this.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Employee Wages and Benefits

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour. Now, it may come as a surprise to this government -- it seems to, anyhow -- that there are people working very hard for poverty-level wages in this province. Frankly, they have to look to the provincial government to provide decent employment standards. If I may say so, Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code: I didn't think it was possible, but it's going to make it worse for average people. Specifically, there's nothing about an increase in the minimum wage, which is the lowest in the country.

My question to the minister: will the minister explain why the government again failed to move and bring in a decent minimum wage instead of what we have now, the lowest in the country?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I anticipate it will take some time for the legislation that I tabled in the House on Friday to be proclaimed as the law, because the regulations will be required to be changed in the meantime. I do not anticipate waiting that length of time before announcing changes to the minimum wage.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've been hearing this. The last time there was an increase was in 1981. My question is: why is it that this government can move so quickly to give money to Peter Pocklington, but something like a minimum

wage they've got to study and study? Will the minister tell us when he plans to bring these regulations in and to what level they're looking at?

DR. REID: No, I'm not prepared to tell the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition when I will make the announcement. All I can do is assure him that it will be made and it will be made in adequate time to give employers time to adjust to the change.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, what about the working poor? That's who we're concerned about -- the times to adjust.

But to go on to Bill 21, Mr. Speaker, we look at the minister's globe-trotting task force: half a million dollars. But they did do one good thing. In the recommendations they recommended that part-time workers be granted prorated employment benefits. This was one of the few good suggestions. They've removed it. My question is: will the minister advise why he allowed this to happen? Why are not part-time workers prorated, that sort of thing? Why did they move that away, Mr. Speaker?

DR. REID: First of all, Mr. Speaker, the comment about the working poor I should remind the hon. member that all statistics indicate that there is a very small number of people working at the minimum wage in this province. The minimum wage itself is not supposed to represent people's needs but what the work is worth. In relation to Bills 21 and 22 I would suggest the hon. leader wait until the debate on the Bills.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we've got a growing number of part-time employees because of this government policy. Now the government has waved away the one good recommendation they have. My question is: rather than wait for the Bill, will the minister tell the growing number of part-time workers, 77 per cent of them women, why this government abandoned them?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, once the hon. member sees the regulations which will follow the statute, I think he will see that this government is just as interested in any particular group as his party may allegedly be. Indeed, it showed in the recently implemented changes to the private pensions Act where part-time workers have to be given equivalent consideration to full-time workers. That type of approach is the approach of this government, although his party may tend to represent only one interest in the total population.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, further to the employment practices Act, to the minister. Could he inform the House just why -- in view of the fact that in the other paper that came out called Caring & Responsibility, the Deputy Premier mentioned family life -- there is not an equivalent amount of maternity leave in this Act for those who are adoptive parents too?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, without getting into a biological discussion as a physician, adoptive parents do not go through the potential complications of the antenatal period that natural mothers do.

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

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for St Albert [interjection]

Labour Legislation

MR. STRONG: Yeah, you'd better start worrying.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the Minister of Labour as well. Two short years ago 10,000 Albertans gathered on the steps of this Legislature in the interests of fairness and equity in labour legislation, and when they saw this minister jump on board the jet to make his world tour, they expected some fairness and equity. But what do we have? Again we have the illusion of fairness, the illusion of equity, but nothing being done for working Albertans.

My question to the minister is this: how does this minister expect his new labour code will reduce labour strife in the province of Alberta when he still maintains the protection of the 25-hour lockout under the terms of the new labour legislation?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is inaccurate in his numbers as usual. He has said we spent millions, and he knows that is wrong; he has just said, "10,000," and he knows that number is wrong.

The situation is that we've had a very thorough review of labour legislation, something that has not been done in this province to that extent before nor, indeed, elsewhere in Canada. The judgment as to whether fairness or equity is present is, of course, one that different people will make. That process will occur during debate.

MR. STRONG: Mr. Speaker, I'd like this minister to go out and talk to some working Albertans to find out just how fair this government is when it comes to decent labour legislation in the province of Alberta.

But supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. How does this minister expect that we are going to create fairness and equity in labour legislation in Alberta when he continues to protect the employers by allowing the use of replacement workers in the province of Alberta?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is indulging in debate upon the legislation. There is a proper place for that at second reading and in committee.

MR. STRONG: Mr. Speaker, I'm not getting into debate. I'm asking the minister why he didn't protect working Albertans in his new labour code, and certainly that isn't debate. These things have been around for a long time.

But supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Does that pose the question, hon. member, or where are we getting to?

MR. STRONG: Can this minister justify the position that he took in regards to not strengthening the spin-off legislation in his new labour code? How is that going to help Albertans?

DR. REID: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the member hasn't realized that the legislation that was introduced in Bill 22 in relation to spin-offs applies to the manufacturing sector where the plant, the equipment the employer, and the employees are at one fixed location. The provisions for the construction industry -- which is his primary concern, I understand -- will be following. They

may well be different for spin-offs, but I'm not going to anticipate that legislation.

MR. STRONG: Again, Mr. Speaker, it's all illusion. There's no reality; there's no action.

Mr. Speaker, who told this minister that by eliminating the right of ordinary Albertans to express their opinions on picket lines . . . Who told him it was a good idea to deny Albertans the right to expression, the freedom of association in joining a picket line that they agree with? Who told you that? Peter Pocklington? It only cost you . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, in the last several minutes we have heard from the hon. Member for St. Albert a litany of what he is concerned about. The hon. gentleman and the party he belongs to are obviously interested in failure in relations between employees and employers. This government and Bills 21 and 22 are aimed at successful relationships between Albertans. We are not interested in his continual . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. minister; you may continue in a moment.

Minister of Labour.

DR. REID: We are not interested in his continual stream of invective; neither are most Albertans. In the legislation that was introduced, there is the concept of fairness and equity for all Albertans, employees and employers, unionized and not. The legislation is aimed at the individual employee and the individual employer. It is not aimed at the narrow interests of a small number of employers and a small number of union executives.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Red Deer-South, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Labour. While the leader of the NDP and the Member for St. Albert were busy getting their marching orders from Dave Werlin, could the Minister of Labour please advise the Assembly how many public submissions he received and how many meetings he was able to attend prior to bringing forward the legislation in Bills 21 and 22?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member brings up an interesting point. Through this 21-month process that I have been involved in on behalf of the people of Alberta, I have had over 600 briefs presented, all of which have been read thoroughly, all of which have been considered. Prior to Bill 60 I had at least 300 meetings with individual Albertans and with groups representing unorganized labour, organized labour, and employers of all sizes and associations, and since last June I have had a further 200 and more meetings with people of that nature. That is a consultative process that has not been equaled in this province, and I'm sure the members of the NDP would never start it.

MR. SPEAKER: Is this a supplementary or the main question, leader of the Liberals?

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may. It's also to the Minister of Labour. Could he inform the House of his reasoning behind the inequitable and unfair and rather an-

tediluvian practice of continuing to forbid the nurses the right to strike?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. gentleman speaks of "antediluvian," he obviously should look in the mirror.

Albertans went through three successive strikes in the hospital field in the late '70s and early '80s, and those who have a memory remember the response of Albertans. They did not appreciate having the hospital system shut down, and it was for that reason that the introduction of no strike in the hospital sector was introduced. That concept is continued in Bill 22; it is continued in a fair and equitable way.

Municipal Liability Insurance

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the main question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, whom I'd like to thank before I ask the question for sending me a copy of the municipal liability insurance report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if local governments are going to provide the type of liability insurance and access to insurance that is reasonable, they need it at reasonable cost. One of the options that was outlined in the report was that possibly there'd be a certain amount of aid from the provincial government. My question is that local governments have been calling for action on this matter for some time. When can they expect some action from the government with respect to liability insurance?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member properly indicates, there is a problem with respect to the cost of insurance to municipalities and school boards in the province. We undertook at the first meeting of the Provincial-Municipal Premier's Council, which met in January and had representatives from each of the municipal associations, to in fact make that decision by September of this year. We committed to that with the municipalities and discussed it thoroughly with them. We intend to keep that time frame.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the second question, then, to the minister. Is this government willing to provide financial guarantees to ensure that the availability of insurance pools for our local government can continue?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have to await the announcement in that regard, once we've gone through the process I have outlined for him in the answer to the first question.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, aside from that, then, to the minister. Is the minister -- because the report did not cover it but it is of active note in other areas -- going to look into the availability of pollution and environmental insurance in reference to the liability factor?

MR. ANDERSON: Environmental insurance is one consideration of the package with respect to those items not currently covered by insuring agencies to municipalities. So, yes, we will be considering that as part of the package and making the decision on that with all of the other program as outlined.

MR. TAYLOR: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The report covers how to finance liability, and I understand you're going to come in and report on liability. But has

the minister considered a possibility of price-fixing or collusion amongst the companies offering liability insurance?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if I fully understood the member's question. If he's speaking to collusion between insuring agencies, at this point in many situations the insuring agencies are funded, of course, from international agencies; sometimes it's national agencies. We know that international events have impact on the insurance rates that take place here, and that's one of the difficulties that municipalities are facing. It is, indeed, one of the problems which municipalities have in the rapidly expanding insurance costs. I may add that school boards have similar difficulties.

DR. BUCK: In looking at some of the alternatives, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the premiums are escalating rather rapidly, have the minister and the members of the municipalities looked at self-insuring? In light of the fact that there are many different levels of government, the possibility could be there for self-insurance.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, Perhaps I should have made that clear at the beginning. The report suggests self-insurance with participation from the province in terms of guaranteeing the initial pool so that municipalities could, in fact, insure themselves collectively after a period of time. So, yes, the proposal is to have municipalities insure themselves. They, in fact, do that to some degree now, but it would require some assistance, at least according to the report, from the provincial government to get it started.

MR. SPEAKER: Stettler.

MR. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister assure the House that in any program of possible self-insurance or any provincial participation in municipal insurance the program will be designed to be actuarially sound?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I can say that the province has no interest in being involved with any project which would see a distortion over the long run either of interest rates or of services to municipalities. We are exploring fully with the municipalities all of the options that are there, and we do intend that any solution which might be proposed which we would participate in would be sound from all points of view.

Husky Oil Upgrader

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Energy. Several weeks ago I asked the question about what progress was being made on the upgrader in Lloydminster. Last weekend, apparently, there was an important meeting held in Regina. Can the minister indicate if there has been any further progress made at this time between the federal and the two provincial governments to try and move ahead the proposed upgrader in Lloydminster?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the three governments -- Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the federal government -- met with Husky a week ago Friday for a good many hours, and we modified the framework that had been initiated in Lloydminster several weeks before. We are now at a point where we essentially have a framework in place that the governments and Husky generally

agree to. However, that agreement calls for the participation of private-sector equity in addition to equity from Husky. We will not have an agreement until we get that equity from other private-sector partners.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In light of the fact that these projects do take some lead time, are we going to have to wait for an announcement of the date of the impending federal election, or are we going to have an announcement before that glorious event takes place?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for the federal government about a pending election, as the hon. member knows. But certainly it's our desire to see this project proceed as quickly as possible, and I don't anticipate it should take very long for Husky to approach the private sector and determine whether or not there will be companies out there that would be prepared to invest.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Can the minister indicate what effect the lack of the upgraders had on the heavy bitumin deposits in the Elk Point area? Has that meant that that project has had to go on a go-slow basis, or is it still moving ahead?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, there has not been any holdup of work in the in situ projects because of the delay in the upgrader at Lloydminster. In fact, there has been, as I indicated in my estimates the other night, over a billion dollars' worth of new announcements with respect to in situ and oil sands projects. Those projects are going ahead, and we're working with other companies with respect to other proposals for developments in the in situ area as well. We want to see both in situ work proceed as well as upgrading occur here in the province.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, the Member for Edmonton-Norwood, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The minister mentioned equity involvement from other private-sector people besides Husky. Could the minister update us on what our involvement is going to be as a stimulus? Are we looking at equity involvement from the provincial government?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the framework that's been put in place -- and it's been indicated publicly that the government's involvement primarily would be based upon covering the debt side of the project. It's our desire to see Husky go out and find other partners to provide the 50 percent equity that's required for the project to go ahead.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you. If the government is in there and participating in respect of guaranteeing the debt, I wonder whether the minister can in turn guarantee that the people of this province will get a piece of the action for any assistance we give and not just get left holding the risk without any benefit, as in so many other projects with which this government is involved.

DR. WEBBER: I was in basic agreement with the hon. member up till the last point that he made, which is obviously wrong.

In the projects we have been involved in in the past -- and a

good example is Syncrude, where the benefits to this province have been substantial; in fact, over a billion dollars' worth of royalties from that project since the project began, as well as many other projects that I can point to. Certainly when we are involved in working with the private sector to see heavy oil development and in situ development proceed in this province, we as a government are prepared to accept some of the downside risk, but at the same time we want to accept and be involved in the upside gain when prices increase. So we are making sure that in any of these agreements we are getting the benefits of higher prices down the road.

Grain Transportation

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Recently the Canadian Grain Commission announced its producer car policy for the 1988-89 crop year. The essential feature of this policy is the mandatory ship to sales program. Would the minister advise the Assembly of the Alberta government's position on this new and more restrictive producer car policy?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we are concerned that the new policy will adversely affect the grain producers within the province and have made that feeling known to both the minister responsible and the Canadian Grain Commission.

MR. BOGLE: Would the minister indicate to the Assembly the kinds of things the Alberta government is looking for in a producer car policy?

MR. ELZINGA: With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I'll quickly go through the five items that we had indicated we felt essential in a grains policy. Number one, we should protect and preserve the right of producers to have access to producer cars. Secondly, we should do everything we can to reduce the constraints that are presently evident as it relates to the usage of producer cars. Number three, we should improve the level of price efficiency in the marketplace. Number four, we should do everything within our power to minimize congestion in our handling system. Finally, we should maintain or increase the level of competition in the marketplace itself.

MR. BOGLE: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister indicate what specific steps he is taking to achieve the Alberta government's policy goals regarding producer cars?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we have taken a threefold process as it relates to indicating our deep concern. One is that I have had personal discussions with the minister responsible, again, the Hon. Charlie Mayer. We have outlined by way of a letter just what I've indicated to the hon. Member for Taber-Waraer. Thirdly, our officials have on an ongoing basis been in contact with the Canadian Grain Commission indicating our deep concern.

MR. FOX: I appreciate that this is a difficult area to deal with, Mr. Speaker, but I'm wondering, if the minister lists as one of his concerns trying to remove congestion in the transportation system, how that could possibly be consistent with his desire that there be greater use of producer cars: more unsold, uncommitted grain clogging the ports and rail lines in Vancouver.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we don't view them as being contradictory whatsoever. Unlike the hon. member we feel that the producer should have greater access to all avenues whereby his income can be increased. We feel that in the event there had been greater consultation prior to this policy being implemented, we could have alleviated a number of concerns that presently do exist with our producers as it relates to the usage of producer cars.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about the minister's clout, because there may be an election coming up this summer or fall. Did he get a commitment from the Hon. Charlie Mayer as to when he will give an answer to his request?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I have not to date received a response to the letter I have written to the minister. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.
Minister of Agriculture.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I have not to date received an answer to the letter that I have written to the federal minister responsible for this, as it was only some few weeks ago that I had corresponded to the federal minister. But when I do, I'm more than happy to have further discussions with the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Strathcona, Edmonton-Gold Bar, Dunvegan, Calgary-Forest Lawn, Vermilion-Viking.

Principal Group

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier or the Treasurer and concerns government policy concerning Code and Principal. Now that the government's own documents are public, that show that by 1984 the government was fully aware that First Investors Corporation and Associated Investors corporation had grossly impaired capital, completely unacceptable accounting practices, and a sales pitch based on a deception suggested by the government's own official, yet took three years to lift the licences, does it still remain the policy of the government to wait until the Code inquiry has run its course before making any acknowledgment of blame?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, implicit in the member's question is an assumption about the outcome of the Code inquiry, and I think it's inappropriate for me to comment about what conclusion Mr. Code will come to, simply because it is clearly under sub judice rule.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, after the Code inquiry itself comes a judgment or order by the judge under the Business Corporations Act. I take it, then, that the government will also wait until that has run its course before considering fessing up.

MR. JOHNSTON: Again, Mr. Speaker, we would obviously follow the order of Mr. Code or the court, and that would obviously be the preferred way to move and, in fact, the responsible way to move.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, in view of the documents that are public and incontrovertible and have nothing to do with the Code inquiry, does the government not consider it sound business sense

to recompense now those who have suffered from its inaction, in exchange for assignments of rights of action from those people, in order to recoup in part or even in whole the loss?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, suddenly the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona has taken over the responsibility of Mr. Code in concluding that the evidence is incontrovertible. That is, in fact, what the public inquiry is about, and that's what is the responsibility of Mr. Code. For us to pre-empt that conclusion is irresponsible.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In recent days we've heard much of Albertans helping Albertans. Is this just brave talk, or does it only apply to important Albertans, or what?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the relevance . . . The NDP wants to have it both ways. They want to be seen to be providing some solutions, but after all, they were the ones who, along with the government, encouraged this public inquiry into the whole question of the Code. And what are to be the results of the Code will be determined by that. For us to deal with one piece of evidence on a day-to-day basis, which seems to be the cursory way in which the NDP has handled this issue, is absolutely irresponsible. There is a much larger context; there are thousands of witnesses being called, and there is a vast amount of paper that has to be examined before we can put into context the reasons for the failure of the Principal Group. Once that is done, this government will respond.

MR. CHUMIR: Is the government considering acknowledging financial responsibility and recompensing investors in any way in light of the report that eight cabinet ministers apparently recognized the failures of the government in licensing these companies to take the life savings of Albertans long after it was obvious to anybody who was looking into this matter carefully that they were bankrupt?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the member gets his information. I know he has a vast research potential over there, but to suggest that he has access to cabinet conclusions is in fact wrong, and to follow the spurious research of others who would suggest that there is some record of the vote in cabinet is absolutely wrong.

The government is fully committed to its course of action. They came to a conclusion with respect to how to proceed, we did it, and we put in place a very reasonable process which will fully provide information as to what's going to happen and what were the causes of the problems in Principal. That's the way we operate. We don't have to work on any kind of specious information, as the member across the way does.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by Dunvegan.

Pay Equity

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Labour. A few minutes ago the minister spoke about his newly introduced legislation as being legislation of "fairness and equity for all Albertans." Well, an increasing number of provinces really understand about fairness and equity and are considering or already have pay equity legislation. Most recently the province of Nova Scotia has joined this group, the Conservative province of Nova Scotia. My question is to the

minister. Will he introduce similar legislation in Alberta this session?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for women's issues is not in the House today, but the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and myself have had considerable discussions on the matter of the gap in average incomes between women and men. Those differences occur both on a total basis and on an hourly basis in some occupations. The difficulty is that the simplistic answer addressed by the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar is only a partial answer to the total matter, and when this government does do anything about the so-called pay gap, it will be a much more thoroughly thought out answer than the one the hon. member is suggesting.

MRS. HEWES: Well, Mr. Speaker, it would at least be a start, and that's something we've been waiting for.

If the minister recognizes the gap, then how on earth does he plan to close that gap, which is now that a woman can earn on average 61 cents for every dollar earned by a man? How do you plan to close that gap in the meantime without legislation?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's statistics for the province of Alberta are wrong. The wage gap, as it is described, contains many factors. There are factors in the professions, such as the seniority of the two sexes in the professions. It is only relatively recently that the number of students taking medicine or law or becoming accountants has become approximately equal. There are gradations in the earnings depending upon seniority in the profession. That same principle applies to other occupations. To address it in the manner that's suggested by the hon. member would distort the whole matter of promotions within a job category.

There are other items that are involved, such as the volitional decisions of individuals as to what job they wish to get into. There are matters of taking time out of the career for family and other obligations. Those are all individual decisions.

What this government is committed to and has worked hard for is for equality of access to education, equality of access to training, equality of access to the job, and equality of access to promotions. That we have done, and there is still a wage gap. Everyone acknowledges that the wage gap exists. What we can do to address that wage gap without preventing those individual decisions that I've just mentioned is difficult to come to. We will arrive at some decisions, and it will be a much more carefully thought out provision than one that addresses approximately 10 percent of the alleged wage gap.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, clearly there are many variables in this whole issue. Has the minister, for instance, done any studies to determine what support there is for pay equity legislation in the civil service in this province?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, within the provincial public service we have a lot of programs that are addressed to encouraging women to take the necessary training to upgrade their occupation, and we assist them with applications for promotions within the public service. That is all going on at the moment. However, we cannot insist that women apply for the jobs. We have statistics, which I think I've made public once before, which relate to the number of applicants at the various levels in

the public service, the percentage of those applicants who are women, and the percentage of women who are appointed to those positions. I can get those numbers updated and give them to the hon. member.

MRS. HEWES: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's clear that it's not working, but the old boys' club certainly is.

Has the minister discussed the need for intervention and legislation in pay equity with business, industry, or labour in the province?

DR. REID: I have had some discussions, and I believe the minister responsible for the women's council has also.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Does he not recognize that in countries where pay equity legislation has been implemented, the wage gap between men and women has been reduced by two-thirds so that women earn nearly 90 cents on the dollar to what men earn?

DR. REID: I have not seen the statistics mentioned by the hon. member, but I am aware of statistics that show that where pay equity has been introduced . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. We'll continue when silence occurs.

DR. REID: . . . there is still a wage gap, and it is a wage gap of about 30 to 35 percent.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary question to the minister. Is the minister aware that the green paper on pay equity -- which the opposition continues to trot out -- with the 38 percent wage factor difference, uses figures that are now approximately 10 years old, and indeed it's that paper that says that only 5 percent of that 38 percent difference in fact is discriminatory?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.
Member for Dunvegan.

Honey Industry

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. As many members of the Assembly realize, 50 percent of the honey production comes from the Peace River country, and also a large percentage of the forage seeds and canola production is in the Peace River country. Can the minister indicate to the House whether the federal government has reviewed its decision to close the border for the importation of bees as a result of the potential spread of the Varroa mite?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I believe officials from the industry met with officials from the federal government in Ottawa on March 23. It was indicated to them at that time that the border would remain closed for this year and that they would reassess it for the following years.

Let me also indicate to the hon. member that we have had

communication from the Alberta Beekeepers' Association with the suggestion whereby we as a province would institute a certification process as it relates to the varroa mite. We are examining that possibility, but I would not wish to leave any false impressions, because this is solely under the jurisdiction of the federal government as it relates to the closure of the border.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Member for Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate what the status of the Alberta Beekeepers' disaster assistance program is?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm more than happy to share with hon. members that in consultation with our Beekeepers' Association we have implemented a \$2.2 million program. It has two components; one is a \$10 per hive payment, and the other is a \$200,000 honey promotional aspect within this program. I'm happy to share with hon. members that to date we have had 260 participants apply for the per hive payment.

MR. CLEGG: Final supplementary question. Can the minister indicate how this program compares to other provinces in Canada?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we are the only province in Canada that has offered support to our ailing honey industry.

MR. SPEAKER: There is one more supplementary available to Dunvegan. There you go. Pass.

Recycled Oil Usage

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, the oil rerefining industry represents an opportunity to create valuable employment by producing high quality oil from waste motor oil. Unfortunately, in spite of the oil drop program only 20 percent of lubricating oil sold in Alberta is recycled. Both the Turbo refining facility in Edmonton and the HUB Oil plant in my constituency face stiff competition from low-priced virgin oil. These companies are now faced with a new challenge: substantially increased costs. They either have to send their waste to the Swan Hills site or add expensive new treatment facilities.

To the Minister of the Environment. Will the minister admit that high disposal charges frustrate the purpose of the Swan Hills facility by forcing hazardous waste into ordinary landfills rather than having it trucked to Swan Hills?

MR. KOWALSKI: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PASHAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that Turbo won't complete its plants to neutralize its acid waste until June and that HUB faces the possibility of closure, leaving waste oil collectors awash with waste motor oil, will the minister explain what alternatives these collectors will have other than pouring it down sewers and drains or spraying it on country roads?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in Canada there are currently three oil refiners. There's one in the province of Ontario and two in the province of Alberta: HUB oil in Calgary and Turbo oil in Edmonton. In the last year we've had ongoing discussion with both firms, and we are continuing discussions with HUB

oil.

MR. PASHAK: Well, that didn't really answer my question, which had to do with: where is all this waste oil going in the meantime?

To the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. In the interest of firming demand for refined oil and ensuring the future of the refining industry in Alberta, will the minister recommend to cabinet that the government buy refined oil for its fleet of vehicles as has been recommended by the Environmental Council of Alberta on page 22 of its report on recycling?

MR. ISLEY: The minister will take your representation under consideration.

MR. PASHAK: I hope I get a better answer than that from the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. But to that minister: since rerefined oil is taxed twice by the federal government -- once as new oil and again as refined oil -- will the minister make representation to the federal government that only the additives in rerefined oil be taxed so that we can make rerefined more competitive and help clean up our environment at the same time?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that's a matter my colleague the Provincial Treasurer will keep in mind when he meets next with the federal Minister of Finance.

MR. SPEAKER: Vermilion-Viking.

Is this a supplementary now, Calgary-Buffalo?

MR. CHUMIR: Yes. I was wondering if perhaps the minister could tell us what he is going to do about the situation in which items such as telephone poles treated by chemicals and other items no longer can be disposed of locally, yet the facilities at Swan Hills are not able to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member; not germane to the original topic.

Vermilion-Viking.

Water Resources Management

DR. WEST: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. The grazing reserve associations of Rannach, Minburn, St. Paul, Smoky Lake, and Wolf Lake pastures have indicated a severe water shortage this spring in both natural areas and dugouts. They fear that the 9,000-plus head of cattle may have to be removed or not admitted at all. What is the department's assessment of this?

MR. SPEAKER: Time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to complete this issue?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.
Minister?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We're certainly aware of the serious situation that's evident in that area right now. The assessment at this point has been from basically the grazing reserve supervisors, who file weekly reports with me, as

well as the MLAs from Vermilion-Viking and Redwater-Andrew and St. Paul, who have brought pictures and everything showing the low dugout water levels that are evident in the area. The assessment we're doing now is to see what options are available and the cost of those options with respect to how effective they would be.

DR. WEST: Supplementary, then. If wells were to be used instead of, say, piping from the North Saskatchewan River or trucking, what numbers and costs are we likely to be talking about?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we haven't rejected the option of piping. At our first consideration of it, it looks like it's fairly costly. As well, the trucking may be a possibility in some isolated areas but maybe not overall. The water problem itself is one I'm working on with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of the Environment, as well as the Minister of Transportation and Utilities, to look at how we could put together a package that may be helpful. But in answer to the member's question, if we were to look at the wells my department advises would likely be necessary to meet it, at \$10,000 a well it could come as high as \$500,000.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vermilion-Viking.

DR. WEST: Yes. Mr. Minister, recognizing the financial strain on the patrons due to the drought, has the minister considered not having mandatory veterinary inspection on each reserve in view of the fact that funding was removed by the Department of Agriculture this year?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I think that's an excellent approach. The Department of Agriculture did fund the veterinary services on the grazing reserves, and it was a mandatory requirement by my department that veterinary services be there to inspect all the cattle as they come in. I have now made the decision, to follow on the advice I've been given by MLAs, that likely that mandatory requirement really isn't necessary and that each grazing reserve would have to make their own decision with respect to veterinary services. Of course, it would be at their own cost, and they would have the right to reject cattle if they are suspect. Each grazing reserve manager and the patrons of that reserve would make that decision.

MR. ELZINGA: To supplement the excellent information my hon. colleague has given to the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking, I can indicate to him that presently we do have a program -- the farm pumping program -- under our department that one could make available to individuals within the grazing reserves. We are presently, as the hon. member indicated, examining further aid toward those areas that are having difficulty as it relates to their water supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the minister of forestry, the original minister, but I'm not so positive he might not need some help here. In view of the fact that a great deal of our water, both out of wells and out of dams, is being used now for commercial purposes, particularly the secondary flooding of oil reservoirs -- and this could be postponed a bit -- has the minister talked with the other ministers involved with

the idea of possibly suspending or cutting down the use of fresh water for industrial purposes wherever possible to get us over this drought area this summer?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I haven't directly in my responsibilities in this portfolio, but the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Agriculture may wish to respond.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the minister. Having had the opportunity yesterday to tour the Ranach community pasture with six of the directors, I can attest firsthand to the very serious water shortage in the area, and I'm wondering if the minister has a commitment from his cabinet colleagues to commit the required amount of extra funding in the event that it's determined necessary to drill some wells on these community pastures.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we'll of course look at all options that would be helpful in the area, but I can't make any commitment on what we would do until we know what the options really are. Each reserve may have to be dealt with on an individual basis rather than overall on all of the reserves, because each circumstance is a little bit different. But I must say that all of them certainly have a severe drought problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Time for question period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Standing Order 40. Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rising under Standing Order 40, which is to express the urgency of the motion, as the Minister of Community and Occupational Health today noted that it was National Volunteer Week, this is in the province of Alberta provincial Education Week. I believe it's important that we recognize at the beginning of this week the importance of those individuals who are professionally involved and in volunteer capacities in our education system. It's important that we recognize them. As MLAs, I'm sure all of us have had the opportunity to visit schools in our constituencies and see the sometimes difficult circumstances teachers find in the classrooms. I know that in Edmonton-Belmont I've had the occasion on numerous times to go into schools and see what teachers have to put up with.

Mr. Speaker, the theme for Education Week this week is lifelong learning, and as there are a number of programs that are being offered by schools throughout the province, I believe this Assembly would be going a step in the right direction to recognize at the beginning of this week the importance of Education Week in Alberta. That's the urgency of this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Standing Order 40 reads that:

A motion may, in case of urgent and pressing necessity previously explained by the mover, be made by unanimous consent of the Assembly without notice having been given . . .

So the request now is: is there unanimous consent of the House for this motion to be discussed? Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion has the necessary approval.

The member for Edmonton-Belmont has made the comments about urgency. Now with respect to the motion.

Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize April 18 to 22 as Education Week in Alberta and commend all those Albertans involved professionally and in various volunteer capacities in the provision of education to our children.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you to all members of the Assembly and to you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important that we recognize the vital role educators, whether they're professionally employed in the system or whether in a volunteer capacity, play in the education of young Albertans. I think that all too often perhaps we fail to recognize their important role in young Albertans' lives. As I noted in speaking to the urgency of the motion, this is a very important week in that it recognizes that education is not something that starts at the age of six and ends at the age of 16, or 18 for those who continue on for grade 12, but it starts very early on and goes throughout our life. This is, as I noted earlier, Education Week and we are dealing with the theme "learning for life," and in that I think it most appropriate that this Legislative Assembly recognize this is indeed Education Week.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Education, I would like to support the motion, having launched provincial Education Week officially this morning in the city of Edmonton. Although I consider every week to be education week, I do feel it's important for us to focus on one particular week each year to recognize the excellent education our teachers, our education administrators, trustees, and Alberta education provide for our children.

I encourage each member of this Legislature and every Albertan to get involved in education. The fact that a good number of citizens do not have students in their kindergarten to grade 12 school system does not mean that they don't have an interest and a responsibility to our students in our system. Our schools provide the atmosphere and the motivation for learning. New initiatives in education include a partnership program with the business community, a distance education project that will assist small rural schools in providing quality education, a new School Act that puts the child at the centre of all necessary legislation, and this is just an overview of the vital advances occurring throughout our education system in Alberta.

Education Week is co-ordinated by a committee comprised of representatives of Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations, the ACCESS Network, and major school boards. Many educators and parents have put a great deal of effort into Education Week, and I congratulate them all.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note that the students who entered grade 1 this year will be graduating in the year 2000. They are truly learning for a life that promises to be even more of a challenge than the times we face today. Our education system must ensure that every student in every corner of this wonderful province has access to the quality education that is the right of every child. Let this House collectively show support for Education Week 1988.

MR. SPEAKER: Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries unanimously.

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply will please come to order.

Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

MR. CHAIRMAN: The responsibilities of the minister are contained on page 205 of the estimates book. Would those members wishing to make comments to the committee please indicate to the Chair.

Hon. minister, it's traditional for the minister to make opening comments to his estimates. Does the hon. minister wish to make opening comments, Mr. Fjordbotten?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Members of the Assembly, it's my pleasure today to present the estimates for 1988-89 of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. It's my belief that the budget I'm about to present reflects the need for fiscal restraint while addressing those areas of my department that require additional funds to enhance and protect our abundant natural resources and provide the stimulus to further diversify our economy.

Before I deal with the estimates, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the deputy minister, Fred McDougall, and his staff for all their efforts. And a special thanks to Klaus Rehaag for the preparation of the budget. His efforts were special, and he came in and put in a lot of extra time. The material that was put together was special and recognizes the importance of the department. I'd also like to thank Don Sparrow for his significant contribution in this department while he was minister. He implemented a lot of excellent programs.

Today, Mr. Chairman, in the gallery I have my deputy, Mr. McDougall; Klaus Rehaag; the new ADM of Fish and Wildlife, Les Cooke; Dave Belyea, Jim Rivait, Tom Mill, and Vonn Bricker, who's the DM's assistant. They're all here to see the estimates debated today.

The Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife has the responsibility for the management, protection, and enhancement of Alberta's wildlife, its public lands, and its forests. All of these public resources must be managed to the benefit of not only the present generation but the future generations that come, and I'm proud of the way this department takes a very balanced approach to that resource management. In all affected areas it ensures that the current use of the resource does not endanger the future use. The management policies ensure that forests and wildlife remain renewable resources in the truest sense.

Mr. Chairman, as the Provincial Treasurer acknowledged in his Budget Address, I'm pleased to report that the efforts of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife represent a major success story in the government's commitment to a balanced

and diversified economy. As an Albertan and as a minister in this government, I'm proud to say that never before in the history of Alberta has such a great opportunity for economic diversification presented itself to us in our forests. In 1987 we had a total forest products value of slightly less than \$1 billion, with employment of about 10,000 people. I'm optimistic that over the next five years we should be able to double that at the very least.

This government, I know, has fought hard to diversify the economy. The forest development division embarked on an unprecedented international marketing campaign to attract investors worldwide in the forestry sector to show them what the Alberta forest resource was all about and how this was the place to invest. That included a mission to the Pacific Rim. It was a trade mission, with our forest industry investment seminar that took place there. That aggressive program has paid off with some handsome dividends with the announcement of several major new worldwide projects that are recognized worldwide and created some 5,000 to 6,000 new, permanent good-paying jobs. I'd like to highlight some of them for you, Mr. Chairman.

The Daishowa of Canada mill. Construction will commence this year on a bleached kraft pulp mill near Peace River. It will have the capacity of 340,000 tonnes per year and will make significant use of Alberta's underutilized aspen resource. Aspen is something that is growing wild; it's been like dandelions, and there was no use for it. Finding a use for that resource that can regenerate itself and generate in the process over 1,800 direct and indirect jobs I think is something that we can be proud of and is recognized worldwide. Without the leadership and assistance of the government I don't think that project would have gone forward.

Champion is another one that I think is excellent. The construction is already under way on doubling the capacity of that mill located at Hinton. When it's completed, the mill will have a capacity of 385,000 tonnes a year and generate over 1,300 direct and indirect jobs. The construction costs on that mill alone are some \$340 million.

Millar Western. Construction has commenced on a chemi-mechanical pulp mill in Whitecourt that has a capacity of 210,000 tonnes a year. I was there a few weeks ago and was impressed with the work that's already been under way. In fact the mill looks bigger than I expected. That project will create 1,100 direct and indirect jobs and has an investment in construction of some \$200 million.

Alberta Newsprint. Later this year construction will commence on a newsprint mill at Whitecourt. The mill will have a capacity of 220,000 tonnes of newsprint. That's excellent because it's the first one in Alberta to have newsprint. Some of our papers have asked if they will be getting their newsprint from that mill, and I said, "Only if we can preprint it you know, in some way." Nevertheless, undoubtedly some will find their way into the Alberta marketplace. But it is something that -- we have the resource, and that's an excellent job generator: 370 direct jobs and 750 indirect and \$360 million in investment.

It's nice to know when you go around that you can tell everyone Alberta is open for business, Mr. Chairman. We want to promote the full utilization of Alberta's forests and strive to address the many concerns and roadblocks in development. At the recent forest industry investment seminar that we held in Edmonton, there was a common concern raised. The future of further forestry development in the province is limited only by two factors: they raised them over and over again. One was transportation facilities; the other one was infrastructure. Part of

that concern now has been addressed through the Roads to Resources program which has been established in the department of transportation in co-operation with the Alberta Forest Service. That Roads to Resources program is going to provide funding for the development of multi-use access roads to unopened land. I emphasize "multi-use," because the associated expenditures are not solely directed at the forest industry but are there to benefit all Albertans.

One of the most important factors that has attracted the boom in the forest investment in Alberta is our renowned forest management record. The Alberta Forest Service is responsible for responsible management and sound management of our forests in order to provide a wealth of social and economic benefits. The Forest Service operates some of the most effective environmental and reforestation programs in Canada and established a forest management record that's second to none. In reforestation of cut-over areas in Alberta, we have now shown in our surveys that 96 percent of all forested areas that were cut have been reforested to meet the very high standards we have. I ask, "Why not 100 percent?" Ninety-six percent's wonderful; we should be able to hit 100 percent. But we have a dedication to that task of renewing our forests. I look at the Pine Ridge Forestry Nursery and it's the most modern and complete facility of its kind in North America. Last summer, right after I was appointed minister, some American senators and congressmen that were here were impressed and wanted to know how they could duplicate a facility like that, because it's the only facility that complete and that modern of its kind in North America. It's capable of producing up to 38 million seedlings annually for use in reforestation projects.

To underline how I feel about the future of our commitment to our forests, Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to announce that there's a \$6.2 million program aimed at forest rejuvenation and \$500,000 for a research and development program. So there should be no doubt in anyone's mind of our commitment to protecting and enhancing our natural resources. We've also recognized that forest management encompasses not only the needs of productive forests' land base but includes the protection and management of certain areas that have been set aside to ensure conservation of what is really, I would think, unique and representative of our natural features. And there are many varied aspects to that.

Our forest management in Alberta will be fully described in a magazine. I don't think we're getting our message out well enough. People don't understand what we mean by reforestation. They have a feeling that when we're cutting our timber, we're cutting all our trees. We're not cutting all our trees. It's reforestation that we're on, and we care about the environment the water, the watershed, wildlife habitat, and making sure we have better forests for the generations ahead. This magazine that will be coming out during Forestry Week hopefully will highlight to Albertans everywhere exactly what we mean by forest management.

I'd like to spend just a couple of moments on the Alberta fire detection and response time. I must say that that is really the envy of the nation. We've invested very heavily in developing one of the most sophisticated fire suppression systems in Canada. This year we've taken two more CL-215 water bombers, and that will bring our total complement to four. We have the most advanced technology for use in early detection and suppression of wild fires, and this technology includes a world-class automatic lightning detection system, an automatic weather intelligence system, and the addition of rappel capabil-

ity to our heli-tech operations, plus a number of new equipment items. We've introduced a new preparedness system which will see the placement of human resources -- that may be fire equipment and transport in the way of helicopters. We're putting those in areas of high fire hazard in advance of fire occurring, not waiting till it happens and then trying to get there. We're positioning those in areas where there's a high fire hazard. It was introduced in 1982, and it's really paid untold dividends. The system is the envy of jurisdictions all over North America.

I didn't really appreciate it until I talked to some members from Washington and Oregon. We went down and helped them with fighting some of their fires this last year. When they were here, they were so impressed with what they saw and the capability we had and would like to copy it. One of the questions asked of me was: "How come, when it's this dry this year, you're not putting more money in your budget? Shouldn't you have more money in there?" You'll notice in the budget this year that based on historical forecasting -- and I'm as concerned as anyone else about dry conditions. I'm not trying to minimize that at all, but it's very hard to base a forecast on the whole year on what you have in April of one year. Hopefully, if we get rain, everything could change significantly, and with the south-
era two-thirds of the province now with the snow cover gone, it's still damp enough that it's not critical. But if I need more money, you can be sure I'm going to be going after the Provincial Treasurer for more. Hopefully, we won't need more, but I certainly won't be shy about doing that to protect our resources.

Also, this year's budget reaffirms the commitment to our fish and wildlife resources. If you look at the Forestry, Lands and Wildlife budget if you look overall, the reductions of the past several years in support of our deficit reduction program generally across government, we have really done our share. But the Fish and Wildlife division has really been sheltered from the effects of those reductions. If you look at the wildlife budget contained in the estimates, it fails to reveal a couple of things. It fails to reveal the additional funding of \$2.6 million that's available from the separate Buck for Wildlife Trust fund and \$1.7 million that's budgeted in the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services for capital projects and land assembly. There's two areas there that don't show up in the budget but are directly related to this division.

The reductions in the Fish and Wildlife division have been structured to maintain the field capabilities required to protect the fish and wildlife resource. I'd like to emphasize there's been no proposed reduction in the number of uniformed officers for 1988-89. I don't have enough of them; everyone agrees with that. But I don't know if you could have enough to put all across the province. I think our 1-800 hot line number is going a fair distance, and we have to improve even more our radio telecommunications system for the field officers. We need to have that field capability, because one of the areas there is a concern about -- and we have to deal with it and should put it right up front and talk about it -- is that we can do all we want with hunting regulations, we can do all we want with fishing regulations, we can do all we want about trying to manage on who gets what but what about the stuff that's taken illegally? What are we going to do about that? It is very, very serious. It's an issue that needs to be taken on and we need to work on. I intend to do that, and I'm hoping to get enough support and help and advice -- and I'm sure I'll get the latter for sure -- to try and deal with this issue and take it on, because I'm absolutely convinced in my own mind that if we don't deal with that issue, it's going to put a very critical pressure on our wildlife resources in

this province.

We are also continuing to improve our capabilities for detecting poachers at the present time, but I don't think even with the 1-800 hot line and 24-hour capability . . . During this last year we've had 1,473 violations that were reported, and there were 357 charges issued by our special investigations unit. But you know, the strange thing is that you can put on a simulated illegal activity and make sure the people see you and they won't report it. I mean, we could have a lot of officers out there -- I'm not asking for every Albertan to be a super snoop and do those things, but I think there has to be some recognition to make sure we all do our bit to try and take on the poaching and everything that's taking place.

One of the other areas I spent a fair amount of time on is the outfitter guide industry in this last year. That's been a tough one to deal with. We're working now on a new outfitter guide policy that'll be based on five fundamental principles. Principle one is the protection of the resource; secondly, the priority for the resident hunter; thirdly, improved landowner relations; fourthly, an improved international reputation for the industry; and fifthly, enhanced enforcement of existing legislation and the creation of a new umbrella association to bring the industry together. Working with those principles and working with industry, I think we can get the industry to be more self-regulating. I think we can end up with something that will be a solution, where the outfitter guides in this province as well as the recreational hunter will be able to live together in relative peace.

I'd like to make a comment about the Brooks Wildlife Centre, Mr. Chairman. The wildlife management budget relates only to the Brooks Wildlife Centre, and the Brooks Wildlife Centre's budget has been reduced by 19.8 percent or \$109,904. I'm currently soliciting proposals -- or my department is -- to look at ways that we might be able to privatize that pheasant production program. Now, I want to enhance the pheasant population in Alberta; I don't want to diminish it at all. We want to continue with all our pheasant programs, and we will. The private operation will only provide the opportunity to explore for potential or expanded production for sale -- it might be to residents or private shooting or to private raisers. And I think we need to work hard to see how we can enhance that. When I looked at what it cost per bird shot that are raised in that facility, I was horrified, and I don't know how we can warrant that I want to see it increased even more as far as the number of pheasants and how we go about it and I think the private-sector way and working with them -- I think we can get it done.

Fishing operations is another one that creates a lot of demands. That's with recreational fishermen. Our policy for commercial fishing in Alberta is to create a business environment which supports a viable, commercial fishing industry where there are significant stocks available. Allocation of fish stocks to commercial fishermen is a matter of concern to some 450,000 sports fishermen and to Indian subsistence as well. It is our policy to allocate highly desirable game species first to Indian fishermen as required by law and treaty, second to the sports fishermen, and commercial fishermen receive a third priority in the fish allocation.

In 1987 we introduced a new commercial fishing licence system to help the industry consolidate their fishing privileges into a smaller number of more viable businesses. That's been the problem right now, when you have pressure on a resource. You start out where it's really not necessary, but the more the population is, the more people you get into it, and there's not enough

resource to be able to handle everyone. We're not at that point in any serious way yet but it's one that we certainly have to recognize. Department staff are working on a fish allocation policy which will provide some clear guidelines to use in resolving disputes between commercial fishermen and sports fishing industries on lakes, and I hope I'll have that ready for the 1989-90 fishing season. It's going to take some time to develop it. The policy across the province is a little different, depending on what lake, and there is a wide variety of reasons for that. But those are areas that we need to work on.

If you look in the budget, you'll all see that we were able to eliminate one division, and that was the resource evaluation and planning division. We amalgamated that with other responsibilities. We have some administrative savings with that and also some amalgamation of some responsibilities that took place. The public land division has assumed responsibility for the planning function, and the balance of the resource evaluation functions were transferred to the land information services division.

One other thing that amazed me is that 62 percent of Alberta's land is Crown owned. The public land division is responsible for the management of that land, and the division must determine the suitability of Crown land for various uses. That role is further enhanced by the inclusion of the planning function within the division.

The land information services division is an area that really excites me when I think about it. It's one that I think is special and I think has a great future, because Alberta has a reputation of being a world leader in development of land-related information systems. This reputation is based really on a co-operative and co-ordinated approach involving the private sector, the municipal governments, and provincial government departments. Some of the major successful developments include a land status automation system which manages records of the lands owned by the provincial government. It was developed at a cost of \$5.8 million, and this system is now providing an automatic economic benefit to the province of some \$2.8 million a year. So it's very cost-effective when you consider the investment that was made and the returns that are there now.

Alberta government's urban and provincial base-mapping programs are using state of the art computers and mapping techniques now. When you look at what we're doing in mapping, one thing that always amazed me was that if you make a map and make a change tomorrow, the map is obsolete, so you've got to produce another map. It never made sense to me. Or you have different departments creating different maps for doing different things. In my view it only makes common sense to have one system -- a land-related information system -- that's updated daily, whether you're at the Land Titles Office or where you're at. So if you want to know about a piece of land, you press a button -- after you pay your dollar or whatever it is, because there'll have to be a user fee on it -- and you will be able to know everything about that piece of land updated to the minute. You don't have to worry, "Have I got the right map?" or "Is this the right . . ." I think there has to be an approach used, and I'm working hard to try and see that put into place. It takes some extra dollars to do it and co-ordination with other ministers. I've come a long way with that co-ordination; I've got just about all of them that are involved to agree, and now we need to make the next steps working with the industry. I don't think we need to create more bureaucracy to run it. I think a lot of that work can be farmed to the private sector, and we can work it so that we're not creating some kind of monster but will

create something that'll work for everyone.

I'm really proud when I look at what we've been able to do with our administration. We reduced it by 6.2 percent. In addition to that, the department has really absorbed the cost increases associated with inflation, and due in part to the success of our early retirement program our full-time equivalent employment will be reduced by 123.9 man-years or 4.9 percent. I don't think there'll be any layoffs, and if there are, they'll be minimal to achieve the staff reductions. We hope to do it through attrition or redeployment.

Mr. Chairman, there are many progressive programs in fiscal management and leadership, and I have confidence in the underlying themes that are in this budget. At this point I'd be happy to hear any comments or take any questions the members might have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of points to raise under Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. It's certainly an area of concern. At the outset I would state that I look with a little more optimism on what might happen in the department than I did in the past, and I believe this minister may be a change for the better in this particular department. He will, I am sure, forgive me if over the next 25 minutes or so I don't say too many complimentary things in terms of the department and what's happening. It's not because they're not there, and it's not because I couldn't find them to say; it's because I see my job as pointing out the problem areas. I'll leave it up to members opposite to get up and point out the good points.

Under forest fire protection, it's an issue I did question in question period, and the minister has alleviated a number of my concerns already in his opening remarks. One thing I would like to do, though, is answer the minister's question or challenge to me to state where it was I got the prediction that this would be a bad year. Number one, I used the prediction of the minister of dam development that the drying trend in southern Alberta justified the spending of \$900 million on the Oldman dam, and I predict \$900 million based on the average history of dams in the province, which is that they end up costing 249 percent, approximately, of their original estimate. I also base my prediction on plans of the Minister of Agriculture who has announced, in fact on the same day in question period, an array of plans he is putting in place as a contingency just in case the very dry summer that is predicted does come through, and he thought it wise to have contingencies in place for that. The Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife had his own newsletter come out in March of this year talking about their plans to attack holdover fires from the previous year, so the department must have, in fact, been predicting it and looking at some contingency plans.

So I think it's fair to say we all understand it is common sense to predict that unless there are some surprises, climatically speaking, this is going to be a touch-and-go year for fires, and our first attack capability had better be in place. I agree with the minister that Alberta probably has the best there is in terms of that quick response capability for forest fires. I think it's something we should be proud of, and my original concern in looking at the budget was that we may be endangering the efficiency of the system and in a spring like this even a very small reduction in that capability could be disastrous.

As I understand it now, basically what we see is a budgeting exercise whereby we say we will budget for an average year.

Even though one might logically predict it's going to be worse, we'll budget for that, and if we need to spend more, then the special warrants will be there. That certainly isn't nearly as important a consideration as the possibility that we would lose our ability to put out fires before they get out of hand.

I have some questions on Forest Resources Management. I see only an increase of 1.3 percent overall, and considering the extent of expansion in the forest industry, which should expand provincial income to some extent I'm wondering if the minister feels that that, in fact, might be adequate for the present and future expansions the government is looking at. I campaigned a couple of years ago on the need for expansion of the forestry industry, and I would hate to see this area of the budget underplayed to the extent where those expansions can't be handled in the best possible way.

Under Forest Land Use, I'm wondering how the minister can cut the area overall by 17.7 percent and yet increase Administrative Support by 24.7 percent. It seems to me rather illogical to increase Administrative Support when one must obviously be decreasing services if there's an overall decrease. It would seem to me it should also decrease the need for Administrative Support unless there's going to be a need for administering some of the problems that grow out of that cut overall.

Most serious, I see a cut of just about 63 percent in Watershed Management. We received concerns and representations from many people about logging of watersheds. Certainly many groups have recognized watershed mismanagement -- as they described it -- as one of the causes for flooding on the Pembina River. That is partly the problem, that everything melts off so quickly because watersheds haven't been maintained well enough. One of the strongest arguments for the Oldman dam is that much of the watershed is no longer there. It has been logged or is being logged, and therefore the melt off comes so quickly and is gone so quickly and the drying trend is exacerbated seriously. So in view of increased forestry activity and forest industry I think that Watershed Management if anything, should be increased. It's a vital area to preserve, those watershed areas, and I don't see how it can be cut at all.

I also have a concern about Recreation Area Operation and Maintenance. It's been cut by nearly 20 percent and I see those recreation areas as being vital to the tourist industry in outlying areas. A cut in maintenance and operation is going to cause problems that may exacerbate concerns about vandalism, about just general running down of them, about them not being as appealing then to tourists, and so on. So I would really worry about the effect this cut would have. I wonder if the minister has studied what effects such a cut might have on some of the smaller communities who really appreciate having the recreation areas in their vicinity. It would seem to me to be something that would be cause for some difficulty for some small businesses in those small towns.

I'm also wondering about the cut in the budget for the rest of that Recreation Area Capital Construction. It's been cut to zero from almost \$300,000. Does that indicate the finish of a single project or is it just that there are no plans for major construction of recreation areas this year but we may see it back in the budget next year? I'm wondering if that's a long-term or a short-term item in the budget.

For Reforestation and Reclamation I see an increase of 55 percent, and if I agreed with everywhere that the increases are going, then I would say again, in light of industry expansion, this is a very good idea. We do see a 27 percent increase in Administrative Support and I would appreciate an explanation of

that. Are the additional forest industries, the special ones maybe planned for a few years down the road, going to necessitate increased administration? If so, that would seem reasonable. If we're going to create the industry and have to administer the forest resources which belong to the public, then we might need an increase there, but I would need an explanation.

A 42 percent increase in Reclamation. Again, that might be a good idea, but I'm wondering if this involves the taxpayers doing reclamation that maybe should have been the responsibility of industry. So the minister may be able to explain that for me. I'm wondering if it'll be offset by increased income from the forest industries.

Under Silviculture I see over \$6 million, and that's a brand-new line in the budget. My concern would be -- and it's a concern that might be even greater after meetings I've had with proponents of what they describe as silviculture -- my concern is that most of that would go towards the promotion of forest spraying or, in other words, using Roundup to control the aspen, grasses, shrubs, and so on that compete with the replanted evergreens. My opinion of using chemicals on forest areas is public and well known, and I don't think I have to impress that upon the minister. I'm certain that the Coalition for Forest Spray Alternatives will continue to do it over and over again until the government sees the light and ceases spraying those chemicals on forest areas. So I'm concerned about how much of that money will, in fact, go into promotion and active spraying of forest areas, and I would hope we would look at other methods of silviculture.

I'm very concerned that we do not start to view our forests as farms, because they're not. With a barley crop you spray the competition and wipe it out. With a forest, part of the competition is the best feed and support for wildlife that has to live in that ecosystem as well. We have to see the forest as an overall ecosystem, not a farm, and because of that we have to recognize that the methods that apply to a farm do not necessarily apply to that ecosystem. So I would ask for the minister's response on that.

Under Public Lands Management I do have a few questions. First, I would like the minister to clarify the department's policy as it pertains to the previous plans to privatize Crown lease lands. Does that policy still hold? Has it been discarded? Now, I know it's been put on hold temporarily. I'm wondering if that will be a permanent hold on it or not. The public hearing process certainly told the government very plainly that the public did not want those public lands sold, that they want them retained as publicly owned lands there for public recreation and public use. I think that's very important, and I hope the government will heed it.

I had one question about the \$2.5 million spent disposing of land. Although I am not one of the world's great real estate entrepreneurs -- and I won't give you all the details on that, but I can guarantee you it's true -- it still seems to me that one of the aims of disposing of land is to make income, not to spend money. So I'm wondering what it is about that. There may be some aspect of it I don't understand, but I'm wondering how we lost \$2.5 million disposing of Crown land. It would seem to me a bad way to do business.

Under game ranching -- and the minister didn't mention it partly because the government is again officially on record as putting a hold for one more year on game ranching. I would like to make a few comments and ask the minister to respond to them though. The extent of game farming in the province indicates that the government is very much planning to go ahead

with game ranching. It's just a case of time in allowing the game farmers to develop the breeding stock before we're even ready to go into large-scale game ranching. So it's not necessary to face the public flack at this moment by going ahead and announcing we're doing it. We can wait until those getting into the game farming have developed the breeding stock.

I think the whole concept of game ranching ignores the lessons of history. Early in this century large game was on the decline in all of North America, and that was happening because we put a value on and allowed the sale of dead wildlife. It almost caused the extinction of the buffalo and was causing decimation of herds of other big game. It was only the wisdom of conservationists and governments of that time, who made it illegal to profit from the sale of dead wildlife for anybody and brought all wildlife into the domain of public ownership, that we still have those herds. Otherwise -- I believe in fact that wildlife in North America would have been devastated as badly as it has been on other continents. So I would like the minister's comments on what he has planned.

What I see developing is a case where those with the right connections are getting in on the ground floor of developing the breeding stock through game farming, and it's not just in one case. I won't offend the Minister of Agriculture by bringing up that one; I accept his contention that, in fact, his relative was into the game farming thing long before he became Minister of Agriculture here. In fact it proves my contention that this is a long-term project of the government: we're in the process of developing the breeding stock. Good Tories are getting in on the ground floor, and they'll sell other desperate farmers overpriced breeding stock to get in on what looks like a good thing.

Someone should warn the minister that in fact one of the most lucrative markets -- that being the Oriental medicinal market -- is starting to dry up. It's starting to dry up because more and more Orientals are turning to Western medicine and abandoning the old traditional medicines. Very likely by the time a lot of our farmers have hocked the home quarter getting in for a game ranch, they're going to find that those markets are drying up quite badly. Then the minister is going to be faced with very strong pressure to license and okay paid hunting behind fences, and in fact various cattlemen's groups are already pushing the government on that line, from what I've heard. So I'd like the minister's assurance that that will never be the case in Alberta and he will make sure there is never paid hunting behind fences in Alberta.

To the question of economic value of wildlife, I would argue that wildlife is more valuable as publicly owned live animals than as domestic animals for slaughter, which is what game ranching is all about. I would also argue that you have to choose. Do you want a species to be domestic or wild? Once you domesticate it, it is inevitable that through poaching, through disease, that could be checked in a domestic animal but can't be checked in wild herds nearly as easily without horrendous expense, it will become only a domestic species. That's why we don't have wild cattle; they're a domestic species. That is what will happen to elk, inevitably, in this province if we go for elk ranching.

[Mr. Musgrave in the Chair]

I would also ask the minister who's going to foot the bill for the armed force that will be required to protect the wild herds remaining, that aren't in captivity, from poachers? Because it will be widespread once it's legal to sell the meat, and it

will be almost impossible to distinguish which was slaughtered and taken from an animal on a game ranch and which came from the wild. We even run into things, where elk ranching is legal, where you have twins being born in captivity. The fact is, elk do not have twins, according to biologists I have talked to. There's only one reasonable explanation of how they come up with these twins, and that is that the elk rancher went out into the wild, shot the cow, brought the calf home, put it on one of his, and he says he's got twins.

A comment made by a world renowned scientist in terms of game ranching and the problems that kind of exploitation of wildlife creates is that one country in Europe that has private ownership of game and game ranching has an armed force to protect that wildlife. That might be able to challenge the Canadian military. I think we're looking at -- although I'm sure that was an exaggeration for effect, although I have no way of knowing. It might have in fact been absolutely true.

I do have concerns that the cost of enforcement will be more than the government can bear, and I'm wondering if that tremendous cost will be borne by the game ranchers who make it necessary, not by the taxpayers who are so strongly opposed to the whole idea in the first place.

On the opening of Highway 40 on a permanent basis, I would like to ask the minister to give his assurance that Highway 40 will not be opened on a permanent basis. I know he's under pressure to do so. In a minister's response form from the previous minister there was the statement in instructions on preparing a memo to a couple of ministers, "If they wish to open it, they all should be ready for the backlash." And then, in the memo itself that Don Sparrow sent to the minister of transportation concerning that Highway 40 through Highwood Pass, he said:

I do not believe we are in a sound position to consider the issue of year round opening of the road as advocated by some individuals and groups. In my judgment we must demonstrate commitment to government approved plans if we are to lend credibility to the public consultation and planning process.

And later he said:

It is, to the best of my information and understanding, a very important winter range that can be defended by experts as "critical." The Assistant Deputy Minister for Fish and Wildlife in a recent communication stated "it is a matter of scientific record the area is virtually a wintering wildlife 'mecca'."

So I would ask the minister to assure us that that commitment by the previous minister will be upheld and Highway 40 will never be considered for opening year round through the winter. I think it would be a horrible thing to do to that wildlife range through the winter.

The minister did make me feel a little better on the guides and outfitters situation; I've been waiting for something to come out about that. I again publicly criticized the initial policy that the previous minister suggested some time ago. I saw it as being extremely dangerous both to the industry and to the wildlife resource. It was tabled. I was prepared to but won't go through the hunting report from New York about the situation in Alberta. They see it quite negatively. So I'm glad to see the minister wants to not just advertise in the States about how wonderful it is but actually do something about the outfitting industry that will earn us the kind of international reputation that will bring that outfitting business back, because it's an extremely shaky situation right now. Nobody seems to know where it's going, and I hope the minister is going to very quickly be giving us some idea of what the policy is so we can look at it. I hope, for instance, it will not include some of the previous problems

of the transferability of the outfitter's licence and a quota or block of permits from one outfitter to another, especially not to outfitters who are not Alberta residents and Canadian citizens. I think those kinds of things were quite unfortunate in the first policy.

In terms of the Alberta Newsprint mill, the mill has raised a number of concerns. One specifically that relates most to this minister is the forest management area, including a very significant portion of the Berland forest area critical caribou habitat as identified by his own department officials. It's a significant portion of the habitat for caribou in that area, but it's an insignificant portion of the entire FMA, and I believe it could be withdrawn quite easily from the FMA without endangering the viability of the project. I would like to see the EIA include the forest cutting. To me, an environmental impact assessment of a forest industry that does not include scrutiny of the forest management agreement and the forest cutting is not a realistic environmental impact assessment.

I will make a suggestion to the minister for his consideration on what could be done to make up the loss of forest area by just taking that out and that is: require the plant to include a de-inking process and the use of de-ink to newsprint. That can be done to up to 5 or even, 10 percent of the pulp. That would have a number of benefits: one, it would definitely negate any argument that that forest area, that caribou habitat must be included in the FMA; it would provide a number of small business opportunities in Edmonton and Calgary and surrounding areas for the collection of newsprint and the transportation of it to the plant; and it would certainly prove our commitment to recycling, a commitment about which we've heard a lot of words but I don't believe we've seen sufficient action. So I would urge the minister to consider that possibility, to consult with the industry and see if it's feasible. Certainly, people in the industry have told me it's not that significant a cost in the overall industry, in the overall building of a plant of that magnitude. So I would really like to see some consideration of that.

In terms of the Daishowa mill, there are a lot of concerns about that. It seems that the Minister of the Environment is waiting for a deficiency statement concerning the environmental impact assessment, that there are some problems not dealt with. Certainly I feel quite angry about being told it's a state of the art mill that will have the best standards in the world, and then hearing, in fact that it doesn't even meet the standards that would be required of it if it was built in Japan, that it will not meet the standards set by Champion Forest Products in Hinton, once they've finished their refit -- they will include some things that are superior to what is suggested by what is included in the Daishowa engineering diagrams -- and, in fact that the original Daishowa engineering diagram did not even include the oxygen delignification. When the glossy brochure came out the glossy picture didn't include it; the stapled-in, black-and-white one did. Now, my presumption is that that was added in after the initial planning stages due to public pressure from a number of sources. The minister is shaking no, but I'm wondering why they had to staple in a different one, a black-and-white photocopy in that case.

I'm wondering also if the minister is pushing for a settlement of the Lubicon dispute before things go ahead, and if, in fact he isn't concerned about rumours that site clearing is virtually under way or certainly will be very soon. And again that is being checked out. I'm not sure whether it is, or he's just going to go ahead in a week or two -- but that it may well go ahead before the permits under the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act could

be granted, and I'm sure this minister would want to see a forest industry start on better ground than that.

The whole dioxin issue must be addressed, addressed totally and addressed completely, including the testing of the minister's samples, I think, if people are going to feel comfortable with pulp expansions in Alberta. Now, my concern is twofold. One, I'm concerned about the environment, because I'm a critic for that area and I'm a staunch and long-time environmentalist. The other one is that I'm concerned that the backlash from environmentalists who understand the dioxin danger and are very afraid of it will endanger the viability of either this expansion or perhaps future ones; that the kind of outcry there is bound to be if the government doesn't handle those concerns adequately is going to lead to future industries being a little nervous about coming here. So I think it's incumbent upon the government to handle every environmental concern right from the outset, and handle it adequately. I feel that the dioxin issue has been handled appallingly rather than adequately. And for the minister, for instance, to say that he's not testing the samples because there are no protocols, when samples have been tested for more than a couple of years in other countries and the protocols are widely accepted even by the industry that has been most publicly damaged by the results -- they have never questioned the protocols by which the results were obtained, so I think for the minister to say the protocols are inadequate is ludicrous. I hope this minister will be lobbying not to endanger the potential success of these very valuable expansions in our forest industry by doing an inadequate job of handling those.

With that I would await the minister's response.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Cardston.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to make a few comments and hopefully give the minister some insight into some problems having to do with wildlife and also to compliment his department on some of the programs they initiated last year which were helpful in wildlife damage. As most of us know, there is a problem with controlling wildlife damage along the foothills east of the Rockies. Most of it is centred around the grizzly bear problem. I think all of us are in agreement that we do not want to see the grizzly bear destroyed, but we have to work out some compromise where both man and bear can survive. We are not talking about just damage to livestock on Crown lease land by grizzly bears but on private deeded land. Last season the wildlife officers did an excellent job of moving in when the damage to cattle became very high in that area and trapped them and moved them out and helped in whatever way they could. They were quite effective, but when the books were closed in the fall, there were a lot of animals missing and dead, and then that moves over into the compensation area. I guess my question to the minister is: is he working on a program that we could have as an ongoing program to control this kind of damage, to lessen the loss to livestock?

One of the other problems that comes into play is that in order for a rancher to claim damage or the loss of an animal, he must have a confirmed kill, which means that he has to find that animal within a day or so or otherwise the bear will have devoured it or buried it. It's causing the ranchers to have to ride that country almost daily. When they get too busy, they're sending their young sons in on horseback to ride in that country. I have a lot of concern over the potential for a drastic accident in the way of a bear spooking a horse and the boy being unseated, and we can guess the rest of the story. When we have this kind

of an arrangement where they must have a proven kill to receive compensation, they don't have any choice but to put people into that range country on an almost daily basis to find that. So I think we need to be looking at something to alleviate that danger.

The second thing that I'd like to talk about has to do with the damage that's done by geese in that same area, in that geese seem to have lost their natural tendency to fly south in the summer; by south I mean way south. They just fly as far as southern Alberta and land on the big lakes and nest there. Some of the lakes are habitat for upwards of 1,000 geese. When they come off the lake in the morning and go up over the hill, they're like a mowing machine.

MR. TAYLOR: That's because the minister gives them sewage lagoons to land on down there.

MR. ADY: We'll build some of those for them right away.

They're like a mowing machine, and the natural pasture is being annihilated by geese and ducks. Now, again we have a protected species there. You can't go out and arbitrarily shoot geese in the middle of the summer when their young are with them. Consequently, the adjacent ranchers are absorbing the damage there, and it's becoming too onerous for them to continue absorbing that, so hopefully we could come up with some kind of a program. It would have to be some sort of a compensation program, because there isn't much that can be done to move the geese if they're not of a mind to be moved. They just move over to the next neighbour's lake and do the same thing to him the next morning. So hopefully under some Alberta hail and crop insurance plan we could work out something. Perhaps the Wildlife people would be prepared to participate with part of the premium, and we could come up with a program that would alleviate this serious problem in the south.

Of course, the danger of not doing anything in these two areas is to put the birds and the animals at risk, because people do have a tendency to take care of what's theirs. We've been able to get good co-operation thus far from the local ranchers and farmers, and I would like to see that stay in place. I believe if we move and act fairly soon, we can alleviate a problem that could get much worse.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Speaking to the estimates of the minister's department, you hear so much of this, especially from the government bench over there: "We're number one; we're number one." It's a little bit like the Washington Capitals out there waving that they're number one, they're number one, year after year. One of the things to look at, for instance, is the percentage of the budget spent on Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Let's take them per capita. Alberta ranks behind B.C., Manitoba, and Newfoundland. We're number four as far as budget per capita spent on forests and wildlife. We're always very fond of saying how much we spend, but Alberta should be spending as much per capita as Newfoundland, for sure, and as much or more than Manitoba. It looks even worse if we take it as a percentage of the total budget. Alberta is running around 1.49, B.C. 4.25, and Manitoba 1.7. Even New Brunswick comes close with 1.25. Here's Newfoundland again, neck and neck with us. Ontario spends more than we do: 1.52.

So the idea that this is a government that looks after its wildlife, forestry, and lands better than any province in Canada should be disabused.

Now, let's go on issue by issue. One of the things that bothers me in this province is the whole issue of sportfishing. I don't think this government is doing what it should do in keeping our lakes fresh, making sure that the dioxin that comes from pulp mills is under control. I notice that for some reason or another Saskatchewan has put out what dioxins are present in their fish; Manitoba and Ontario have. But Alberta still goes through a song and dance that only the Minister of the Environment is capable of when you try to question his department as to what they're doing about dioxins in fish.

But to move on further, there's the question the minister has of the meat plant and the sewage or the untreated residue of the plant -- I guess sewage is hardly the right word -- from Cargill that's supposed to be pipelined over to the Bow River. I'm not sure exactly what will happen, but that also sets up another side to that that the minister might care to remark on. It's my understanding -- and I may be wrong, and he could advise me if I am wrong -- that the Cargill plant is going to depend for their water input on drilling water wells in the High River area and tapping into the aquifer, which leads me into one of my pets.

I happen to come from and was born and raised in an area south of Bow Island where in dry years you could even see the rattlesnakes' ribs sticking out. Macleod, which is supposed to be dry, was considered a land of milk and honey compared to Bow Island, which of course now has irrigation. As a matter of fact, we had many a dog that lived, flourished, thrived, and died at the ripe old age of 14 or 16 having never seen a tree. So the minister knows that I come from an area that really puts a great deal of value on water. Now, the water part -- I notice the Member for Chinook grinning. I guess she could sympathize with it; it's very similar to Bow Island country, Mr. Minister. If your dog runs away up in Chinook, you can watch it for three days; the country's so flat. All the way to Bow Island you can watch it.

The question with respect to aquifers is that this province lets you get away with tapping into aquifers. I mentioned Cargill as one of the areas, but there are many oil companies that do. I recall a few years ago when I was in the oil business, operating in an oil field, I went across the Alberta/Saskatchewan boundary. On the Alberta side I was allowed to use water wells and dugouts and dams, water that could very well have been used for cattle, to push down a well to push out oil. Whereas on the Saskatchewan side in the same oil field I had to drill for fossil water -- that's the salt and sulphurous water that usually lies deeper than what the oil reservoir is -- and had to pump that up, clean it up, and push it out to take out oil, which is as it should be.

But this province has over a million barrels a day of potable and fresh water, and now that we have a drought approaching, this is one of the things I tried to touch on with this government in question period today. I got this "after you, Alphonse" bit from the Minister of Agriculture, the minister of forestry, and the Minister of the Environment. But that may just be the trouble; it's "after you, Alphonse" when it comes to aquifers. Anyone that's ever flown from Calgary to Texas -- I don't know why he would -- can look down and see those round circles of irrigation that were almost exclusively done by wells. So it shows you what value there is in looking after your aquifers, and we're allowing our industry to tap into it. Once industry taps into it it's hard to cut them out either into the subsurface

water or into surface water that we're talking about pipelining on the east side of this province in the Vermilion country. We're bringing water down from the rivers to the oil fields, and that I believe, Mr. Minister, is absolutely verboten. You should be very aggressive with whoever's going to be put in charge of it. In fact, I would recommend, because I'm rather impressed with some of the things you're doing, that you take that on, the sole responsibility of aquifers and potable water in the province.

For instance, a little item that I don't think many people know -- I learned it a while ago -- is that the pulp mill at Grande Prairie uses the same amount of water as the town of Grande Prairie does. That's rather a question of virtue. Maybe the pulp mill at Grande Prairie might be able to operate from some fossil water that's down deep, salt or sulphur. I don't know how much they'd have to clean it up to do the process of what they're doing. But little things like that could go a long way. I know I operated some in the Middle East and India when I was in the oil business long ago, and water is more important. If there's any limit to growth in Alberta, it's not the intelligence of its people, it's not the value of its school system, it's not our oil reserves, and it's not our grain fields. It's the amount of water we have, if there's a limit to growth. I really feel that this government possibly is overlooking some of the areas there.

I may move on to some rather peculiar policies that you've seen develop through the years here. There's the question of Stirling. I couldn't help but throw that one in, Mr. Minister, because your department, your former department the environmental department -- everyone else seems to have got thoroughly mixed up when it came to who was granting permits for what had hoped to be a wetlands experimental area on about 600 acres of Crown land. Somehow or another, I think probably by mistake, the town of Stirling ended up with the right to put in a sewage lagoon on 100 acres of it. But a sewage lagoon next to a wetlands development that you're hoping to take children and people to to create a tourist attraction hardly works. The fragrant aroma of sewage drifting past your nostrils just as you're watching some of God's noble creatures flap their wings and take off in the air is just not conducive to bringing people back to look through the area. Yet, Mr. Chairman, somehow or another this department -- and I think this minister is most responsible for it although there appears to be some sort of a freeze on now -- should go to work, because after all, I'll agree that Stirling has to look after its sewage. But we should have been able to work out something where we're not trying to use an area that was intended for recreation purposes and in particular education as a sewage lagoon. I think the public is looking forward to straightening out something there.

Now, if I may move on. It's in your grazing lease conversion policy. You cannot accuse the government of not being responsive in this area. They've changed their mind every year for, I think, four or five years on that. What they've ended up with now is brassing off everybody: the conservationists, the exploitationists, the ranchers, the farmers. You mention grazing leases and they all go ape because all they know is that for sure, within six months the policy will change. I cannot see, Mr. Chairman, why the government cannot institute a policy of recognizing that okay, there'll be some grazing lease conversion, public lands conversion, but go through a two-stage process. First, you announce what areas you are thinking of or where there have been requests for a conversion. There can be public hearings on them. If it gets through the public hearings, if people all generally agree that it isn't, then the acreage that's going to be converted should be going up to public tender so

there can be no question, that it isn't some person who's wearing blue and orange underwear or has membership of that category that gets first crack at the conversion. It seems to me that's a very solid system and one that would work out.

The other area, Mr. Chairman, that I'd like to touch on just for a second is the necessity for environmental impact studies. For some reason or another this government still thinks that pollution is practically only in two areas, where the environmental impact of that is dumping untreated sewage or letting gasses and noxious substances go up into the air. I've often accused this government of really only one environmental policy, and that's to build smokestacks tall enough so the pollution won't come down until it's in Saskatchewan. Well, it progressed a little bit beyond that stage. Now you try to put the smokestacks only up high enough so the pollution will only come down about a few townships away. But the fact is that there is an environmental impact -- and the pulp mills are a classic area that we should be looking into -- and that is the impact on wildlife above clear-cutting of the forest. What's it going to do to our wildlife and to our tourism in the long run?

There's nothing as depressing as to leap into a bus -- just for instance, the Minister of the Environment took us on a bus ride this summer from Swan Hills out to the new plant. Well, 50 percent of the distance that you traversed on that bus, and it was only about a 12-, 15-mile ride, was over the baldest, barest looking old moonscape you ever saw. It was an area that had been denuded or clear-cut, as they called it. A lumberman calls it clear-cut; a nonlumberman calls it a ravaged landscape. It looked as if it had been in the middle of the Siegfried Line or the Maginot Line for one and a half years. All that was missing were the shell craters and the bodies; it was just absolutely denuded. Well, that type of cut, which may well be the way that you do it, should at least be done where the tourists aren't looking or at least not be sighted. There should be some co-ordinated plan of forestry cutting so it isn't one that puts off the tourist industry if it has to be clear-cut. I doubt whether it has to be clear-cut but maybe they have to do it in strips.

That leads to the next fact I wanted to touch on, Mr. Chairman. As somebody who has spent most of his life exploiting Mother Nature, ripping the jewels away from the centre of the earth or on the earth, someplace in line, and turning around and selling it for a quick buck, I think I'm fairly experienced in knowing how these things develop. What I'm concerned about today when I see the pulp mill setups that are going on is the same type of enthusiasm I've seen around the world in various other initial stages of a resource development whether it's renewable or nonrenewable. It happened here in the early days of our oil. The government was so pleased that the multinationals came in here, gave them a ride in their corporate planes -- they didn't have jets in those days -- that they gave out 99-year leases and 21-year leases township after township, because after all, these people may never come back. [interjection] Back in your day it was a horse and buggy and they were peddling manure fields then, speaker from Lacombe.

Nevertheless, the concept is still the same, that all of a sudden somebody comes in from outside and likes what you've got. You've had it there for years, and suddenly, for fear that they are not going to return, you grant some hopelessly impossible leases. I've seen that in bauxite in South America; I've seen it for lumber development, mahogany in Indonesia; and in many areas. I think we are seeing the same thing here, because that aspen has sat out there -- and I know myself, after having bought a place once I was elected and moved up here, it's the

damnedest weed that I've ever seen. That aspen pokes up everywhere; it comes in the house and everything else. As a matter of fact it was the only time in my life, I think, that I cheered on the caterpillars. I thought it might kill the aspen. Unfortunately, the aspen came right back.

But the fact of the matter is that that aspen that has been a drag on our market, a very annoying thing to have around, and people have had it around for years, is suddenly in demand because of a technological breakthrough, just like our oil was, like our tar sand was, like the mahogany markets of Indonesia or the bauxite of South America, and I probably could go on: guano on the islands in the South Pacific -- because the industrial world has suddenly discovered our aspen. What I am afraid of -- and I look and I see the same thing: Daishowa with practically a handsweep of all northwest Alberta, covering everything from the Lubicons up to the Metis settlements, because they're so kind to come and see us; at Whitecourt the same area, moving all the way over to the mountains; and God knows what few other areas there will be.

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

I would like to advise just a bit of caution. It may well be that those huge aspen forests that look as useless today, or just coming into their own, as our oil leases did many years ago or as the mahogany forests did somewhere else or other elements somewhere else may turn out to be one of our most valuable resources. And we're going to be disappointed, or the government that follows you people are going to be stuck with trying to get back a lot of the land that has been let go. I wonder if the minister is really being careful in looking after our children's and grandchildren's heritage, because this minister's department probably more than any other department here, is challenged with and charged with the duty of turning over to our grandchildren a world and a society that's in the physical sense as good or better as what we inherited ourselves, and preferably improved.

This is all I think I have, Mr. Chairman, because there are others that want to speak on the area. I just had to get my two bits in on this area.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few comments related to the minister's department. Most of my comments are going to be related to the public lands division and the parts of that division relating to the grazing reserves operated by the department and by the government.

Mr. Chairman, I've written to the minister regarding some concerns by my constituents about the costs of the grazing reserves and what it's costing them per annum a unit-month to pasture their cattle on there and the increase that came into effect this year. I'm sure everybody in cattle well recognizes the inflation factor that's built into the system, in that the amount that's charged on grazing, on the actual land, is an amount from a formula that was developed many, many years ago that everybody's come to realize is probably one of the fairest formulas around. It goes up and down according to the price of cattle and according to the price of the productivity value on the land. I guess we always get the question: is there really a difference in various areas of the province in what the grass will produce? Some people question whether one area is as much

better than the other areas as what the formula allows, but that's something, I suppose, that experts have to iron out. But I believe that part of the increase, most people realize, comes and goes according to the price of cattle.

But the part that they're concerned about is the other increases in the animal unit cost related to the operation of the grazing reserves. In a time with problems in the agricultural industry, their contention is that now is not the time to increase the other allotments of that reserve. Attached to their concerns is the feeling that the cost of homes on the reserve that is charged to the operation of that reserve -- that on some of the grazing reserves, the homes on those reserves were built previous to the department of housing taking over the homes and renting them back to the department of forestry, and that is in some cases driving the amount in the budget for homes up quite high. All these patrons always have the question, "Why are we paying two or three times for what we've already paid for once, before housing and public works took these homes over?"

One of the other concerns is related to -- I know the irrigation lease reserves are high-cost reserves, and even with the increase they are closer to operating at a break-even point, but they're still not at that stage. The other comment I've had from some of the other dryland reserves that indeed are at a break-even stage and the increase will put them in a profit position -- their directors are saying, "What happened to the comments that were made for years that once you get to a position where it's break even, the increases will stop?" If the minister can answer that. Again, I should repeat: the increases we're talking about are any increases over and above the land rental or the grass rental. They're considering that as something that comes and goes and is acceptable. But the other increases are those over and above that.

The other comment that has been made to me through the years is that according to at least some of the information I have, resource maintenance on reserves that are in various parts of the province -- central and northern, where it costs money to keep the trees from invading the pastures again -- is not included as an operational cost of the reserve but rather an operational cost of the whole system. The contention is that fertilizer and some other chemicals likewise should be considered in the same manner when they're used on an irrigation reserve, in that without them the reserve doesn't produce to anywhere near the same extent. There is a contention out there that fertilizer and other chemical costs should be considered in the same manner as resource maintenance.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that about covers my comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin by just offering congratulations to the minister. It's a new portfolio for him since estimates were dealt with last year, and given the kind of energy and commitment that he's demonstrated in his other portfolios, I think it bodes well for the Forestry, Lands and Wildlife portfolio.

I would like to thank the minister on record for meeting with some of my constituents the other day to discuss a petition that they had circulated and got signed regarding the future disposition of an abandoned rail line between Vegreville and Wilingdon and Vegreville and Ryley and being open to some of the suggestions that these farmers were bringing to the minister about the problems they're having with this abandoned and unmaintained land adjacent to theirs, in terms of weed infestation

and waste disposal and people using it in an indiscriminate way for hunting that poses, sometimes, a hazard to livestock pastured adjacent to that rail line. So I do thank him for meeting with the people. I know that he's doing his best to come forward with a policy that will satisfy the landowners and yet take into consideration the needs and aspirations of people who seek to maintain wildlife habitat and have some recreational use of land not generally fit for agriculture, because some of it does fall into that category as well.

The Buck for Wildlife program, administered through the minister's department -- although I recognize that's not government money, it seems to be treated as government money. Some of it was spent in the Vegreville constituency last year, specifically a project just south of town. The water reservoir became surplus to the town of Vegreville when the Vegreville water corridor was put in and a number of communities, including Vegreville, were serviced by pipeline from Edmonton. The town and the local Fish & Game Association are doing everything they can to make very creative use of this abandoned reservoir site. Along with Buck for Wildlife they've installed some fish in the reservoirs there, and there are some ambitious plans to go ahead and develop the area as a recreation site. I think the surplus lottery funds coming through the Department of Tourism will be a big help to develop that project a little further, as well as a number of other government programs. So we're looking forward to further co-operation with the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife on that project.

I would like to mention a few things on game ranching. I think a lot of us in the province view this minister as being perhaps the levellest head in the Conservative government on this issue. I recognize that there are some short-term economic opportunities for people who get into game ranching. That's obvious; there's money to be made. I enjoy eating elk meat as much as anybody, but in thinking about this at length, I just cannot see how we can reconcile the dangers that this poses in the long term with the short-term economic benefits. Having elk and deer and moose in the wild in Alberta, I think, is a precious sort of resource, and if we get into wholesale game ranching in the future, it jeopardizes that precious resource. There's no effective way to control poaching when people are unable to distinguish between horns taken off an animal shot and lying in the woods or taken off an animal in domestic circumstances, no way to distinguish between meat that's carved off a destroyed carcass out in the woods from meat that's sold from a . . .

MR. DOWNEY: If you can't tell the difference, you'd better stick with fish.

MR. FOX: I think it's a legitimate concern, Member for Stettler. It might not concern you, but I think our wildlife resource is a precious resource. It's worth far more in terms of the tourist industry and recreation and people enjoying what we have that's very special in this province than it's worth in terms of dollars of meat on the table to a few people wanting to make a buck off privatizing wildlife.

I still can't see any way of reconciling . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Go get them, Derek.

MR. FOX: What's the Liberal policy on game ranching? I've never heard that. He'll ad lib that right away for us.

I can't see, Mr. Minister, how we could possibly cope with the kind of disease infestations that are likely when you start

grouping together native animals that are used to wild situations, if they're held together in confined quarters. You're all shaking your heads, but you think about it for a while. They're going to be subject to disease. We can control that disease in the domestic situation, but there's no way to prevent that from extending to the animals in the wild, and I think that jeopardizes that wildlife resource. I have some serious long-term concerns about the implications of game ranching for that precious resource.

It's worked in New Zealand, but they never had red deer in the wild. That was something that they imported. We have to differentiate, I think, between elk and buffalo, because buffalo are for all intents and purposes a domestic animal. They're not found in wild circumstances in Alberta. I would just hate to see this precious resource of ours jeopardized by the desire of a few people to make a fast buck in the short term, because it's worth a lot more to Albertans in the long term, and I know that this minister has that kind of healthy, long-term perspective.

I wanted to comment and compliment the department on their initiative in the Elk Island-Blackfoot grazing reserve area. It's a unique multi-use kind of area that was developed through the co-operation of the departments of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, and Recreation and Parks. It was my pleasure to attend the official opening of that facility along with the Minister of Recreation and Parks, and it's a job well done. It's going to serve the members of the Blackfoot Grazing Association very well, yet provide opportunity for Albertans, especially those in Edmonton and the eastern area, to go out there and enjoy some of the public land that's there through the hiking trails and trail riding and things that are available. So it's a good project and I'm pleased that the department has put so much effort into it.

In talking about community pastures and grazing associations, I want to again bring to the minister's attention the day that I spent yesterday touring the Rannach community pasture with six of the directors and the grazing association supervisor, who lives out there. We walked around to the different paddocks to see what the condition of the pasture was. I'm certainly thankful that the directors of that association had the foresight to pull the animals off the pasture about five weeks before the usual October 20 deadline to make sure that that pasture wasn't seriously overgrazed. Given the prolonged drought that's taken place, not only last summer but last fall, this winter, and again into the spring, the long-term viability of those pastures would have been jeopardized by their decision to leave them on, but they had foresight. They took some criticism for moving the animals off early in September, but I think the pasture will benefit long-term because of that.

The grass remains a problem there. We're all hopeful that there'll be some water falling from the skies and that the grass will recover and that there'll be some healthy pasture for the cattle to graze, but the most immediate concern -- and it's one the minister is well aware of -- is drinking water for the livestock. It's a sad sight indeed to drive around and see the sloughs that are dried up and the dugouts that are empty. Even though some of the dugouts might have two or three feet of water in the bottom, for practical purposes they're empty. In fact, they're worse than empty, because there is water there that will attract cattle to come and drink but they won't be able to get any clean water out of there for very long. I think there's a very real possibility that some of the cattle could get stuck and drown in the some of the dugouts we looked at because they'd be drinking out of the steepest part of the bottom of the dugout. Some of the sloughs we looked at, too, when the weather warms up, will have problems with blue-green algae poisoning in the

sloughs. There's just not sufficient water there, and it's a real concern.

There's no easy answer. Like I said to the gentlemen I was touring with yesterday, the problems are obvious but the solutions aren't. We looked at the North Saskatchewan River to see what possibility pumping out of the river into low areas or dugouts would hold. There is a real problem there too. It's the same problem in the St Paul grazing reserve. The river banks are hundreds of feet high at that point. They estimate about a 500 foot draw. Again, I know the minister's department has engineers that'll be able to assess the viability of that better than I'm able to. It's a serious problem.

We were looking at what would be involved in drilling a well adjacent to a dugout and filling the dugout. I think we have to recognize that a lot of these dugouts were constructed when they weren't lined. They're unlined dugouts, and there'd be considerable leaching of water into the dry ground around the dugout. We calculated that if you were to approach one of these 500,000 gallon dugouts and hoped to fill it with a well that had a flow, say, of five gallons per minute, you'd need to let it run for two and a half months nonstop. If there was no consumption, evaporation, or leaching, it might fill the dugout. It's a big problem, and no easy solution.

One of the ideas that one of the directors of the Rannach community pasture association had was that we cut up some culverts and make temporary watering troughs, I guess -- long watering troughs that the well could pump water into with an overflow directed at the dugout so that if the cattle weren't keeping up with the amount of water available for them to drink out of these culvert watering troughs, then it would spill over into the dugout and not be lost. That way the watering could be on a continual basis. Again, I'm not sure if that's the best solution. It's really something that causes you to scratch your head and wonder about how we can possibly cope with the problem.

The other thing that they were anxious to bring to my attention concerned vet fees. I was interested to hear the Member for Vermilion-Viking suggest today in question period that because the Minister of Agriculture has cut vet fee services for community pastures, what we ought to do is look at having the cattle come in without being inspected. That seems like a step backwards to me. When you're bringing in animals, in this case 4,000-plus cattle from over 80 different herds, I think it's in the interests of everybody, not just the 80 producers but everyone who raises cattle, to make sure that these animals are fit and in good condition. The vet inspection seems to me to be an important part of effective management of community pastures. What I would like to ask on behalf of the people at the Rannach community pasture is that the minister give some consideration to lobbying his cabinet colleagues to reinstate the vet fee service. I think it's an important aspect of the community pasture concept.

The other concern that I think is more a long-term concern rather than an immediate one is the issue of pasture renovation or rejuvenation. Perhaps the decisions have already been made, but another program perhaps through the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund where an amount of money would be committed on an annual basis to pasture renovation. So we could look at maybe working over and reseed, say, 10 percent of the cultivated acreage of community pastures in the province on an annual basis to make sure that the resource is not lost through, you know, the grass becoming tramped on and root-bound and just petering out. If we renovate a certain percentage of it on an annual basis, then we're going to make sure we get the maximum benefit out of

that pasture area.

I offer those suggestions to the minister on behalf of the people at the Rannach community pasture. The community pastures have, I think, provided a significant economic benefit not only to ranchers in northeastern Alberta and certainly the rest of Alberta but to the community as a whole. It's developed the economies of the areas where there are community pastures. I think we've got to recognize that it's public land that's available for other uses too, that people are able to hunt and make recreational use of community pastures. It's our hope that those uses could always be compatible, that people would exercise restraint and good judgment in using the community pastures.

So with those brief suggestions I'd look forward to the minister's comments sometime in the future. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's certainly a privilege and a pleasure to sit up and comment on such an important . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Stand up.

MR. CLEGG: Quit talking, Fischer. To speak on the estimates of this important industry we have in Alberta, and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member. Order in the committee, please.

MR. CLEGG: I must compliment the minister for the work he's done since his appointment to this position and also the officials of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife for showing the kind of responsibility they must show for this important industry. This responsible attitude is evident in the fact that the total spending estimates show a 1.7 percent decrease for 1988-89. Forestry and wildlife are a valuable economic resource and an important part of the Alberta heritage. This reduction in spending estimates appears to be a genuine attempt to reduce costs without neglecting any services.

I am personally very, very happy to comment this afternoon because of the announcement of the Daishowa chip plant at Peace River. Although it isn't in my constituency, we have a large forest industry in the Dunvegan constituency and an awful, awful lot of poplar in my area. I'm excited, and I believe that with the kind of volume the Daishowa plant is going to need, we'll probably have one or two chip mills located north of Fairview up in the Clear Hills country. That kind of development would certainly create jobs, jobs, jobs in my area. As many people here know, we have an oil industry that has slackened off the last two or three years and tough economic times in the farm industry. In my area many farmers rely on off-farm jobs, and this will be an absolute boost to their way of life. Certainly I'm really excited about that announcement of the plant.

Also in my area the wildlife resources -- the hon. Member for Vegreville and we in this government believe in our wildlife resources. Again, in my area we have lots. We've got moose, we've got elk, we've got deer, we've got bears -- grizzly and black bear: certainly a hunter's paradise. But it's our belief that we must protect our resources, and I'm sure that many of us here today understand that we can protect our resources and still allow people to hunt. With the cutbacks, we've had to not expand our wildlife officers, certainly something that I wish we had the resources to do, because I feel that there have been peo-

ple taking illegal game, something that I know our minister is concerned about. Certainly I'm concerned. It's sometimes said by people that more of some of our resources are taken illegally than they are by legal hunters. So I think that if we can get more enforcement into that side of our industry, then we can in fact still protect our resources and have good hunting in Alberta.

I just want to close and ask the minister: as a result of the department's impressive efforts to assist in the development of Alberta forest products to maximize the use of our forest resources, what have been the gains in the province in terms of forest products production and employment generation?

Thank you.

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

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd also like to start off by complimenting the minister on his new appointment and new responsibility. It's no doubt a very exciting department to be heading at this time in the history of the province of Alberta because of the great potential that we have in terms of forestry and wildlife.

I'd like to point out that we are also looking in our constituency, in the Lac La Biche Forest at potentially some major development occurring hopefully this year, because we do have, as identified by your department, the water, the forest the power, and the people to attract a major industry in the Lac La Biche Forest. With the high level of unemployment and welfare, especially our generational native welfare in the area, it would be great to be able to address that in terms of a job creation situation.

One of the things that I've been working on as an MLA is to also be getting our native people ready to get some of the forestry jobs which are going to be created within the constituency within the Lac La Biche Forest area. For example, we applied for the Canadian jobs strategy, which I just heard on Friday has been approved by the federal government which will be training approximately 35 local Metis people in Lac La Biche. We're also making the same application for Calling Lake, so that we will have on stream trained people for forestry jobs, in terms of creating small business, in creating and helping the forest fire fighting forces, and the creation of a small business enterprise for even forestry clearing in the Lac La Biche Forest area. So I would encourage the minister to make sure that -- the environmental concern, the job creation concern, and the development of the forestry industry is a very important balancing act that he has to work with, but looking at the accessibility of his office and the openness of his department I'm quite sure that all of these concerns can be addressed provincially.

Quickly I'd like to ask some of the questions or make some of the following statements to the minister relating to other concerns brought forward by farmers in the Athabasca-Lac La Biche area. It has to do with the blackfly area, as the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture are very much aware of. We do have a blackfly problem near the Athabasca River, and one of the concerns expressed by farmers who own grazing leases in that area is that they would like to see your department change the way the grazing leases are cleared. Instead of having a universal method of perhaps clearing grazing leases, in areas with high populations of blackflies, that, say, four quarters of grazing leases where the same amount of acreage would be opened up or cleared be in one open space so that cattle are able to stay away from the forested area and

stay away from the blackfly. I would urge his department to take a look at perhaps -- in the province of Alberta the way the grazing leases are cleared at this time is not responding to the blackfly situation. That could help a long way in terms of addressing a concern in the Athabasca and Wandering River areas.

Another concern that I have been recently made aware of is a new regulation from the Department of the Environment which now requires the fencing off of creeks and lakes and ponds on grazing leases. Farmers have indicated: who's going to pay for the new fencing requirement? I would like the minister to respond whether he's aware that the Department of the Environment has created this new regulation which will require farmers to fence off all the creeks, the ponds, the lakes, and whether there's any compensation that would be paid to farmers for this. Secondly, how will farmers have accessibility for their cattle for drinking water? Has that been addressed in the new regulation? So I would like to have more information from your department relating to that new regulation.

I do know that there is a concern of the pollution aspect of perhaps having too many cattle adding undue fertilization to our water bodies in the grazing lease area, but I think that the question of fairness to farmers also has to be addressed by your department. Some of the farmers are quite upset with some of the new regulations coming out, and there's very little consultation with farmers who are affected.

The other issue that I would like the minister to address is relating to commercial fishing and anglers and the whole aboriginal hunting rights issue. I was quite pleased that when he set out the priorities of his department, all three concerns are addressed by his department. I would like to recommend to the minister that he perhaps take a look at the commercial fishing industry. It is a very important livelihood for many hundreds of people, in northern Alberta especially, and they are quite upset with the \$15 per lake licensing that each of the commercial fishermen need to acquire now within their zone. Many of them are reporting that they have up to 60 of these licences that they have to pay for, which can amount to hundreds of dollars, within their zone. For an industry which is a very low-profit industry and where fishermen are required to go long distances from lake to lake, that additional licensing fee is really beyond the means of a lot of fishermen. Many of them are saying that what we should really be doing is that there should simply be an annual commercial licence fee which takes a look at the number of lakes which are in a zone area, and the value of the commercial licence annually should reflect the number of lakes that they have available to do their commercial fishing in, as opposed to having an individual lake licence, which can amount to figures of close to \$1,200 a year for many of these fishermen.

Another thing that I think we also have to look at is that the economic potential of tourism related to anglers is very important provincially, but I think one of the areas that I'd like to see as well is probably that the anglers should be charged with more responsibility. I'm an avid fisherman myself, and I'm a little bit appalled by the fact that the anglers are very often seeking that the commercial fishermen be cut back in their takes from the lakes, but I never hear from the anglers, for example, that they should be more responsible for not taking undersize fish. I look, for example, at many American states where only fish of a certain length and age are allowed to be kept by anglers. I would

like to see the minister moving in a direction where through policies, promotion, or education the anglers are encouraged or mandated not to catch undersize fish. Take, for example, pickerel. It takes five to seven years before a pickerel is able to reproduce itself. We need to get to a size kind of policy. The same with perch, et cetera.

So I think if we're going to be asking the commercial fishermen to be responsible guardians of that important resource -- and I think we have co-operation from the commercial fishermen -- we must also look at the anglers having responsibility for that important resource. With the lack of enforcement we have right now within the province of Alberta and the cutbacks in terms of fish and wildlife enforcement, I really think that the anglers are maybe taking way more fish, way more underage fish out of our lakes and rivers than anyone estimates. I think they have a very important responsibility for maintaining that resource for generations to come.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but the committee must rise and report. Perhaps in the next 20 seconds the member could conclude.

MR. PIQUETTE: Our aboriginal people, of course, have constitutional rights for fishing and hunting. I think I would encourage the minister to get into a partnership discussion with our aboriginal people to ensure that they feel they are participating in wildlife and fishing management. I think that rather than throwing stones, which very often we hear, what we need is to develop a new partnership in terms of management of those resources.

In concluding, I would like to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Deputy Government House Leader.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the report and the request for leave to sit again?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Motion carried.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, the House will not be sitting tonight. Tomorrow night we will be in estimates of the Department of the Environment.

[At 5:29 p.m. the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]

