

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Monday, July 31, 1989 8:00 p.m.**

Date: 89/07/31

[The Committee of Supply met at 8 p.m.]

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, it appears to be 8 o'clock.

head: **Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
Estimates 1989-90**

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are here this evening to deal with the 1989-90 estimates of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund capital projects division. The first vote to be called this evening is that of the Department of Health. The particulars of vote 1 are to be found on page 18 of the estimates book. I would invite the minister to say a few words concerning this grant program.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Thank you . . .

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask a question first. Would it not be possible to start this 12-day session -- it could be a 12-day session -- on the heritage trust fund with a general discussion of the heritage trust fund first, rather than jumping straight into . . . We have been through this debate almost every year. Usually the government ends up relenting at some point and deciding that it does make sense that we have at least an hour or two to discuss the heritage trust fund in general. Sometimes it has been done at the start of these estimates; sometimes it's been done at the end. But we usually do get some time for that, and I really don't see why this year should be any different.

MR. FOX: I would just like to add to my colleague's comments, Mr. Chairman. We do have, according to our Standing Orders, 12 days to consider the spending estimates of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund capital projects division. I think it's easy for all members to see that there's not as much substance here as there was a few years ago, when our coffers were a little more flush, shall we say, but there are some important things to discuss here.

From the point of view of the Official Opposition, we think it would be worth while for all hon. members to spend at least some time talking about the heritage trust fund as an entity and the approach that we want to take to the heritage trust fund before getting into the substance of the individual estimates that are proposed in here. I would like to point out to the hon. Deputy Government House Leader that if he thinks 12 days would be well spent debating these estimates, we could certainly accommodate. I don't know if he doubts our ability to keep something going that long, but I assure you that we could. But we have no interest in delaying the progress in the House here. We have things of substance that we want to get to, but we think it would be important to spend some time discussing the trust fund in a general sort of way before moving into the specific estimates and would hope that members on the other side would give that request some legitimate consideration.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. FOX: Or else.

MR. STEWART: Threats will get you nowhere.

Mr. Chairman, if indeed the members were denied the opportunity to have the fullness of discussion as they would wish, then I think that would be one case. The fact of the matter is that there are at least two other avenues through the rules in which such full discussions are appropriate. There's the standing committee of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, where that is very appropriate, and secondly, during the course of the reading on the appropriations Bill. So those are two opportunities provided by the rules for such debate. Appropriate debate, I think, could take place at that time, and the proper procedure, I think, should be followed in this instance, where debate should be confined to the votes themselves as presented in the estimates before us.

MR. McEACHERN: To that point. It is true that the Alberta heritage trust fund committee does sit for a length of time and goes through a number of things about the heritage trust fund. It's also true that this Assembly has some 21 new members that have not been through a session of the Legislature yet, and they cannot all be on the heritage trust fund committee. So it seems to me that what we're being asked to do here is to pass \$141 million of expenditures out of the financial assets of the heritage trust fund to put them into the capital projects division, which the Auditor General tells us -- these deemed assets that we build with this money are not considered part of the fund that is recoverable.

So there are some important issues around that: whether or not this Assembly should be putting that money aside. While it's true that one could refer to that and did in the overall context of the budget in terms of how big is the deficit and that sort of thing, it was not . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I believe I understand the point the hon. member is making, but it's the ruling of the Chair that we are here this evening to discuss the estimates proposed for expenditure from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. It has been pointed out that there is an opportunity for a general discussion of the heritage fund that will be available to all members of this Assembly.

MR. McEACHERN: When?

MR. CHAIRMAN: When the appropriation Act is called, and that will be called soon after Wednesday, which is, I believe, the last day for the main estimates. When they are voted on, then the government must introduce an appropriation Act. That must go through first, second, committee stage, and third readings. It is a very general thing, which will allow for a general discussion of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

MR. McEACHERN: I can ask that you be very, very clear on that, Mr. Chairman. [interjection] No, really.

Every time a Bill has been brought before this Assembly that is of the appropriation kind, when you get to second reading and I have wished to make some general comments about what that appropriation is about in a general sort of context, I've been told that that's out of order, that all we have are some very specific

expenditures, and that that's not the time to debate it. In fact, even on the budget . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, I will say order. Order please, hon. member. [interjection] Order.

I understand your point. You're saying that the appropriation Act doesn't give you the scope you require, and I'm not necessarily accepting that point. All I know is that the rules require this evening for us to discuss and study the estimates that are to be voted on for this Heritage Savings Trust Fund. That's the order of business for tonight, and it is not for a general discussion of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

MR. McEACHERN: Then I'm taking that what you're saying is that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

I'll recognize the Minister of Health.

Health

1 -- Applied Cancer Research

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to make a few introductory remarks, because I'm sure hon. members will have questions with respect to vote 1, for which the Ministry of Health is responsible, and that is the whole issue of applied cancer research.

I think it's important to note that the research conducted under this particular vote is, of course, in addition to the many other research funds that exist throughout the province, probably the most notable being the Alberta heritage savings medical trust foundation, which of course the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications will be addressing in due turn. The objective of this vote and these Applied Cancer Research dollars in the amount of \$2.8 million, to be voted this evening, is with respect to the establishment of new or expanded treatment programs for research into cancer.

Perhaps a comment with respect to the eligibility. To be eligible for support, research proposed has to be directly related to the problem of cancer. In addition to the study of cancer as an experiment of nature, the research can deal with the application of basic findings and includes advances in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. Important balances are established between clinical and basic research. Certainly the approach has been to have an interdisciplinary approach whereby some of the Applied Cancer Research funds are worked into co-ordination with other research funds in order to get the best value for our dollar for research in Alberta.

I'm proud to report as well that to date since 1976-77, when the first Applied Cancer Research was voted, we have spent a total of \$36 million on applied cancer research in this province. I think we can all be proud of the advances that have been made in our own province with respect to this disease.

I welcome questions from any of the hon. members this evening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to direct a few questions to the minister. Although I've been around this vote three times now and asked dozens of questions

-- I remember the first time I asked about 20 questions; last year I asked 10 questions -- I never seem to get many answers, except to be sent a copy of the annual report of the fund, and that answers some of the questions, I suppose.

But I would like to focus on some, I think, pretty salient central questions. The first one that's obvious to me, I think, and to other lay observers about this -- this is a Ralph Klein -- is why these dollars for applied cancer research are separate from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for medical research that the minister already noted. I guess there's some history maybe I'm missing here, but it seemed somewhat inconsistent to have here \$2.8 million, or over the past few years \$36 million, devoted specifically to applied cancer research, which I've learned in the past is very technical and -- I use this term -- maybe pure research. It's not everyday lay people's kind of research. This is very technical, very medical, and it relates to oncology. I'm just wondering how it is that this has been set up in the past, devoted to that very narrow, particular area of health care and research, and why others are not.

Now, we have the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for medical research, and is there any determination in the department or among the whole research community that all the dollars should be lumped into one and that researchers should be able to apply from one central pool? It would seem for economic reasons as well as for administrative reasons that it should be under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund and not this separate one. I've always just thought it was a bit of an anomaly. I know those who apply for this fund covet the fact that it exists and want it to continue. I don't begrudge them that. I'm just wondering, in terms of the policy, why this has been set up in a separate way and why we have to go through it year by year.

In fact, again I think, as I've said in the past, Mr. Chairman and members of the Assembly, it's interesting that we do have this vote come before the Assembly. I don't recall the expenditures in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund for medical research coming before the Assembly. In fact, I remember being told very directly by a member of the board of that fund that they were very pleased it didn't have to come before the trust fund. [interjection] It does? It hasn't in the past, and I was told that they were pleased that it didn't because they said legislators probably wouldn't understand how and why the dollars would be spent. Anyway, these are just a number of the anomalies that I want to raise and, as I say, have raised in the past.

I was interested to hear the minister's comments with respect to the fact that it's directed to prevention as well. Again, I understood that it only deals with cures and treatments and that any dollars being directed, as I said last week, for instance into prevention of cancer, whether it's through better nutritional education or nutrition programs or through smoking cessation or through any one of a number of other cancer-causing agents that we might avoid in terms of the high rate of cancer in the province and throughout Canada -- I didn't think that any of these funds were directed to that, that in fact these were funds devoted exclusively to care and treatment, and God knows we need dollars there. Again, it's interesting to know that we have this fund, and we know the Canadian Cancer Society and the Alberta cancer society, as a division, also do research into this area. Again I wonder in terms of this vote how its dollars are directed vis-a-vis the Alberta cancer society and the dollars that they direct their funding and their research proposals to as well. So, again, just some clarification.

I did have some questions -- I think it was last year when I

discussed the whole matter quite thoroughly with somebody who had made two research proposals under this fund and was rejected both times. It seemed to them and it seemed to me, from what the minister and others said, that it's not quite clear what the protocols are that are really being looked for. The adjudicators say, "Well, here's a proposal," and they'll assign either X number of dollars to it or no dollars at all. It seemed to some who were rejected that their proposals weren't good enough, and they weren't quite clear why their proposals weren't good enough. Again, we're getting beyond a lay understanding to some very technical understanding, but still I think that since these are public dollars going, it'd be good to know to some degree exactly what is being looked for in terms of this \$2.8 million in terms of the research proposals that are accepted and others that are rejected.

I've haven't quite got caught up or done my homework on this. I was teaching my five-year-old how to ride her bicycle at dinner. I didn't get the work done I should have on this. She did 25 revolutions; it was pretty exciting.

But I thought I remembered that in the past the minister said they weren't quite sure how long this fund was going to continue and whether or not this was going to be wrapped up. We're at \$36 million now, but is this going to be in perpetuity? Or are we just going to continue to allocate this number of dollars this year and the next five, 10 years, or is there some way of looking at its future?

As I said -- where did the Chairman go?

AN HON. MEMBER: He's not listening to you. No one's listening to you.

REV. ROBERTS: All right. Well, I'll take that as a sure sign that I've said enough, and I'll try to look over *Hansard* in the years past. But I think those are primarily my concerns, and I'm glad I've got them on the record this year yet again. We'll see if there are any responses.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the hon. minister like to reply?
The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I look at this documentation in regards to some of the earlier comments made about a discussion on the heritage trust fund, it does catch me a bit off guard. We look at vote 1 that we're dealing with now, Applied Cancer Research, and no one can argue about the benefit of dollars being spent towards cancer research.

But I try and equate that in my mind with the documentation I see in front of me. Maybe it's because of my ignorance that I have to ask these questions, but the document in front of us states: The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Capital Projects Division: 1989-90 Estimates of Proposed Investments. Now, capital projects to me, and during the budgeting experience I developed at city hall, meant some type of concrete physical structure or possibly equipment, vehicles: that type of thing. If we talk in terms of investments, investments to me meant investments where you receive an actual return, unless you're talking in loose terms where you mean an investment for the common good, for society's good.

Now, the question I have. When we look at these types of expenditures, this \$2.8 million which is classified under the capital projects division, first of all, are these dollars restricted

to projects that involve the acquisition of capital goods to develop facilities, to buy equipment? Or is there in fact some funding of operational programs where those dollars are given and they're never returned?

Secondly, when we talk in terms of investment, is there any actual investment that's returned or achieved from those dollars in terms of actual investments? If not, when we look at the overall financial statements, the statement of assets and liabilities, would this \$2.8 million, for example -- or we could look at the total \$36 million under vote 1, when we look at previous expenditures. Would this amount of money in fact show up in the financial statement of assets and liabilities as an actual asset of the heritage trust fund?

Now, I'm not sure if the Minister of Health is prepared to deal with that particular question. If she's not, possibly she would refer it to one of the appropriate ministers. I see the . . . I know I can't mention anyone being absent, so I won't mention someone being absent.

MS M. LAING: I have just a question about something that isn't in the budget here, and it is in regard to the \$200 million endowment fund that was to be set up to deal with family life and drug abuse. Now, I note that in the minister's estimates in the budget \$250,000 have been set aside for the establishment of that endowment fund. I'm wondering, inasmuch as it's not listed here, where we would get information as to when that endowment fund is in fact established.

MR. PASHAK: I note that over the years, Mr. Chairman, there's been a decline in the funding, and for the last two years it's been somewhat stable at \$2.8 million. Does that represent a permanent kind of cap on expenditures for this kind of research?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister?

Sorry; the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to raise some questions that I believe fall under the whole area of applied cancer research, in that it was a bit over a year ago that I was first contacted by a woman in Calgary who came to me for some help in her particular situation. As I pursued it, it raised enough questions in my mind that I think it would be appropriate to sort of pose those to the minister tonight, because it was really my first experience with somebody approaching me through my constituency office to receive or try to receive some help or assistance for the cancer that she is suffering from.

It raises the whole question about particularly difficult types of cancer, Mr. Chairman. In this particular woman's case she was suffering from a very rare form and a very slow-growing form of cancer that may take 10 or 15 years, that long, to run its course. There are only a small number of cases that have ever been diagnosed in the last 50 years in North America. Now, it's because of its very specialized nature and the rare kind of cancer that it is that there's not a lot of work being done to treat that particular kind of cancer. So when she goes to the cancer hospital in Calgary to seek treatment, they take a look at this particular disease and say, "Well, it's so rare we really don't have the capability in Alberta of helping or of being able to offer you very much."

Well, nobody faced with a life-threatening disease wants to hear the answer no as a final say in their life, and in the case of

this woman she was not willing to accept that answer. So she went through a whole process of inquiring through various hospitals and medical institutes throughout the United States to try and find out whether anybody anywhere was doing work in research in her particular form of cancer. Now, she came across a particular kind of procedure in Tennessee, and apparently, according to the information she gave me -- and I wasn't able to verify it independently -- the Ontario hospital insurance program would pay for the cost of sending this woman to try out these cancer research procedures in Tennessee. That is, if she had lived in Ontario, the Ontario hospital insurance program might pay for her to take this treatment in Tennessee, but when it came to Alberta, we had one devil of a time, Mr. Chairman, trying to get any sort of approval through the Health department to approve her to go down and take this treatment in Tennessee. Now, eventually some money was freed up to do a preliminary assessment, and she went down for about two weeks, but in terms of getting an ongoing procedure or an ongoing program at that institute in Tennessee, to my knowledge she still hasn't been successful in getting that approval.

So it raises a number of questions in my mind which I'd like to have the minister address tonight, Mr. Chairman. First of all, pretty well all of cancer treatment, a large bulk of it, is sort of viewed as being research anyway, applied research in some form or another. That is, the hospitals are funded through grants from the Department of Health. There are not always standardized procedures or protocols that people go through. In each individual case a doctor or a team of medical people sort of mix and match in a sort of alchemy sometimes to give people the right kind of procedures to treat the cancer they're experiencing. But in any case, so much of that treatment is already very much of an experimental nature.

So, given those sorts of protocols or that sort of environment, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know what procedures the Department of Health uses in evaluating so-called cancer treatment programs in other parts of primarily North America, in terms of evaluating the work that's going on in a variety of places and under a variety of labels, some of it to private institutes, some are hospitals, and so on. What is the department doing to put those treatments onto a sort of approved list so that when an individual comes or presents themselves through the whole procedure, through the whole process, and at the end of that we find there is not a cancer program or cancer protocol for them in Alberta -- what does the department do to evaluate these other programs, to say yes, these are acceptable, and no, these are not, given that this is the cutting edge of research throughout North America?

I'm particularly interested in knowing what evaluation or monitoring is going on in the Health department so that when we see cases such as the one of the woman who approached me in my constituency office -- she's gone through the process. She has stories of others who have gone through the process, many of whom are turned down, many of whom are frustrated, many of whom are angry, and not knowing what it is that the department is doing to evaluate these programs. Because if somebody says no to you in Alberta and they get some brochure or some news article or some magazine article of some program down in the United States, it's a beacon of hope. It's potentially a lifesaver, and people are in desperate situations, and they're willing in some cases to buy into what might be potential quackery, except a very sophisticated form. In other cases they may well be a new technology or a new research project that really is discovering and opening up some real opportunities for these

people. So I'm wondering what the department does in evaluating those.

Secondly, when another government, like Ontario in their hospital insurance program, puts some of these institutes and some of these programs on an approved list, is there some way that the Department of Health here in the province of Alberta adopts those decisions in other provinces? Does that help Alberta in making up its mind, when they see what other provinces are doing?

This whole cancer research area is an exciting one, Mr. Chairman, but I also see how it's fraught with a great deal of emotion for the people who are in that system who are groping and hoping that some treatment will emerge that will help them. There are a lot of people for whom this system just is not answering their needs. Here in Alberta, despite the money that we're putting into it, obviously we can't cover the waterfront, so we have to rely not only on the sharing of information but on the work that's being done in other places. Instead of duplicating it here in Alberta, perhaps it makes more sense to put in place a system or protocol whereby we can refer Albertans in those situations to those other institutes or hospitals where those can be identified.

So I'd like the minister to take a few minutes in her answer to explain to me, if she would, or to the Legislature this evening how the research that we're doing here in Alberta fits and complements and so on what's going on in other places and how we fit in referring people who are having particularly difficult cancer treatment problems.

Mr. Chairman, it's a bit of a different topic, and I don't know whether any of the money that we're setting aside here is going towards bone marrow work in the province. I'll just make a couple of comments, and if this is not directed in that area, then the minister can tell us in her remarks. I know that there has been some pressure -- and again this is based on people calling my office and presenting problems to me -- on the whole effort towards establishing a national bone marrow transplant registry. It's a very painful procedure, but when people of very, very similar genetic makeup can share bone marrow from one person which can be injected into the other, it can be quite an effective procedure for fighting bone cancer. People generally in the past have had to rely on very close family members in order to provide the match which will give the greatest chance of that transplant succeeding. But if on a random basis a transplant program were established, I understand that it would be one chance in about 10,000, Mr. Chairman, that an individual donor could fit an individual recipient.

So the whole idea is that if there could be a national bank of potential bone marrow donors, you could establish a population of people willing to donate their bone marrow. If you could get a registry of many thousands of people across the country, then any individual person coming forward and needing that transplant could access that registry both in Canada and perhaps, if the protocols could be established, throughout North America as well, thereby reducing the difficulty in getting the correct donor, especially if the individuals presenting themselves don't have a close family member or a close family member with quite the right genetic makeup to fit into that category. I'm just wondering, in terms of applying this research in cancer, whether any work is going towards bone marrow transplant work, Mr. Chairman, and whether any of this money is being directed towards establishing that registry across Canada, at least as far as we can do it here in Alberta.

With those two general comments, I look forward to the minister's response.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, I will try and answer the questions as best I can.

First of all, the Member for Edmonton-Centre raised the question of why is this here, and why isn't all of the research conducted under a single umbrella, and what is the co-ordinating function that goes on amongst the research funds. I think that's a question very much before us, because this, the \$2.8 million, is in fact at the point of a policy decision in that area as to whether or not applied cancer research continues on with the heritage fund or whether, in fact, it does envelope into the broader mandate for the foundation. It's a question before us. I've certainly received strong representation, as I'm sure all other hon. members have, from the cancer boards about the necessity for applied research as opposed to simply the basic and less control kind of research which goes on in the other research bodies. Nonetheless, it's a question before us, and my interest in it will be to provide the best value for our research dollar in Alberta. That will be what I will take into that policy discussion.

The second issue, with respect to prevention: yes, in fact it is one of the guidelines for applied cancer research. I guess we need only look at the issue of smoking, for example, and the very direct correlation that's been established between smoking and lung cancer. There may well be other things that we can do in an education sense which don't need the actual research funds applied to them too; nonetheless prevention, as well as diagnosis and treatment, is part of that research capability. I think the prevention end is more the issue of how we can get the information to Albertans so that they can make healthy choices about their life-style in order to not get things like lung cancer, et cetera. That is perhaps a different issue than specifically the applied cancer research here.

The third question -- and it's the same one, I think, that was asked by the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek as well, or Calgary-Forest Lawn -- was the issue of rejection of the proposals, and Calgary-Mountain View raised the same question. I think it's important to point out that it is the provincial cancer hospitals that review the proposals. The department provides the research funds, and the basic procedure for evaluation is a peer review process, which includes an evaluation by a team of experts on the Alberta Cancer Board Advisory Committee on Research. As well, we evaluate programs co-ordinated with other agencies. Certainly all of our research agencies are working hard to ensure that the multidisciplinary approach that we are promoting in the research area means a co-ordination and a nonduplication of those precious research dollars, and it's a very strong responsibility on the part of the peer review process.

Edmonton-Whitemud raised the question with respect to why this is the capital projects division. I think it's "capital" in the broadest sense of the word. This is a dedicated fund of dollars from which the assets are being used by the province in a certain way. So it's not capital in the sense of the way we traditionally define it in the budget process, capital meaning buildings. It is the actual dollars of investment in the heritage fund and how we use those dollars.

The question of whether or not the capital projects division is part of the deemed assets of the heritage fund. The member may wish to raise the question with the Treasurer when the actual Bill is before the House as opposed to the estimates. But if I refer him to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, section 6, it

says that:

The assets of the Trust Fund shall be used for the following purposes:

And when we get into this particular capital projects division, it is:

the making of investments in projects which will provide long term economic or social benefits to the people of Alberta but which [may] not [necessarily] by their nature yield a return to the Trust Fund.

So that is the issue we're talking about here. Yes, it is part of the deemed assets of the fund.

The Member for Edmonton-Avonmore raised the question of the family life and drug abuse foundation. That is not what is before us this evening. That would be a separate investment, a \$200 million endowment fund of the heritage fund. I can't provide for the hon. member what division that would come out of, but it would be a separate fund.

Calgary-Mountain View raised the question of really the linkage between what we're discussing here tonight, which is applied research, and the decisions that are medically based and research based on how to use those research funds in the best way and link that to patient care in Alberta cancer hospitals. I will have to check for the hon. member about the procedure of an approved cancer program in Ontario which wasn't approved in Alberta. My understanding of the decision would be that if it were medically recommended that that person review or check out a particular kind of procedure which might not be available in Alberta, then that would be covered by our Alberta health care plan. But I would be pleased to look into the specifics of the actual case the hon. member raised.

We are not talking here about the treatment. We are talking about the clinical research and, in fact, patients being involved in the actual research, which is what cancer is about. There certainly is a patient policy in our province to protect the rights and the vulnerability of that patient before any kinds of proposals are accepted by the peer review.

In terms of the bone marrow transplantation registry, I am pleased to get the representation from the hon. member. Certainly there are bone marrow transplants occurring in our province. The question is how far we go and what is experimentation and what is not. But I'm happy to receive his recommendations on that registry. It hasn't received Canada-wide discussion amongst the ministers of health to my knowledge, but I will certainly keep my interest open on the matter.

I think that answers, Mr. Chairman, the questions that have been raised with us.

MR. PASHAK: Just a very brief question. I don't think it came through; I think the microphones weren't operating or whatever. It's just a very quick question. I noticed that this year the amount to be voted is \$2.8 million and a year ago it was \$2.8 million, but before that it was \$4.8 million. Does this reflect a government kind of policy with respect to capping the amount of money that's available for cancer research or whatever? Just what is the government's policy with respect to funding for research?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: I thought I had answered the question, so I apologize to the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

It's not a cap, but it is certainly the end of the cadence in terms of this. We committed to the end of '89-90 for the dedi-

cation of these funds to Applied Cancer Research. The policy question before us now is whether that continues on. Certainly the Cancer Board is a strong proponent of continuing to have this applied research. The broader question is whether it is the best value for the research dollar to keep it in this area, very strictly controlled in that sense, or broaden it out into the broader research capability. That's the question before us, and I don't have an answer for the hon. member tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Yes. Just a few more points to ask for some clarification on.

In terms of the co-ordination with research projects as they might be coming from a number of different avenues, I wonder whether the minister was going to say that it was in fact co-ordinated with the research being done by the Cancer Society. I know they don't have a lot of money, but I think most of the money that they do receive does go to research. I'm just wondering, again vis-à-vis those projects and those research directions, whether -- I'm sure there must be some co-ordination, but just how does it work?

Also, I did forget to mention . . . Again, with the dollars going from government but through the Provincial Cancer Hospitals Board -- they make the funding decisions -- is there any bias toward or any further need for, in the minister's judgment, research into AIDS and HIV? Certainly the relationship between HIV and cancer is very strong. And as we've seen in previous government reports, they recommend some research to go into the whole field of AIDS research, but to my knowledge no funding has yet gone into that. I'm wondering whether some of this money can be used for either epidemiologists or others who are looking into AIDS research.

Then the last one -- I know it's just a thorny issue, and I'm never quite clear about it, but I would like to toss it out to this minister for her response now or in the future -- is again the judgment around how the patents would proceed if certain research proposals develop the cure for cancer or some chemotherapeutic breakthrough or something that is just going to be bought up by all kinds of people. Who owns the patent for that kind of breakthrough, whether it's a drug or some other cure? Is it the researcher? Is it the university in which they're doing the research? Or does the government have some claim on the patents, since it's government money that's going to it? I'm never quite clear, with Chembiomed and all the research that's going on to do with medical research, and particularly in the pharmaceutical industry, which is supported by public dollars, who owns the patent. I take it there has been something worked out with faculty at the university, but here again if that, God help us, cure for cancer is ever broken through and discovered, it's going to be quite an issue with respect to the patent around it. I think it presents some difficulty on the policy side.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, there is definitely co-ordination with the other agencies that have research funds, certainly the Cancer Society. In fact, we encourage applicants, through the review process by the Provincial Cancer Hospitals Board, to co-ordinate the need for those research dollars and to approach other funds. But, yes, those funds are attempting to co-ordinate as best they can without infringing upon what may be a direct interest of the particular research group. I think that would apply specifically with the Alberta Cancer Society. But,

yes, the answer's there, and we encourage a multidisciplinary approach.

Secondly, with respect to research into AIDS and cancer, of course the AIDS portion would not be under this applied cancer research unless it was linked to the cancer issue. Certainly there is AIDS research through blood work, for lack of a better word -- and I apologize for not having the correct one -- with work being done through the foundation for medical research. I think one of the policy questions before us is whether we choose diseases specifically for a specific response, whether it's in the treatment or the establishment of facilities or whether it's in research towards it. I realize cancer is that in this province. Are we going to be into other diseases to which there are going to have to be specific, dedicated research funds? It's a major policy question before us, and it's right there.

With respect to who owns the research, I don't have an answer for the hon. member, and I would be pleased to respond to him in writing with an ownership response. It's a very legitimate question, and I don't have it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the minister. I'm looking for some general information. I wrote to the minister probably about a month ago concerning the sources of research funds for sudden infant death syndrome. The minister was very quick to respond and has given me a comprehensive list of potential funding sources for that kind of research. I would just like to pursue that in light of the fact that under this vote, or under tonight's topic at least, clearly there is the potential for funding research into certain diseases, such as cancer research.

I'm really simply looking for information, and I guess I'm asking the minister whether she could tell me how it is that money from the heritage trust fund might ultimately be committed to sudden infant death syndrome research, whether that would be done under a vote such as the one that we're discussing tonight or whether there would be some other way that we could promote that and bring that to the attention of medical researchers, either through the heritage trust funding process somehow or elsewhere. I am impressed by the number of possible sources, but I note that they're not directly focused on sudden infant death syndrome. I'm sure that the minister is aware of this, but many people aren't, that in fact SIDS takes many more infants than immediately comes to mind, in many people's minds, at least. One out of 500 children under the age of one year dies from this affliction, which would rank it as one of the most persistent causes of death in infants under the age of one. If the minister could comment on that, I'd appreciate it.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, I think it gets back to what the Member for Edmonton-Centre was asking, and that is the specific disease and specific research applied to that disease. There's no way that I could assure the hon. member that a SIDS proposal would be funded under this research fund, because I think appropriately it is decisions made by a peer review process of what's the best value for those research dollars. Nonetheless, I think one of the gaps, if you like, that I feel we've identified within the Department of Health . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order please. The Chair is having

some difficulty hearing the minister. If we could lower the level of conversations for a while, at least . . .

MRS. BETKOWSKI: No guarantee that we could get this particular fund funding the SIDS. Nonetheless, I think there is a gap in the ability to say we want to know more about this: we want to know more about infant mortality rates; we want to know more about the first six months of life. I'm hoping that with the combined efforts of the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans and other bodies that may be reporting to the province over the next several months, we will have some impetus towards that kind of thing. We may, for example, hit health goals as part of something we wish to consider as a government. If we want to reduce the infant mortality rate of six months and under, SIDS may well be an area that we could target into. So I can't guarantee that this will be directly linked to that, but certainly the issue of research and how to use those research funds in the best way is an important one before us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the House ready for the question?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS M. LAING: I just have a couple of questions -- I'm sorry I didn't ask them earlier -- in regard to research into the area of breast cancer and the kind of effective treatments that are being . . . If we're looking into the effectiveness of treatment -- I know that in the past radical mastectomies were performed, certainly, when it was not necessary -- and if that would be an area that the research department would be looking into . . . Also, I understand that the prostheses that women who've had radical mastectomies require have been taken out of the Aids to Daily Living, and I'm wondering again if they would be returned in the future. I recognize that it probably doesn't come under this vote, but . . .

Thank you.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: The second question. No, it doesn't come under this vote, and for the time being the prostheses are not covered within the overall coverage policy of Alberta Aids to Daily Living, but that is a very separate issue from what is being dealt with here.

With respect to breast cancer, yes. In fact, a good deal of the clinical research has addressed better methods. That's why it is clinical research, that you don't need to do the radical mastectomies as often, and there are much more precise kinds of surgery going on. I think it was in response to that knowledge of how important the whole issue of prevention and early detection is, more importantly with breast cancer -- why we've moved with the start-up of a breast early detection of cancer program in the province. So there's a very clear application of applied research, and then right into the whole early detection/prevention mode.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Agreed to:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Total Vote 1 -- Applied Cancer Research | \$2,800,000 |
|---|-------------|

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, I move that the vote be

reported.

[Motion carried]

Environment

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the next matter for attention by the committee is the Department of the Environment. The estimates are to be found commencing at page 15; they're actually on page 15 and page 16. There are two votes. Vote 1 relates to Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement, and vote 2, Land Reclamation. The Chair will hear comments with regard to either vote, but would the minister like to make any introductory comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would you like to have the vote now or later?

Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity to make a few brief opening remarks. The Department of the Environment is responsible for two important programs, namely the irrigation headworks and the main irrigation systems improvement program, which is vote 1, and the land reclamation program, which is vote 2. Vote 1 is for \$39,837,000, and vote 2 is for \$2,480,000.

Mr. Chairman, I had filed with the Clerk maps for all members, and if those maps could be distributed, I'd be most appreciative. These maps basically show the distribution network in southern Alberta and will give members some idea of the significance of the irrigation system in southern Alberta. I'll just continue while the maps are being handed out.

Mr. Chairman, the irrigation headworks and the main irrigation systems improvement program not only provides water for irrigation but also provides for a wide range of multipurpose uses, such as domestic water supply for area residents, municipal and industrial water needs, water-based recreational facilities such as Chestermere Lake and Kehoe Lake and Lake Newell, and wildlife enhancement. In short, it is the lifeline of the southern Alberta economy and is much, much more than just a rural thing. The program to rehabilitate the headworks system was initiated in 1975 and was significantly expanded in scope following the government decision in 1980 to proceed with an integrated water management plan for southern Alberta. This program is a 15-year program ending in 1995.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate at this time that this program is essentially a program for rehabilitation in upgrading of existing irrigation main conveyance systems. These systems were built during the early part of this century, and I had the opportunity not so long ago of touring the system by helicopter. One has to use one's imagination, I guess, to think of the courage and the foresight and the tremendous hard work that those pioneers put in to build that system. In the first place, it's just so immense, so impressive, and it gives you an idea of the courage of our forefathers to have the foresight to develop the lands of southern Alberta the way they have been developed today.

That was 60 years ago, and these systems that are still in use today have fallen into disrepair. Improvement and upgrading of these systems is necessary in order not only to meet present-day demand but also the expanding level of multipurpose water use. After six decades of continuous operation some of the conveyance structures -- most of the conveyance structures -- and

the main canals of these systems have deteriorated badly and are in poor condition. The system capacities were limited and were barely adequate to meet the needs of the districts. Therefore, a major rehabilitation program was urgently required in order to provide for the uninterrupted operation of these systems for a reasonable length of time. So that is a brief overview of vote 1, Mr. Chairman.

Now turning to the land reclamation program, I'd like to make a few comments regarding this very, very popular program. Mr. Chairman, government-allocated money through the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund to the land reclamation program in 1976 and 1977 in the current program has been extended to March 31, 1994, to the tune of about \$2.5 million a year. As members know, the objectives of this program are basically to return lands as closely as possible to their original capability and to carry out reclamation research on industrial disturbances to land to determine methods of minimizing such disturbances and to provide for early certification of reclaimed lands and to create local employment for many Albertans. In the last while the most common projects are municipality directed and consist of abandoned landfill sites and sewage lagoons and water reservoirs and sand and gravel pits and so on. To date we have completed nearly 1,200 individual projects, mainly small ones, that previously scarred our landscape. In addition, much-needed reclamation research is undertaken, and we are now starting to get some answers on how to minimize industrial impact on land and to assist in determining how to reclaim land.

I know that members of the Assembly are interested to know that there is considerable work to be done through this program. For example, we estimate that there are between 300 to 400 individual landfills which will need attention in the next few years. So I think it's important to note that Alberta's landscape is still scarred by the remains of a wide range of past activities such as abandoned irrigation ditches and railways and roadways; abandoned water, oil and gas wells; and extensive sand and gravel operations on private lands. There may be a need to expand the program into these areas in future years. As members know, this is a very positive program with municipalities and with the private sector, and in a few short years we will have succeeded in reclaiming many scars on our landscape.

Mr. Chairman, with that I would be pleased to listen to comments and to entertain questions. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the minister for his very helpful introductory comments. In his enthusiasm to serve the committee well, he's spread over into the second vote in his opening remarks, but I'll restrict my comments to the first vote until we deal with that, and then perhaps come back on the second vote. Irrigation certainly can and does make unproductive or less productive lands in our province flourish, and I'd like to share the enthusiasm of the minister for our forefathers. I think the foremothers had something to do with that as well.

The irrigation technology augments a natural flow of water, of course, and makes land more productive. I think the obligation of the government from a public policy point of view is to make sure that the system is the most efficient possible -- that is to say that we don't waste a lot of water -- and to ensure that the

benefits and the costs are in some measure in balance. Now, very clearly the money expended under the irrigation headworks and main irrigation systems improvement program is designed to make the system more efficient. Less water is wasted through the system as we proceed to more concrete-lined canals and generally fix things up so that less water leaks out of the system or drains out in unbeneficial ways. I think we also have to make sure that the irrigation technology itself is benign; that is, that it doesn't result in the destruction or degradation of soils over a long period of time.

Now, as I said, this program does help to make the headworks and the irrigation systems more efficient. I note that some \$400 million has been spent up to the beginning of this fiscal year, with another \$40 million this year. The minister didn't indicate but I presume that in the remaining five years of the program we're looking at roughly the same rate of expenditure: approximately \$40 million a year, or another \$200 million yet to go under this program, which makes somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$650 million in total invested in rehabilitating the headworks and the irrigation systems, a very considerable sum of money, I think, by any standard at all. If you add to that the cost of the Oldman River dam, which is still listed in government literature as \$360 million in 1986 dollars but which I reckon will be some \$500 million of actual, as-spent dollars, you've got a figure of \$1.1 billion or \$1.2 billion that the government is putting into capital investment in the irrigation system, which goes beyond a sizable sum of money: it's an incredibly significant investment in irrigation technology.

I wonder if the minister has taken some time to investigate whether that massive expenditure from the public purse is being matched by improvements in technology at the farm level. I mean, it's one thing to put in excess of a billion dollars into, if you like, the wholesale end of the system, but I'm wondering what attention is being paid to research and to applied technology right down on the farm in terms of the efficient use of irrigation water and of ensuring that the investment that's there is going to enhance the productivity of the resource over a long period of time. I am told, for example, that upwards of half of the water that's used in the irrigation system evaporates before it gets down to where it's going to do some good with the basic sprinkler type of technology that's employed in most irrigation operations and that possibly if we were to develop a cost-effective trickle type of system we would have a more efficient use of the water within that particular system. Also, such a system is less prone to overirrigation, which has happened in some cases in the past. When you're irrigating flatlands, you have potentially more danger of salinization and other symptoms of overirrigation than you do in a more sloped type of terrain, such as, for example, they might have in British Columbia.

The other thing that's been expressed to me as a matter of concern from a public policy point of view is that we don't really have a handle on where all of the water goes in the system. I imagine some overall studies have been done, but when you sign on to the irrigation system, obviously you have to have the approval of your irrigation district. They do a study to make certain that the farmland can benefit from the introduction of irrigation. But beyond that, farmers who are on the system pay a per-acre fee for being part of the irrigation system. They don't pay a water charge at all. So if they use a little bit of water or a lot of water or no water at all, they pay essentially the same amount of money per acre, per hectare, or however it's calculated, which obviously doesn't create any particular incentive to

use water carefully. There is a disincentive to overirrigate dramatically because that will result in immediate damage to crops and soil and so forth.

Water really is one of those basic, life-sustaining resources. I think that in our day and age it doesn't make very much sense to say that a life-sustaining resource is free or without charge, because that means, in effect, that we don't put any particular value on the resource. Obviously it does have a value. The government wouldn't be investing in excess of a billion dollars in the system on projects already committed if it didn't put some value on it, but the question is: how is that value reflected down at the retail level, and is there not a case for perhaps metering water as it goes through the system in the interests of making sure that the efficiency is there and that water is not being wasted in the system?

I would like to know what studies have been done by the Environment department relative to these issues, because the Environment department is investing some \$600 million through this particular program, especially in the area of cost benefit. Are we making the best possible use of irrigated lands? What types of crops are being grown on irrigated land? Are these the types of things that are best suited towards irrigation technology or not? I don't know the answers to these questions, but I wonder what kinds of studies are being done relative to the investment of this kind of money.

Obviously, soil conservation is an issue, but I think we as a government have an obligation -- or you guys do in the government anyway -- to evaluate the sustainability of all types of economic activities, including irrigation. I think that's a part of determining whether this type of investment should continue or perhaps be expanded, or what the next steps are in irrigation, knowing whether the type of activity that's in place in irrigation is sustainable or not. Is the minister considering some means of tracking the flow of irrigation, if not through a metering system, through some other type of system?

What about future expansion of the irrigation system? I understand there's some limited scope for expansion with the Oldman River dam project, but part of the justification for that project is that the capability exists to add more lands onto the irrigation system in the Oldman River system. But what about some of the other river systems in the province? Where are we at in terms of studying potential expansion of the irrigation system? I'm thinking of the Paddle River system, the Milk River, the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan river systems. Is the government coming close, through the Environment department -- because that's where the river management studies are done; that's where all the dam builders live, as a matter of fact -- to damming some of those rivers in order to expand the irrigation system to other parts of the province that aren't presently served by the system which is undergoing rehabilitation and improvement through this program?

Those are some of the questions I have relative to this expenditure, and I'm looking forward with interest to the minister's reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few comments I'd like to make on the Department of the Environment estimates under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

It is significant to recall that it was some 14 years ago when the then Premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed, announced while

in Taber that Alberta would invest some \$200 million to significantly rehabilitate and expand our irrigation activities within the province. Of course, since that time we've added to those funds considerably, but it's also important to note the level of rehabilitation and, indeed, the new expanded areas that have been added to our irrigation fold and what that's meant in Alberta. It's seen a system which for many, many years was in a very serious state of decay and neglect, a system which, through neglect and overuse in some cases, had had some very serious problems developing along main canals with salinity, where farmer was turning against farmer, neighbour against neighbour, because of some of the problems being brought on. While the last 14 years haven't been easy in the sense that you're trying to prioritize activities within 13 autonomous irrigation districts, it has nonetheless been a very exciting, innovative, and worthwhile endeavour.

Last year during the height of our drought, the worst drought to hit parts of Alberta even looking at the '30s, according to some experts in the field, seeing the capacity of the main canal, the enlarged capacity, a number of constituents of mine told me that had we not embarked on our work back in 1975 and continued at it through those years, had we not done that and had there not been the foresight and the vision to get a proper handle on irrigation, we would have had a disaster through our irrigated districts. Some people, Mr. Chairman, are under the illusion that irrigation in some way replaces Mother Nature. That is not the case; it is a supplement to Mother Nature. If it doesn't rain -- I had constituents last year who were out changing their sets on wheel moves every seven hours. They were doing that around the clock seven days a week, and they couldn't keep up. So irrigation isn't there to replace Mother Nature; it is there to supplement Mother Nature. We couldn't have done that, we couldn't have kept up in our own way without that work.

I was really interested to hear the comments made by the former speaker, the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. I do appreciate his interest in this field, but I am reminded of some of the comments made in the Assembly earlier by members from the current caucus -- Calgary-Forest Lawn, for instance, Calgary-Mountain View -- and the former member who represented Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

Last summer, while the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee was touring the various irrigation sites across southern Alberta, I had the pleasure of joining them while they were in Taber, and I remember in one discussion with a couple of opposition members from the committee how pleased I was with their reaction relative to what they saw, relative to the work being done and the development. That's not to suggest for a moment that our system is perfect or that we're using the water in all the right ways. There's always room for improvement; there are ways we can use that water more effectively than we now are. But you don't gallop before you learn to walk and then run. We're moving, and we're moving in a significant way. A farmer is the best policeman for the system, because even though someone might say, "Well, the water is there; you might as well use it," there's a cost associated with that, a cost that is borne totally by the farmer.

When looking at one small system just this past weekend, I asked one of my neighbours what his energy charge is for his particular pivot. That's after the capital investment and not equating in his own costs or breakdowns or anything else, just the cost of energy. Assuming that he's running for a full hour, he's got an energy charge of \$2.75. Now, that's not too bad in

this particular day and age, with the costs we have. Nonetheless, it's a cost that has to get factored in when you consider that his pump is running 24 hours a day, and again depending on what kind of help we receive from Mother Nature, it may be running for quite a long period at a time.

I note that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is not on the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee. With his deep interest in this subject, I certainly hope he's able to become a member of that committee in the not too distant future, because I think that would really be enlightening. In a sense it reminds me of a discussion I had with a very dear friend who's now departed, Mr. Ron Tesolin, who entered this Assembly in 1975 representing the riding of Lac La Biche-McMurray. Ron was coming in to speak at a meeting in the constituency of Taber-Warner. As we were flying into Lethbridge on Time aircraft and I was pointing out the main canal and showing some of the salinity problems, Ron said, "Well, the canal is on the high point of ground." You see, he had assumed that because in his part of the province the only water he sees running is in a creek or a stream or a river, it would be in a low point of ground. Now, there's something that I assumed he knew, and he had a false knowledge base of that particular matter. Once he realized that the canals were built on the high point of ground, it was much easier to understand salinity. Maybe everyone in the Assembly is aware of that today. If they are, I'm pleased. But it shows that whether we're talking about irrigation in the south or drainage in the north, we shouldn't assume that the other party has all the answers or all the knowledge background so that a decision can be made.

I did want to relate specifically to a couple of aspects in the budget today. There is a significant agreement on the main canal, and I'm pleased the minister has seen fit to pass out maps showing all the various irrigation districts. On the very end of the largest of all of the canals -- it's the St. Mary mainline canal -- there is a section; it's the final section to be completed. It's referred to as the Seven Persons Reach. It's located just west of the city of Medicine Hat in the area near the Sauder reservoir. We were able to enter into an agreement with the St. Mary River Irrigation District for this final development. It will cover a three-year period of time. The total cost of \$19.1 million. Now, to do that, we had a lot of help and co-operation from Peter Melnychuk, the assistant deputy minister in the department. As well, over the past few years the three most southerly MLAs have been involved in these main canal agreement discussions, and that's because the canal cuts across all of our constituencies. I'm referring to the members for Cardston, Cypress-Redcliff, and myself.

In these discussions with the St. Mary River Irrigation District board, we were able to bring in two other issues which needed to be addressed. One deals with the inlet, or the outlet if you prefer, from the main canal into Horsefly Lake. Horsefly Lake is located just south and east of the town of Taber. That's been a long-standing concern of the Taber Irrigation District. The three irrigation districts, by the master agreement, are all committed to funding works on Horsefly Lake on a proportional basis to the total acreage they have. There was also a role for the department to play in those discussions, and I'm pleased that with the leadership shown by Peter Langman as chairman of the St. Mary River Irrigation District board, Keith Francis from the Taber Irrigation District, and Bob Wilde from the Raymond Irrigation District, those districts were able to come together and agree upon their participation. They then worked with the three

MLAs, who in turn worked with the department, and we were able to come out with a 60-40 cost-sharing arrangement whereby the department will be responsible for 60 percent of the costs and the districts will come up with the other 40 percent.

There was one other matter that we dealt with in the St. Mary district itself, and that's commonly referred to as the Middle Coulee-Verdigris project. We were able to agree that the St. Mary district will come up with the cost of providing a bypass around the Verdigris slough so that fresh irrigation water can proceed on down to some farmers in the area east of Milk River. In the Middle Coulee area, where there's been some *severe* erosion problems, particularly on the upper reaches, we've been able to see a cost-sharing agreement worked out between the Department of the Environment and the St. Mary River Irrigation District. That cost-sharing agreement will include the basic work necessary in Middle Coulee, plus what might be referred to as basic work on the road access. In other words, the department and the MLAs very strongly agree that we don't need a full-fledged road going along the coulee, but there is some need for improved road access both for the construction work and the annual ongoing maintenance that's necessary. That will be, again, a 60-40 cost-sharing, where the department is providing 60 percent of the costs and the district 40 percent. Again I thank Peter Melnychuk, through the minister, for the fine work and leadership that he's provided in the department on this important issue.

Mr. Chairman, I raise these points to show that it's not only a case of the department going out and investing Heritage Savings Trust Fund dollars on behalf on the expansion of irrigation. We've got 13 districts that are autonomous, that have their own elected boards of directors. Each has its own priority list and its own needs. Some are involved in intensive irrigation with the row-crop industry and others in a less intensive manner. So there's a need for flexibility and understanding. I pass on, through the minister again, the appreciation of the members involved for the way his department has accepted that challenge in its working with the districts, many of whom are constituents we represent.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have several comments I would like to make. The first comment I will make has nothing to do with whether or not we should spend this money on irrigation headworks and main irrigation systems improvement. It has everything to do with why it is that it is the Minister of the Environment who has risen in this House tonight to, first of all, brag about the \$362 million that his department has supervised under this vote in the past and, secondly, to brag about and talk about how he's going to spend the \$39.8 million that is budgeted under this vote for the coming year.

Substantively, I have a serious problem with the Department of the Environment having the responsibility to supervise this kind of expenditure on irrigation headworks and main irrigation systems improvement. It is a conflict of interest. The Minister of the Environment should ensure that his department reviews the environmental concerns of this kind of project from an objective point of view. It is impossible, it would seem to me, that his department -- as good as they are, as competent as they are -- could conceivably be objective when they have a huge stake

within their department in developing and planning and building and promoting this kind of project.

If I can refer the minister to his own estimates, the estimates of his department, this \$39 million will be added to the \$46.4 million under vote 3, Water Resources Management. That means that we have in the order of \$85 million of a total of, if you add together the total Environment department budget with this, \$160 million. Fifty percent of this department's budget goes to Water Resources Management, Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement. Fifty percent, and fully 520 members of his department are directly involved in that kind of activity. It is, Mr. Chairman, a direct conflict of interest because these kinds of projects have an impact on the environment, and we can have no confidence that there is anybody with any objectivity in a position to review, to determine their environmental impact.

I am also concerned at another level, and that is that this initiative tonight, coupled with the \$46 million already spent through this department on water resources management, directly reflects the height of cynical politics. This government last year made a commitment to get out of the dam, water resource management business, and what did they do in response to that commitment? They transferred seven people -- seven people whose offices, last time I checked, were still in the Department of the Environment. However, they were reporting to somebody in Public Works, Supply and Services. Five hundred and twenty people remain in that department working on these kinds of projects, and \$85 million of a fully \$160 million managed by this department has nothing to do with the environment; it has everything to do with dams and water resource management. It is improper that it should be in that department both substantively and because this minister's predecessor made a commitment to get it out of that department.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, we cannot support that this particular amount of money will be spent by the Department of the Environment. That's not to say we would not view this more favourably under the Department of Agriculture. It would stand to reason that the Department of Agriculture should play the role in developing these kinds of headworks, should even promote these kinds of activities. But they should do that with the objective review and in many cases the public review somehow coordinated or involved in by the Environment department, and perhaps the next step would be to have the process supervised by the environment assessment committee which we have proposed in a Bill that's on the Order Paper at this time.

The second question that concerns me is the question of the cost benefit: \$362 million. I wonder whether the minister could show us anywhere -- and maybe it exists; hopefully it exists -- where an analysis of the cost benefit has been done on that \$362 million investment. I would like to see that before we could consider more favourably, one way or another, the additional expenditure of another \$39 million.

Thirdly, I would like to ask the minister: of the \$2.5 million under the Land Reclamation vote, how much will be spent on reclaiming land that has been damaged due to faulty irrigation technology; that is to say, are we reclaiming land that has become overly salinized due to irrigation? Could the minister please comment on that?

Finally, would the minister state, one, his commitment to -- and secondly, indicate what he's going to do about it -- research into various kinds of land conservation techniques in drylands, which might include promoting with the Agriculture department

other ways for making that land productive that go beyond irrigation?

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair misread his lists. I recognize the Member for Cypress-Redcliff, then followed by Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just some short comments about the allotment to the Department of the Environment relating to main headworks funding. Some members have made comments about the overirrigating of land. I think the Member for Taber-Warner answered much of that when he gave a per-hour cost of operating equipment to irrigate, operating the pivot system. The other thing we must remember, too, besides the per-hour cost is the upgrading on that system and the replacement of that system. We're looking at somewhere between \$50,000 and \$60,000 per pivot system in place on the farmland; that's over and above the price of the land.

In rough terms we are now irrigating about one and a third more land with roughly the same amount of water as we were 10 to 12 years ago. So the systems have improved. But I think the one thing that has happened along the upgrading of the main canal and the recovery of land along that canal and the stopping of that canal from leaking -- indeed we often heard before that we used to have a lot of pheasants, a lot of wildlife along those canals because of that swampy ground. That doesn't exist anymore because those canals don't leak. That is, one of the problems with the system is that it was improved to the great extent now that it doesn't leak, and something nobody could foresee was that that land and some of that wildlife would be lost. As a result, certain irrigation districts have done things to put land elsewhere into production for wildlife.

Some of the other comments made, Mr. Chairman, related to the methods of irrigation. Just quickly, I looked at some irrigation in Israel. Mention was made of trickle irrigation. In rough terms, to irrigate an acre of land with trickle irrigation, if you're dealing with rows in two-foot spaces and every other row has a trickle irrigation pipe going down, we're looking at maybe half-inch pipe and about 10,000 lineal feet of pipe to irrigate every acre. So if we're looking at 135 acres that a pivot covers or the full 160 acres in a quarter, we're looking at how many miles of plastic pipe to irrigate that? Then besides that, we've got to buy another half section of land to store the darned pipe on, because it's got to be rolled up. That was the one problem they had over there in irrigating cotton: the amount of land it took to store the pipe. It isn't quite as simple as it seems. It's simpler when you're dealing with smaller acreages, but when you're dealing with larger acreages, it presents a whole new problem.

Mr. Chairman, comment was also made about where in relation is the farmer compared to the delivery systems we are constructing and reconstructing. I would say that if we look on the vast majority of the farms, their systems are at least five to 10 years ahead of that of the delivery system even when the delivery system is completed. There may be one exception, and that is an area where, instead of putting open ditches, we went to pressurized pipe in the reconstruction. That changes the benefits a lot. Really, a concrete ditch is one thing, but an enclosed system is something totally different. In our country we have to look at the delivery system and the size of the delivery system. We have to look at what frost will do to it. It's not quite as simple as it is in California and other areas of the world to construct

a system that will work. We have to have a system that works in extreme heat and cold.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask the minister some questions about that stretch of the canal system that involves the canal from where it leaves the weir in downtown Calgary and continues on to Chestermere Lake. I'm sure the Member for Drumheller would also have an interest in the answers to these questions, because that stretch of the canal is really the only significant and interesting geographic feature in that part of the city of Calgary and that land that lies to the east. It's relatively flat and somewhat removed from the Bow River and other park areas.

There was a park proposal that went forward in 1978 to develop the irrigation canal along that stretch. In fact, I raised this during the estimates to some extent, and that land is controlled by the Western Irrigation District, so it's part of the canal system. They'd agreed to put funding into that stretch of the canal to develop that land for park and recreational purposes. In doing that, they consulted a wide range of Calgary outdoor clubs, canoe clubs, hiking clubs, all the community associations in that area of the city, and a rather exciting proposal did come forward that the province -- again I'd like to stress -- was prepared to fund. I guess that's back when times were relatively good and money was flowing into the Treasury from oil in significant ways.

My understanding is that the city backed out of negotiations on developing the park at that time because they just felt for whatever reason that they didn't want to take on the responsibility for ongoing maintenance. Now, that might not be correct, but the significant point is that I believe something is now happening along that stretch of the canal. As I go along there, I see work taking place. I think they're straightening out the west bank of the canal along that area. And the map the minister was so kind to provide us with also indicates that that stretch of the canal from the weir to Chestermere Lake is either under future or presently under construction.

So the questions I have to the minister that arise out of that background information: first of all, is it still the policy of his department, when they're doing upgrading and rehabilitation of canals, to also provide for recreational and park opportunities where that's appropriate? That's the general question. Then I'd like to ask a couple of specific questions with respect to that stretch of the canal system. Perhaps the first question would be: could he bring us up to date on the status of improvements that are taking place there? I know the minister can't be responsible for knowing everything that goes on in his department and that sort of thing, but he could at least perhaps agree to bring that information before the Assembly at some point in the future by way of letter.

The second question would be: what is the status of negotiations with respect to the city of Calgary in terms of ongoing maintenance if that stretch of the canal or part of that stretch of the canal should be developed for park and recreational purposes? I guess I don't have to remind the minister, the former mayor of the city Calgary, just how essential additional recreational and park space in that area of the city would be for the residents who live there. It's vitally needed, and any help the

minister could provide in that respect I'm sure would be greatly appreciated by all the citizens on the east side of the city of Calgary.

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

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER: The boy from Bow Island.

MR. TAYLOR: The man from Manyberries to you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, on the two works, votes 1 and 2 -- I'll group them together to make the answering simple -- I'm still bothered by the fact my colleague the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark has already touched on, the question of the Department of the Environment, which should really be a policing type of department, out doing capital works and particularly after they said last year that they had learned their lesson and wouldn't be doing so. As my colleague pointed out, there were seven people, I guess, transferred over. So the seven dwarves left because Snow White had just been taken over as the new Minister of the Environment, I gather. Nevertheless, I think Snow White should be spending a little time, Mr. Chairman, on . . .

Besides irrigation, I'd be intrigued to know whether the Department of the Environment is taking as aggressive a stance, or are they doing any capital works, with respect to the dry areas of the province. Although you wouldn't know this year, there is certainly geographically much more dry area than wet area.

This occupation with irrigation, I think, is quite legitimate. Having been raised next to irrigation, I know how important it is, but I also know that if Environment had been on the job years ago or even on the job now, a lot of the land productivity we lost in the dry areas that never will be irrigated could have been retained. I'm afraid this government may have taken the motto from the hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff's tie: if it's green, we can spend a lot of time on it, but if it's brown or not green, then we can ignore it. Consequently, Mr. Chairman, I'd be interested in knowing if the Minister of the Environment has any sort of program going for dryland and wind erosion. That would come under land reclamation, of course.

The other thing that bothered me very much -- and I notice the Minister of Municipal Affairs has taken off -- is that this government has a tax system that encourages municipal districts . . . They ask the municipal districts to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He's back.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry. I didn't intend to refer to his leaving. I'm so used to seeing him over on that side of the Chair that I didn't look over here, I guess, now that he has his new-found authority. But I think he and his seatmate could do some checking as to why our tax system is designed to encourage MDs to do away with food-producing land. If you can zone it industrial for a gas plant or zone it industrial for any sort of plant, there's much more money comes into the MD. So what we have here is the Minister of the Environment, dedicated to preserving our environment, sitting in a cabinet that has rules in municipal regulations that encourage MDs to convert their farmland over to industrial use in order to raise more money. Because after all, an acre of farmland is only going to yield a few dollars taxes, but if you can convert a quarter section or 80 acres to industrial use for particularly sulphur plants and any-

thing else, the taxation, because of the capital structures on it, yields a lot more money. I'm sorry for being so simple here, but I saw the frown on the hon. Snow White's brow, Mr. Chairman, and I thought I'd explain to him why that impetus or inborn pressure was there to convert land to industrial use.

Then we have the minister coming along from Calgary, in all his due innocence as he moved up here, saying that the government is learning to minimize industrial effect. I took that down with my own shorthand, Mr. Chairman. Well, I think somebody with this kind of 19th century, antediluvian approach to land reclamation, "learning to minimize industrial effect" -- what the hell's industrial effect doing in there in the first place, Mr. Chairman, if I can broach on the four-letter words. In other words, the best way to reclaim land is to make darned sure the thing doesn't get ruined in the first place. So I'll be very interested in knowing whether the Minister of the Environment has been checking with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to see if they can work out some system that doesn't give an inborn advantage in pressure to develop industrial areas.

I know in my own constituency they not only zoned farmland to industrial use for a gas plant but then had the nerve -- the councillors said they'd had pressure from the hill, Mr. Chairman, the hill referring to this mound of dirt where this Chamber is sitting now. They said they had pressure. I would be very interested whether the Minister of the Environment put any pressure on those councillors in the MD of Sturgeon to take on a sulphur plant, or if he did not, whether he knows whether his seatmate might have put pressure or somebody else put pressure on the MD of Sturgeon to allow the oil companies to put the sulphur plant where they wanted, which was in the middle of number 1 and 2 land, and our genial soul will come rollin' along five, 10, 15 years from now, whoever succeeds in the position, asking for taxpayers' money to put the land back in the same position.

AN HON. MEMBER: Headworks.

MR. TAYLOR: I doubt if you'll live that long, Mr. Minister. But this is the type of silliness we've got going on here.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, if I may put one other shot in here, because he still seems to be alive and wiggling, what is the minister doing in the reclamation of land that has been oversaturated with herbicides or pesticides, or has he even tested for that? Has the Department of the Environment been doing any testing to find out whether land is slipping slowly but surely into non-productivity because of the overuse of either pesticides or herbicides or both? I'd be interested if there are any programs that way at all. All I see here is a mad, insane desire to dam every trickle in Alberta and try to spread the water around the immediate vicinity of the dam as far as it goes, not real, true, land reclamation.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to participate in the discussion of vote 1 under the Department of the Environment. I thank the minister for passing out these maps. They're very helpful. I do want to point out, though, that when Kowalski was minister, he gave us coloring books. Hon. members will remember those.

I would like to say, before getting into the discussion on this,

that the minister has come under quite a bit of fire for a number of very sensitive issues that relate to his department. I don't want to comment on them -- it's inappropriate at this point -- but I do want to point out that he has taken action in a very speedy way on some other issues that don't necessarily come to the attention of this House. I want to go on record thanking him on behalf of some constituents of mine, in particular the representatives of the Holden drainage district who asked that I arrange as quickly as possible a meeting with the new minister to discuss their needs in respect to the rehabilitation of the drainage canal in the area south of Holden.

Their problem had developed over a period of years, where the funding they were getting seemed to be approved later and later and later in the construction season, putting into some doubt the progress on the project. They weren't sure if they'd be able to do anything from year to year because the announcements came so late. They were concerned about that and wanted to meet with the new minister to explain their needs, hoping that would help him better understand the needs of other drainage districts. I made a request to the minister that the meeting be scheduled. He did it at the earliest possible convenience, and then lo and behold, before the meeting came, he'd already solved their problem. They had their commitment and had it early. So a little pat on the back for the minister there from the people involved in the Holden drainage district project. I express my appreciation as well for him being very open and willing to listen to the concerns I expressed to him.

In terms of vote 1 here, the Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement, I think I concur wholeheartedly with the comments made by my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place. Certainly, once the projects are in place and the irrigation systems are there and working, it's in everybody's best interest to make sure they're working well. If that requires some rehabilitation to the irrigation headworks, some relining of the canals, some improvement in the canal construction, then I think we can all agree that's money well spent. What we're trying to do is preserve and make better use of the resource. So I think on the face most of these expenditures are fairly benign. It's money that we could all agree is being well spent to make better use, more efficient use, and more thoughtful use of an existing resource.

I think, however, there is some case to be made and some questions that need to be asked with respect to the government's overall policy of spending money on developing irrigation systems and water management systems in the southern part of the province. I think it would be instructive for all members of the Assembly, especially ones that live, say, north of the Trans-Canada Highway, to take a close look at just how much money has been spent by the government to promote agriculture in the southern part of the province and compare it to the amount of money that's spent to promote agriculture in the northern part now. I think in fairness I should acknowledge that the conditions are dramatically different. We have in the southern part of the province areas that receive a substantial number of heat units during the growing season but often lack water. We have in the central part of the province some areas that receive, on average, adequate rainfall; perhaps frost might be a problem.

Then you get up into the Peace country, where in some parts you've got some special conditions with usually more rain than they know what to do with and very long daylight hours, which kind of puts a bit of a different spin on the growing seasons there. The conditions are different and I acknowledge that, but I

think the claim can be made with fairness that a disproportionate amount of money has been spent by this government over the past 15 years or so developing projects in the extreme southern part of the province that has tended to relocate or shift the emphasis of agriculture southward.

Now, there are some enterprises in the southern part of the province that aren't likely to flourish in the northern part, and I speak of some specialty crops -- vegetables, et cetera -- that we find growing in the Brooks area and down around Lethbridge perhaps that aren't likely to do as well in the northern part of the province. But there are as well some forms of agriculture crops being produced in the southern part of the province on irrigated land that are produced in the northern part of the province with every bit as much success. I'm talking about alfalfa and barley production, wheat production. I think what we've seen over a period of years . . . I don't have statistics to support this, but I think hon. members can see the trend. The livestock feeding industry especially has moved further and further south. The industry is very heavily concentrated in the southern part of the province. I think there's a case to be made for some very serious consideration to be given to what we can do to make agriculture in the central and northern parts of the province more productive.

There is, as I acknowledged at the beginning of my comments, some money spent on water management projects in the central and northern parts of the province. They're usually drainage projects, because often the problem people experience there is too much water rather than not enough. So there is some money spent there. I think after years of deliberation the funding formula was made the same so that it was 86 percent/14 percent on a provincial government/local cost-sharing basis. That discrepancy was addressed, but I still think the concerns expressed by farmers in the central and northern part of the province that a disproportionate amount of the government's attention seems to be paid to the southern part of the province is a reasonable case and one we ought to take a closer look at. I recognize that these projects are always very controversial and sensitive. Certainly the development of canal projects, water storage projects, dam projects is becoming more and more controversial. I think that's a healthy thing, because we need to take a very close look at every project planned, take a look at its overall impact, not just see a river and believe that if we dam it, it will back up water and make it available for us to use. There are impacts both upstream and downstream from that construction, and it has substantial impact on the overall environment. Those things need to be considered and considered very closely before proceeding with projects.

The drainage projects are also very controversial, and any member who's had to deal with drainage projects will understand just how much controversy can be generated. When one farmer, for example, wants to drain a slough to be able to crop a few additional acres, that causes some grief for people downstream who may feel that their land is being flooded by too much water coming their way. So there's always a controversy, and there needs to be careful consideration of the interests of all parties involved. A downstream assessment of the impact of any project is something that I hope and I know the department takes a close look at.

I think there's also a sort of third player in the situation now as it respects drainage projects, and perhaps to some degree irrigation projects, and that is the people who advocate on behalf of wildlife habitat and wetland maintenance. I think the case

could be made in some areas that people have gone too far in the direction of drainage and perhaps have really caused some problems with the marshland and wetland habitat. I'm just trying to make the point here that the broad variety of interests society has has to be considered when these projects are undertaken. We're not just dealing with farmers who either want more water to farm with or want to get rid of some water so they can crop more land. People other than those of us involved in agriculture have interests that need to be respected. Those are the people who advocate, as I said, on behalf of maintenance of wildlife habitat and wetlands in the province.

Those concerns being expressed, bringing those concerns on behalf of northern farmers to the minister's attention, I would like to say again that from my point of view the money proposed under vote 1 is money well spent trying to make those irrigation systems better. I do hope the minister takes to heart the comments made by my colleague from Edmonton-Meadowlark in respect to jurisdiction. The Department of the Environment ought to think very carefully about being involved in the construction and maintenance of irrigation projects. I know the responsibility for dam building was taken away from the Department of the Environment last September, September 1988, during the cabinet shuffle and given over to the minister of public works. That was something we all thought was a good idea, but now it ends up being the same dam minister in charge of public works -- I mean the dam-building minister in charge of public works -- so he's still got the project under his purview. But I think it makes a lot more sense that the department of public works builds things, and that leaves the Department of the Environment relatively more free to advocate on behalf of the environment.

I think the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark made some additional good points there about irrigation headworks and main irrigation systems improvement, that there's a good case to be made for these water management projects being under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture or -- well, I think Agriculture's probably the best place for those sorts of projects. Then you get ministers in cabinet defending their own turf: a Minister of Agriculture advocating on behalf of those who wish to irrigate their land and produce more and a Minister of the Environment able to advocate on behalf of the environment, making sure that the concerns expressed by people who want our resource to be respected long term, farmers included, are taken into consideration. I think that would be a healthier scenario in terms of having a good debate both inside cabinet and inside caucus and, more importantly, inside this Legislature on the relative merits of various irrigation projects.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to add my voice to a number of others and perhaps ask a question or two that haven't been raised tonight. I want to start out by saying that I agree with the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark in his contention that there is a conflict of interest here. I might just speculate a little bit on how it might have arisen that the Environment department is so heavily involved in irrigation and dam building and irrigation headworks and that sort of thing. I think it probably stems from the days when there was a lot of money coming into the heritage trust fund and the government didn't want to be seen to be spending money too fast in the gen-

eral budget, so one of the backdoor ways of giving money to people that needed it and wanted it for political purposes was to turn the heritage trust fund into the kind of fund that would allow expenditures on what really should have been projects under the general revenue budget rather than out of the heritage trust fund. We've seen a whole raft of those, of course: the building of a hospital, the building of a park, the building of dams, and so on. So I think that's how they got into it. Of course, they still claim that those expenditures on those capital projects are deemed assets and add them to the assets of the fund and say that, you know, this is how much we have and don't acknowledge that the money has actually been spent and is not going to be recovered.

So I think that's probably how it came about. That doesn't excuse continuing to do it now that we know we've spent most of the heritage trust fund on the general revenue deficit, being not too far from equal to the assets of the fund. So it's time the government sorted that out and decided there is a conflict of interest for the Minister of the Environment to be building dams. Really it should be somebody else building them, and he should be monitoring them.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

I want to raise some questions for the minister about the sharing of water with the rest of the prairies. And in terms of building new dams, I might remind this minister, being a new one -- I think I've mentioned it to previous ministers -- that the Saskatchewan dam that was built by Diefenbaker was supposed to revolutionize agriculture in that area. By the time they got it built, in fact, most farmers decided they didn't want to switch to sugar beets from wheat. I think you have to look very carefully. The lesson to be learned from that is that when you think about expanding irrigation in southern Alberta, you've got to think very carefully about what it is that will be grown and what gains there are overall, knowing that irrigation is a very expensive process.

My colleague from Vegreville already mentioned the fact that the headworks and canals are built at an 86 percent cost to the province, 14 percent to the local district. So one might rightly assume that the people living in the southern part of Alberta would push for irrigation. I'm not against irrigation as such. I'm just raising some of the pros and cons that the government needs to look at in determining policy and the direction where money should go. While talking about that money, I should add that there's a couple of hundred million more under the Agriculture department -- in fact, \$237 million more -- spent on irrigation under the agricultural budget that was not mentioned by my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place, and he already had the numbers up to over a billion dollars. So the Minister of the Environment has to know that the irrigation of the southern part of Alberta does take an incredible amount of money.

Now, it would seem to me that the question has been raised before, but I want to again raise it with this minister. He is a new minister, after all, and the previous one assured us an answer on this question, and I want the assurances from this minister. We know there've been some plans developed to link these dams and canals together and to at least potentially drain water from the northern river basins down into the southern river basins, not only to help with these irrigation projects but the fear is always raised that perhaps that water will be exported, even

down into the United States. Now, the ministers have always insisted that's not the case. We've got a new minister. I'd like him to speak to that issue and tell what his attitude is to that idea.

Just a couple of other comments about the operation of the present systems. The cost of water is per acre and doesn't really make a lot of sense, as one of my colleagues already mentioned. It doesn't suggest to the farmers that they have to be careful of the amount they use, although there may be other reasons why they would be careful with it, and of course most people are fairly prudent. Particularly farmers in a hot and dry part of Alberta would probably be naturally fairly prudent. Nonetheless, it would seem to me that some of the solution to that kind of question might be in setting a cost based on the amount of water you use, might encourage farmers to try a simple solution like just watering in the evening or overnight rather than during the day. For all I know, perhaps they do now.

The Member for Cypress-Redcliff suggested that in the last 10 or 12 years there's been an improvement in the efficiency of about one and one-third compared to one, 10 or 12 years ago. I would say that's not really all that great an improvement unless it was fairly efficient to start with. So I would think the minister should be looking at ways to improve the efficiency beyond that.

I guess I would just raise the question of salination. I think it has been mentioned tonight. One of our major problems for the future, it seems to me, is to keep our agricultural land healthy. Obviously, the government needs to look closely at what's happening in those regions.

I guess I'd like the minister to also address -- and this is the last thing I would raise -- that we seem to be heading into a period of change of climate, a warming of the earth. So I think our dry areas are going to get drier, and the hot areas of the province are going to get hotter, and it may be harder to maintain irrigation in the south. It could be that if we're going to have decent agriculture in Alberta, we may need to increase and improve agriculture. I do think the government should be looking at the future plans in this area with a view to the climatic changes we can expect over the next few years.

I don't think just the assumption that we're going to have hotter, drier weather in the south part of the province means that the warming up that we're going to experience in the north part also will just mean that we can grow more of a variety of crops better and still get the same amount of moisture in the north either. In other words, the kind of agriculture we have now with the climatic changes that are expected over the next 20 to 30 years cannot just be assumed to be pushed north and, therefore, we can continue to produce -- Canada being a northern country -- the same kinds of products in the future as well as we can now. I think any irrigation policy for long-term development has to take into consideration the potential changes that are being anticipated on a pretty well-established scientific basis by a lot of environmentalists that are watching the climate as it's changed over the last number of years and as they look into the future.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the questions that have been asked by the hon. members and some of the comments that have been made, and I'll try to answer them to the best of my ability.

First of all, to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. I think the hon. member spent a lot of time talking about deliv-

ery systems. These matters, of course, are under the jurisdiction of the various irrigation districts in the Department of Agriculture. This vote, Mr. Chairman, deals with the headworks and canals, and vote 2, of course, deals with reclamation. I'm amazed how irrigation headworks and canals and the issue of reclamation has wandered around the province to include drainage problems in northern Alberta and gas wells and everything else. I didn't realize the whole thing was that immense.

MR. McEACHERN: Now you know.

MR. KLEIN: Yes. Quite a lesson, quite a lesson. I'm glad I wasn't paying too much attention; I might be misled.

But, Mr. Chairman, with respect to delivery systems and the cost benefits that were brought up by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, I'm advised that such a cost/benefit report was prepared by the Irrigation Projects Association some four years ago and was distributed to all members. I'm advised also that that report can be updated, and perhaps we can follow up with the appropriate government and private agencies to have it updated and resubmitted to the members. Also, the hon. member asked what was the cost of this program: is it going to be another \$40 million for the next five years? I'm advised the cost to completion is \$129 million over the next five years, so that's something like \$26 million a year.

With respect to the delivery systems, although it's not part of the headworks and the main canal system, I'm sure the hon. member knows that all that water is metered, and the whole delivery system is based on the user-pay philosophy.

With respect to the Oldman dam, it has been pointed out that the construction is no longer under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Environment. The Oldman dam will ensure a higher level of water supply to provide a level of irrigation of 1.25 million acres plus an additional 170,000 new acres of irrigation. It's a project that was brought on stream not only to provide for the agricultural needs of irrigation farmers in southern Alberta but to provide for the municipal needs of towns like Pincher Creek and cities like Lethbridge and, indeed, Medicine Hat and to provide a stable and consistent flow of water.

To answer as best I can the question put to me by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He's on our side again.

MR. KLEIN: Is he? He's on our side again. Okay, thank you. Right.

Well, he questioned my right to brag about something that is very, very good, something that will serve the citizens of Alberta for many, many years to come both in the area of irrigation and in the area of reclamation. I guess I have a serious problem with the hon. member's serious problem. I really don't know what his serious problem is, because everything that I read in the program and the votes involved is good. I don't know why he has a problem at all. I don't have a problem. I don't have a problem with the fact that one is capital and one is operating. The project we're dealing with today relative to headworks and the main canals is a capital works program. The one that the hon. member alluded to is an operating program, and he should have addressed that when we were going through the operating estimates some weeks ago, but obviously he didn't.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark alluded to salination due to irrigation and what we are doing

under the reclamation program to address that particular problem. Well, the program that has been established under the main canal project and the rehabilitation of this project in fact is looking after the reclamation of land that has been somewhat disturbed by salination. In fact, I'm advised that that salination now is starting to recede and to disappear and lands that were affected are now becoming productive lands. So the programs that we have initiated are indeed looking after a reclamation program, although that is not included in the reclamation vote.

Dealing, Mr. Chairman, with the issue raised by the hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn with respect to the Western Irrigation District, the tenders have been let for that particular project. As a matter of fact, it has been expanded somewhat. The canal was going to be upgraded to handle something like 1,300 cubic feet per second. Since we have to do the work anyway and it's just a matter of widening it a little bit more, it will be upgraded to handle 1,600 cfs. An agreement has been signed with the city of Calgary. The city of Calgary will be responsible for maintaining the recreational component of the system in the city limits of those areas adjacent to the canal.

We have been having some problem with the Western Irrigation District relative to Chestermere Lake and the levels of Chestermere Lake. We hope to ameliorate those problems somewhat next year perhaps, by building a small diversion weir. One of the problems the WID is having right now is that they don't want to be responsible, if there's a heavy storm, for flooding of lakeside properties in Chestermere Lake. Therefore, we're looking at a small diversion weir to take that runoff water and skirt it around and put it back into the canal at the other end. So hopefully we can solve some of those problems, and I hope that answers some of your questions.

With respect to Westlock-Sturgeon and the hon. member's questions, I have no idea. It's beyond my wildest imagination, Mr. Chairman, how we got from headworks to gas wells in the constituency of Westlock-Sturgeon. I have no idea how we got there. I have no idea. That's what I was saying earlier: I had no idea that our irrigation system expanded that far.

With respect to the issues of pesticides and herbicides on lands, we have a number of Acts within environmental legislation that address this problem of the proper and most effective and efficient and safe use of herbicides and pesticides. That's well addressed in legislation, which is available to the hon. member.

Mr. Chairman, I think that answers in as broad a sense as possible the questions that have been raised. I'm grateful, once again, for the comments that have been expressed by both government members and members of the opposition, and I would ask all members for their support of these two votes.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. The minister didn't answer one of my questions. In fact, I asked a number of them that he might have spoken at greater length to. I'll reask the question.

We know there have been a lot of plans made to link the dams and the canal systems of the south with some of the river basins of the north, and it's always been a fear on this side of the House that those linkages would be made and would be draining water from northern river basins into the southern river basins and into those canal systems. Not only that: it might not stop

there. There is some real concern, of course, about the environmental costs in the north, but also the fear has been on this side of the House for a number of years now -- and I'm sure you've heard of this before -- that some of the water might even be piped on down into the States and sold to the States. I did ask you to comment on that. Each minister in the past has always been pretty straightforward on it. I thought you might like to comment.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, I'd be very, very glad to comment.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just before you proceed, Mr. Minister . . . Order please. Order please.

MR. KLEIN: Sorry.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think members should perhaps be alert to the fact that, first of all, the minister did say that he would respond to other more specific things in writing, which is the tradition. The other thing is that I think we should deal with the vote before us and not general policy questions of widespread water distribution.

The Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make a point of response to the minister's comments. It's our understanding that we're dealing with vote 1 here, Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement. I believe members on this side, at least in our party, spoke to that vote and that alone, and we would appreciate the chance to make at least a few comments or say whatever we please and ask the questions that we want on vote 2 when that comes to pass.

MR. McINNIS: Just two things quickly. One is the question I asked relative to the future expansion of the irrigation system, whether the minister has some thoughts about that, about where we are going with irrigation in our province. In particular, I mentioned the Paddle River system, Milk River, Red Deer River, and South Saskatchewan, if he would comment, given the \$40 million that's to be invested from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund on irrigation headworks, on where he thinks we're going.

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

The other thing. I thought I heard him say that all water that's consumed in the irrigation system is metered now. Either I'm misinformed or the hon. minister is misinformed, but my understanding is that you pay an acreage fee to get on the system; you don't pay a user fee for the water. Now, if I'm misinformed, I'd be very pleased to admit that, but I wonder if perhaps the minister either misinterpreted my question or didn't quite catch the full import of it. My understanding is that users of the system pay a fee per acre per year to be part of the system, but they don't pay for the water.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to direct a very brief question to the minister in the light of the significant amount of money that we have expended on irrigation and the additional amounts of funding that are being laid

out. In light of that significant outlay, it's important that we be assured of an adequate supply of water to flow through these irrigation works. The concern I have, Mr. Chairman, to the minister, is that . . . The concern I have, Mr. Chairman, is to get the attention of the minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ralph.

MR. CHUMIR: The concern I have is with respect to the supply of water. We can have an inadequate supply of water going into these irrigation works that we're spending so much money on. The concern I have is that I've been hearing from certain sources that there's a theory that the Oldman dam is not going to be able to supply the amount of water it was once thought it would be able to supply. I'm hearing tales that the dam was built too high up on the river; the flow will not be adequate to fill the dam; it should have been built lower; the engineering studies were done too late rather than when they should have been.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I don't think the estimates are the proper forum to discuss the location and siting of the Oldman River dam, with all due respect.

MR. CHUMIR: With all due respect, Mr. Chairman, I mean that is very fundamental. If we're spending money on irrigation . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The estimates are for the headworks for the existing system and the main irrigation system improvement. They're not anything to do with the Oldman River dam.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, if we're improving it, we presumably need water to supply the improvements.

However, in light of the concerns I've heard expressed about this, Mr. Chairman, I would like to hear the minister's comments on that, because I hear some very disturbing reports about differences of opinion within the department, things that cause me great concern. It may be a case for levity. My sources may be totally out to lunch, but I'd be very interested to hear the minister give me the benefits of the discussions he's had and the information he has.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to say I don't quite understand why it is that the minister is able to make comments about the Oldman dam at some length, as he did a few minutes ago, and then as soon as somebody else mentions it, you're not sure that he's in order.

I would also like to say that my question about the possible exportation of water to the United States is a perfectly valid question. We're talking here about a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. If the hon. member is rising on a point of order, he should get up on a point of order and not . . .

MR. McEACHERN: It's not a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If it is a point of order, I don't believe the

hon. member is making a valid point of order. We're here to discuss the . . .

MR. McEACHERN: I didn't say it was a point of order, a citation. I was merely making my feelings known about something that's happened in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, all I'm making is the case that the question that I asked should be considered, so I would just ask the Chair to reconsider whether these questions should exist. We are spending over \$400 million under this very vote over the last few years and including this year's allotment. If you're going to spend that much money, it's got to be done in the context of what's happening in the province with irrigation and agriculture and whether the dollars are well spent or not and what are the policy aims and directions of that. So the question is perfectly well in order, and the minister was quite willing to answer it if the previous Chairman had not interrupted and said that he shouldn't answer because it was not in order. I just believe that it's in order and that he should answer it. Every other minister in the past has answered that question for us, and I don't see why this new minister shouldn't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. In any event, there have been some questions raised that the hon. minister may wish to respond to at this point.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, he is indeed right. It is an acreage assessment based on an acre-foot of use. But it is metered -- that's the point -- and it is controlled, and it is measured along the way.

Mr. Chairman, this whole issue of the Oldman dam I find not particularly disturbing, because I'm sure the appropriate minister can defend the dam and all the technical aspects of the dam. It becomes the responsibility of the department after the dam is built. What I'm trying to say: it's not my dam.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, a few moments ago the hon. minister made some comments about flood control at Chestermere Lake. I wonder if I could just make a brief comment to the minister about that.

I know there's a dispute presently between the summer village of Chestermere Lake and the Western Irrigation District. It has something to do with some kind of dispute about assessments, Mr. Chairman. But I find it hard to accept the argument that this dispute has something to do with flood control at Chestermere Lake. I'm trying to imagine what might be the equivalent of a tidal wave rolling down the canal from the weir in Calgary to Chestermere Lake. Hitting the lake, you wouldn't raise the level of the lake by more than a centimetre or two. So I don't understand the argument that was being made here about this issue being a matter of flood control. It's a situation that I think might require the minister's cool head. It might require his skills as a mediator in trying to resolve this dispute between the two parties. But I really don't think it's quite fair to fully characterize the dispute as one having to do with flood control, and I certainly hope a resolution will be made to this dispute,

with the good offices of the minister. But I think it just fair to put on the record that not both parties to this dispute believe that what's at stake here is a question of flood control as much as it is a dispute over assessments between the two parties.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not in any way trying to characterize this as just a matter of flood control. In the context of replying to the hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn, I simply outlined the recreational responsibilities that have been agreed to by the city of Calgary relative to maintaining the lands adjacent to the irrigation canal. I mentioned that one of the mitigating factors, perhaps next year, that could lead to the resolution of this dispute -- I do admit that there is a dispute, and I have met with both sides. I've urged them to get together and put this behind them and work with the department to see what we can do in the long term to make sure that the lake has for all time an adequate level. I simply said that next year one of the mitigating factors could be a small diversion to channel off the flood water.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FOX: I would just like to make the point, if I may, Mr. Chairman, that in my humble opinion when we're dealing with irrigation headworks and canal rehabilitation, some discussion about the possible source of water for those projects, a.k.a., the Oldman dam, and how these individual projects may fit into an overall scheme as proposed by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway, I think are legitimate questions and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, that may be your opinion, but in the Chair's opinion the Oldman River dam is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. It will not become a matter for this department until after it's commissioned and in service. Tonight we're here to discuss the estimates that are proposed for expenditure of funds from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund on certain purposes, and none of them involves the Oldman River dam. I'm sorry; I have to rule that subject out of order.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, maybe I owe an apology to the Minister of the Environment. I thought we were considering votes 1 and 2 under Environment.

AN HON. MEMBER: We are.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. TAYLOR: Well then, how could the minister be so lost that he didn't know about sulphur plants and reclaiming land? All he had to do was turn over vote 1, and this is what I wanted to discuss: land reclamation. Further to that -- either one of us is lost -- he considers that land reclamation has nothing to do with the Oldman dam. He's quite correct, but it has a hell of a lot to do with vote 2. That's what I was talking about. I think we're discussing vote 1 and vote 2 together, aren't we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, as I understood the situation, you can certainly make comments if you wish on both votes, but the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place in his initial com-

ments said that he would reserve his comments for vote 2 until after all the discussion was over on vote 1. I assumed the minister was trying to respond to all the concerns that were related to vote 1 before we concluded the discussion on vote 2 and he would wind up in that area.

MR. TAYLOR: I will sit down, then, if you want, as long as I can get the floor back again for vote 2, because I have more to say on vote 2.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You'll have an opportunity to respond to your concerns on vote 2.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Well, before we leave vote 1, the minister acknowledged that there is no commodity charge for irrigation farmers but said that there is a metering system. My question's simply: well, why not? I mean, if you've got the capability there, if you've got the metering system in place, why not structure the charge so that if you use more water, you pay more, and if you less water, you pay less? It seems to me the system the way it is perhaps penalizes those who are more efficient in their use of water while rewarding those who are less efficient. It does seem to me that it doesn't create any incentive within the irrigation system to conserve water. I appreciate what some of members said about the energy costs. That's a factor, and that makes a difference, too, whether you're on the natural gas system or whether you use electricity or diesel or even gasoline. All of those are factors as well, but they're not central factors. My question's simply: if not a commodity charge, why not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry; did you want me to respond to that, Mr. Chairman, real quickly?

It's the whole issue of water conservation, soil conservation, and so on. Once we get the ECA in place, it's going to be one of the first issues to be addressed by the Environment Council of Alberta through a series of public hearings and so on. The hon. member might be right in his assumption. I happen to think that the farmers of southern Alberta and farmers everywhere are probably the most efficient users of resources overall and have demonstrated over time that they know how to manage their resources and they don't need members of the NDP to tell them how to do it.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to pursue the question of cost benefit. Did the minister say that there was a cost/benefit study done on the \$362 million that's been spent already under this vote? If so, could he make a commitment to table it? Secondly, is there a cost benefit done on the \$39.8 million that we're talking about now? Could he make a statement explicitly to that effect? Thirdly, could he tell us how much of the \$362 million already spent has been spent on Oldman River dam-related irrigation headworks, and how much of the \$39.8 million of the coming year is going to be spent on Oldman River dam-related headworks, and could he give us a total of the dam plus the related headworks? Could he please do that?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, give me some time. I'll take the last four or five questions under advisement and give him the

answer.

The answer to the first question is that there was a report prepared four years ago on the cost benefits of the delivery system. That report was prepared about four years ago, and I understand it can be updated, but I'm sure the report that was done four years ago can be made available.

MR. McINNIS: On this question of metering of water, my comment has absolutely nothing to do with the efficiency of farmers relative to oil companies or any other group of people in our society. Rather it has to do with the efficiency of one farmer vis-à-vis another one. I simply want the minister to acknowledge that if you have a commodity charge as well as a demand charge -- which in effect is all you've got in place now, a demand charge. You've got the right to make demands on the system; that's what you pay for. Why isn't there an element in the system that recognizes that water is a valuable, life-sustaining resource and that it's not free? It's simply not free. Why not build a commodity charge in?

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman, I have one further question related to the Oldman dam and its implications for spending more money in this way. It follows from the question raised by my colleague from Calgary-Buffalo concerning the dam being built too high up the river. Could this be compounded by evaporation rates? Could the minister please comment on rates of evaporation that have been analyzed by his . . . [interjections] No, it's true. Fifty percent.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, I have no intention of commenting on a dam that's not my dam. Right. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments to be made with regard to vote 2?

MR. TAYLOR: Vote 2?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Vote 2.

MR. McINNIS: Just on a point of order. Have we voted on vote 1?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, we'll vote on all things at once, but we'll have the discussion on vote 2, and then we'll hopefully get to some votes. [interjections]

MR. McINNIS: Where does that guy come from?

The questions that I have relative to vote 2 are fairly simple ones. They relate to the selection criteria for the sites to be rehabilitated. Obviously, there are a number of sites in the province that have been victimized by industrial activities and other things throughout the province, hence the reason for this program. The minister mentioned that most of the proposals are put forward by municipalities dealing with landfills and other types of, I suppose, waste disposal operations that require rehabilitation, but there is the question of private land and who benefits and how those costs are apportioned. This program is financed from public funds, the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, but how is the decision made to select private properties for which the investment is to be made from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, and is there some type of system for billing back those benefits?

One of the reasons that I ask is that in a report the other day the Department of the Environment is involved in cleaning up the Picture Butte site for the Gainers plant proposed by Peter Pocklington, for which the minister of economic development has already loaned \$6 million even though the thing hasn't been built. The caller suggested that the Department of the Environment had been involved in cleaning up that particular site. A second question is whether that was done under this program or under some other program, if indeed that information is accurate, and again how the costs are apportioned for private land-owners under this program.

MR. TAYLOR: My questions are two additional ones on the land reclamation. The sulphur plant: I didn't get very far as to why the Minister of the Environment has not taken an active part in seeing where sulphur plants are located and what they would do to affect land, because chemical fallout from sulphur plants can certainly do a lot to destroy the productivity of the land.

Let's move on to two other areas in land reclamation. I'm wondering what the minister's doing tied in to irrigation and the salinization of soils. Does he have some project or some method going so that the irrigation or improper methods of irrigation -- bearing in mind that most land that's irrigated is privately owned. The last time I looked the Department of the Environment doesn't have the authority to really wield any kind of club or moral suasion if the irrigation practices are contributing to the salinization of the soil. His seatmate may be a help to that.

Thirdly, there again on the Minister of the Environment, there's a herbicide called Tordon 101 which is outlawed in most of the United States, but this department uses it and allows it to be used when trying to denude or reclaim land they feel has gone to poplars or wild weeds. It's outlawed to the effect that in the long run -- and the U.S. feel -- it will lead to sterilization of the soil. So here's the Department of the Environment using a herbicide, supposedly to restore, to bring land in line for production to be sowed to crops later on, that has been declared too poisonous and too dangerous by a large percentage of the country south of us.

So those are three questions involving land reclamation that I would be interested in the minister's answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I was just going to try and wrap this thing up. But that's fine. . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Just looking at the amount that's set aside here, it's only two and a half million. That land reclamation project in the city of Calgary alone cost roughly \$5 million when they attempted to clean up the Beaverdam flats site. Now, I'm not saying the province should be responsible for cleaning up all these sites, but it just seems to me that there are a lot of sites that were once occupied by functioning refineries. The refineries are shut down. Who's responsible for cleaning them up? And if we're serious about that, I just can't see how two and a half million dollars could do the job.

A very specific concern that I have occurs in my own con-

stituency, where there's a Hub Oil plant that's been operating for years. There's all kinds of waste oil that's been dumped into the ground. I'd like to know out of this two and a half million dollars whether there's any actual research done into sites across the province to find out whether they're contaminated, and then whether action programs are being taken with respect to cleaning up these sites.

MR. BRUSEKER: Just one quick question. During the winter there was that extremely cold snap, and we had a tank car in the rail yards in Calgary break open and a load of diesel fuel spilled out onto the ground. I was wondering what is happening in terms of land reclamation for recovering the contaminated soil that's there, and what the state is of that land reclamation process that's occurring in there. Is there money allocated in here for that particular project?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Chairman, some of these questions I will take under advisement, especially those that were put to me by the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, because they deal with the ERCB, they deal with land use matters, they deal with the Ministry of Agriculture. Very few of them deal with head-works and main canals and reclamation per se. So if you don't mind, I'll take those under notice, and we will make every attempt to . . .

MR. TAYLOR: You got a heavy date, and you've just got to get out?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I really don't want to be here until 11:30, 12 o'clock.

With respect to the question that was put to me by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, we're talking about municipally owned sites. In terms of the dollars for land reclamation, where there are private lands, private properties, the owners of those properties are responsible for the reclamation. So we're talking about municipally owned sites. We're talking to some degree about orphaned sites, sites for which we can't find the person who was responsible. There are many examples of those kinds of sites where the businesses have been family owned and then they've been sold three or five or six times and we can't find the owner who was responsible for originally polluting the sites. So this money then goes for that kind of thing.

Specific to Picture Butte, I understand that the town owns the land in question, and our arrangements were with the town. But I'd be happy to get the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place more details on that particular situation. I just don't have them at my fingertips.

Diesel fuel: that was strictly the responsibility of the Canadian Pacific railway, and they were responsible for the cleanup, the cost of the cleanup, and reclaiming the land, which was supervised by our department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

MR. WICKMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I hadn't entered the debate on Environment at this particular budget, in the documentation of the estimates of proposed investments. Let me say it's a good, healthy debate, and it's the type of process that can be much more productive than the process we had during the main

estimates, where the ministers will get up and respond to questions kind of on a one-to-one basis. We don't get that opportunity in the main estimates, and maybe that's one of the reasons this type of form becomes so attractive.

Mr. Chairman, we've gotten into the area of reclamation of particular sites, and the minister made reference to sites that had been abandoned or sites that had been owned by municipalities or Crown land and so on and so forth. Now, I guess the question I have specifically out of these dollars that are being spent: would an example of such an expenditure be the estimated \$1 million cost to clean up the site in the constituency of Edmonton-Whitemud that came up in the House here fairly recently? While the minister responds to that, I would appreciate at the same time if the minister could take a couple of minutes just to give an update as to how that cleanup of that site is coming. Because, Mr. Chairman, I checked just a few days ago, and there is work going on there, but that site still is not cleaned, and those residents adjacent are not happy with the length of time it's taking to correct that situation.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Chairman, if I knew that this was going to be question period, I would ask the hon. member to save something for tomorrow, you know. If he does ask me the question tomorrow, I'll have the answer. Relative to the first question, no. Part of the \$1 million estimated for the cost of the cleanup of that particular site will not come from this particular program.

MR. WICKMAN: What about the second question?

MR. KLEIN: The second question: I don't know the state of the cleanup operation right now. I mean at this particular moment I just don't know where it is. Tomorrow I will know, okay?

MR. FOX: It's in Whitemud.

MR. KLEIN: I know it's in Whitemud. It's on 9th; it's a strange number.

MR. WICKMAN: It's 9th Avenue and 109th Street, adjacent to Horizon Village.

MR. KLEIN: It's 109th Street, right.

MR. WICKMAN: Possibly the minister could send me a written response as to how that cleanup is coming, Mr. Chairman, through you.

MR. KLEIN: I'd be happy to do that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: A real quick supplementary on the Picture Butte situation. Did the minister say that he was unsure of the details on that arrangement? My question was whether it was paid for under this program. Is that the part that you're looking into, or is it the actual amount that you were checking into? Did it come under this program? That's what I wanted to know.

MR. KLEIN: I advised the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, that our arrangements were with the town. Therefore, I assume it's coming out of this program. As to the amount or other associated details, I don't have those details at my fingertips right

now. I'll be glad to provide them to the hon. member. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the House ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Agreed to:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 1.1 -- Program Support | \$1,342,000 |
| 1.2 -- Irrigation Headworks Rehabilitation | \$10,950,000 |
| 1.3 -- Water Management Planning | -- |
| 1.4 -- Water Resource Development Projects | \$25,925,000 |
| 1.5 -- Improved Operational Capabilities | \$1,620,000 |
| Total Vote 1 -- Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement | \$39,837,000 |
| 2.1 -- Land Reclamation | \$1,980,000 |
| 2.2 -- Reclamation Research | \$500,000 |
| Total Vote 2 -- Land Reclamation | \$2,480,000 |

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

[Motion carried]

Technology, Research and Telecommunications 1 -- Individual Line Service

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, with my minister's hat on, with respect to the capital projects under the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunication, Vote 1, Individual Line Service . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready to vote on . . .

MR. STEWART: Would it be in order if I gave some information to the members, which I am sure they would want to hear, relative to the progress of the individual line service?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, this year the program is committed to converting the lines for about 31,000 rural telephone subscribers in the fiscal year. The amount of \$46,358,000 is needed to meet that commitment. As members are aware, the individual line service replaces the existing party line telephone service with individual lines. The program was initiated in 1987 when the Public Utilities Board ruled that such a service was basic and provided it to be mandatory. Without the program, the party line subscribers would be paying as much as \$2,000 to \$4,000 for individual hookups, with an additional monthly surcharge of up to \$100. However, with the program, the cost to each subscriber is \$450, payable in a lump sum or at a rate of \$5 per month for 20 years. The government is paying 75 percent conversion costs and the estimated total is \$225.7 million. This amount comes entirely from the capital projects division of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

The expenditure listed under grants includes a rebate program of \$110 for each subscriber. When the Public Utilities Board increased the subscriber cost to \$560, the government

instituted a rebate to keep the cost to \$450, as promised. Another rebate program offsets the monthly surcharge for those who have already got individual line service installed. Also included are grants to AGT for upgrading the telephone exchange equipment to accommodate the individual line service.

Members will note, Mr. Chairman, that the estimate for 1989-90 is less than that for last year. The larger amount was needed last year to repay a special warrant to the General Revenue Fund. The special warrant had provided operating funds from December of '87 to March 31, '88, when responsibility for the program was transferred to my department from Transportation and Utilities, and that was four months before the beginning of the last fiscal year. So this year the request is for the straight 12 months.

Mr. Chairman, the individual line service is on schedule. So far, 48,000 subscribers have been converted from party line to individual line service. That's almost half the 106,000 subscribers who will have their lines converted by the summer of 1991. So voting approval of these estimates will allow the program to provide Albertans with the benefits of individual line service, keep it on schedule, and bring it up to 66 percent completion by the end of this fiscal year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: Just a couple of fast questions. I was a little puzzled that last year's estimate was \$57.5 million, yet the actual expenditure was \$48 million. That's quite an estimate. Or is this the usual thing you do when election time comes up, Mr. Chairman: convince the rural people they're all going to get private lines, and then once the election is over, everything is shut down? I was just wondering why such a terrific shortage in reaching the target they'd set out last year.

The other is: how much of the \$45 million set out this year is made up My understanding is that a little more than a hundred dollars per subscriber is contributed by the Alberta government to AGT. How much of that \$45 million is that actual \$100 grant? I'd like a little better breakdown. Or is it all?

Also, with respect to new lines, what percentage going in are fibre optics versus the old electromagnetic system? In other words, are we sacrificing in order to privatize lines? Are we doing it to the lines that may be out of date as fast as we finish the project, or are we doing our best to put a high percentage of fibre optics in? I know in the rural area where I live a fibre-optic fine has gone in, but it aroused my curiosity, because a year ago hardly anybody even knew what it meant. So I wanted to know what percentage of the new lines going in is fibre optics versus the old-fashioned system.

That was all I had.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to piggyback on some of the questions from my hon. colleague from Westlock-Sturgeon regarding fibre optics, I had a few questions regarding that. The minister may choose to answer these in a written form later, since it's obvious some of the government members are getting a little antsy.

With respect to fibre optics, if they are putting in fibre optics -- and there is a commitment to putting in fibre optics in the AGT yearly report that was tabled in the House -- I'm wondering what the cost of repair is with respect to breaks in the lines comparing fibre-optic lines to the conventional metal lines. I'm

also wondering about the projected life span for fibre-optic lines in comparison to regular, conventional metal lines. I'm also wondering: of the lines that are being put in, how many are being put in underground? In terms of mileage, I guess, or percentage or kilometres or however you want to look at it, how many are going underground and how many are going aboveground?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Where have you been?

MR. BRUSEKER: Go to sleep, guys. If you can't handle it, that's your problem.

MR. TAYLOR: We'll shake your chain when we need you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'm also curious about the cost per kilometre of line that is being put in. What I'm wondering about here is that the minister mentioned 31,000 subscribers will be getting individual line service this year. He mentioned that last year 48,000 got line service, yet he spent \$48 million to service 48,000, and now he's spending \$45 million, \$46 million to cover 31,000 subscribers. I'm wondering why the difference. Why does it appear, at least, that this year the cost per subscriber seems to be substantially higher than it has been in the past? Also, I'm wondering, in that 31,000 subscribers how many kilometres of line are being put in to meet the needs of those 31,000 subscribers who are going to be getting those lines?

One question that I had, generally speaking, about TRT in general and some of the votes that have gone earlier is that in the main estimates there is the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research. I'm wondering, since we have other research areas in the estimates for the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, why is it that the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research is not in here and in the main estimates? It seems there's a contradiction in there. I'm wondering how those two differences in locating research components fit in. Because this is Technology, Research and Telecommunications, I'm wondering why they're separated.

One other question I had in terms of fibre optics versus metal lines is what a comparative cost of installing them initially is, not just the repair rate and so on -- longevity -- but how do the differences compare in cost of installation?

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few questions, perhaps, of a technical nature to the minister on this program, ones that he may as well wish to respond to at some point later, but I would like to raise them here today.

I'm wondering in respect to the two methods of payment offered subscribers, the \$560 lump sum payment at the outset or the \$5 per month over a 20-year period, if he could let us know what percentage of subscribers are opting for option 1 and option 2. I'd be interested in knowing that.

I'd be interested in knowing as well how many subscribers have objected to the mandatory nature of this program. There was a change in the program description instigated by a memo sent by the former Minister of Technology, Research and

Telecommunications to AGT prior to their submissions to the Public Utilities Board instructing them to, in a sense, make this program mandatory. Once the ILS program was offered to an exchange, every subscriber would have to be converted or lose their telephone service. That meant, for some who felt no need to have individual line service or some who had it by default by virtue of the fact there were no other subscribers on their party line, they were now confronted with the reality that they had to pay the \$560 less the \$110 rebate to keep their phones. I'd be interested in knowing what . . . Though my sense of things is that people are very appreciative of the benefits of the ILS program, I would like to know how substantial the objections have been to that particular provision.

Another aspect of the program that members might not be aware of is that there has been made available to subscribers, at least in some exchanges, scheduled for the final year or two of the program something called the PLC-1, the private-line converter. I know that some people in the Tofield exchange, for example, have had the benefit of that device, which brings some of the benefits of individual line service to party-line subscribers. I commend the department for making those devices available. It was something that came as a result, I think, of suggestions made in this House back when the program was first debated. I'd be interested in knowing how many private-line converters were provided or made available to subscribers to tide them over, if you will, until their exchanges are converted, how much was spent on the private-line converters, and what if anything can be done with those devices after the particular exchanges in question are converted to the individual line service itself. Does this just become surplus material, or is there some reclamation of the circuitry or some other use that these devices can be put to? It may be possible, for example, for them to be sold to perhaps some of the privately run telephone systems in Ontario that aren't nearly as far advanced as our publicly owned utility, AGT. Just maybe a suggestion that we might want to look at selling those PLCs if they're of some use to somebody somewhere.

Those are some questions that I would appreciate some answers to, Mr. Chairman, when the minister's able to gather that information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway?

MR. McEACHERN: You shouldn't be surprised, Mr. Chairman. I am, after all, the critic for Technology, Research and Telecommunications, so I must make a few comments and ask a few questions.

The idea was raised that perhaps the amount of money spent had something to do with elections, and I looked a little further back than the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. In fact, the government promised to do this in the 1986 campaign. In the first year, the '86-87 year, they put \$30 million into this program to get it started, and somehow the next year they faltered to only \$18.4 million. However, with an election coming up in '89, they picked it up again to some \$57 million, and now we notice that after the election's over, we're back down to some \$46 million. So this very excellent program which is going on has been a bit susceptible to the vagaries of election schedules. However, it is a good program, and one does ask the government to carry on at full speed and wish that the rural people would have their individual line services in the near future. If that should mean

that the urban areas, which have had cheap service for a long time, have to pay a little extra to help cover that cost, so be it.

Although I'm also interested in the introduction at this vote in the past program, which I have before me, I note that it says -- this was when it was under Transportation and Utilities: Transportation and Utilities will provide grants to AGT as work progresses; private sector contractors will be used as well as AGT's own resources. I wonder if the minister could give us a bit of a breakdown on how much of this work AGT is doing and how much private contractors are doing.

In the present booklet for this vote, on page 24 it says:

The department will also provide grants to the Alberta Government Telephone Commission (AGT) and has provided grants to Edmonton Telephones.

I guess my question is: do they come out of this \$46 million, or is that from other sources, say, in the general revenue accounts of the province, or is it just from here?

One other thought occurs to me in terms of the numbers being bandied around about the -- I think it was the Public Utilities Board that said that the government would have to charge \$560 for this service, and the government had promised it at \$450, hence they were given a rebate of \$110. Now, the first year that provision was made for that rebate -- I have the public accounts here and it shows that the government did set aside \$4,677,300 for the purposes of giving those rebates. Provision had not been made under the capital projects division for that, so it had come out of a special warrant under the department, in that case the Department of Transportation and Utilities. However, only \$608,092 of that was spent; a very small part was spent. I guess that would either indicate that not very many people took the government up on its rebate or else that the program was just getting started and maybe the next year it really increased. Perhaps the minister could fill us in on that, because of course we don't have the numbers for '88-89.

It does occur to me that somebody could take their \$110 and then start paying their \$5 a month for 20 years and, after a year or two, sell the farm or leave the farm and move off somewhere else and not, in a sense, pay their share for this individual line service, thus leaving it to the next person coming in, which of course would make it, I guess, a good selling point, but they'd have to pick up the cost. But as we know, in rural Alberta a lot of farms are being shut down, and farmers are taking bigger and bigger farms. Some of those farms that get shut down may not be taken over by somebody else in the sense that somebody moves into that farmstead and uses that building. So the government could put up its \$110 and then have people walk away within a few months or a year or two without fulfilling the payments of the 20 years at \$5 a time.

I wonder if the minister would care to comment on some of those things anyway.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, first off with respect to comments from the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon and as well from the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway, the deal with the conversion program over a period of years. I can assure the hon. members that there is nothing sinister. AGT sets out their conversion program based on bona fide needs that are out there and the logical way to proceed in a cost-effective way and from a technologically effective way to accomplish the overall objective of completing this by the summer of 1991. It sets that conversion program, and I can assure the hon. members that as the minister I have nothing to do with any sort of indication as to

where they should proceed and how quickly they should proceed, election years or no election years.

A number of questions related to some very technical matters that relate to fibre optics, and then the hon. Member for Calgary-North West raised a number of further questions that relate to life span and the costs that relate and difficulty with respect to repair, frequency of repair, and necessity. Those are ones that indeed I will take him up on his suggestion to respond to in detail and in writing and respond in that way. On the fibre optics I must just note that while I don't know the percentage, I do know that indeed fibre optics are used in some areas, particularly in the high-traffic corridor areas.

The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon also made reference to grants to AGT. AGT, as a matter of fact, in conjunction with the ILS conversion, does a modernization program. They're using their "surplus revenues" for the modernization, and they've committed, I think, about \$264 million for that particular purpose. The type of modernization we're talking about is to enable the rural subscriber to use types of facilities that those of us that live in the urban areas now enjoy, such as touchtone phones and so on. So that's the sort of upgrading that takes place in conjunction with ILS to make it fully compatible and comparable benefits.

The Member for Vegreville wanted to know the percentage, lump sum versus the monthly amount. Incidentally, the monthly amount I believe carries an interest rate of 9.2 percent. But getting to the specific question as to the percentage that do take up the monthly payment as opposed to lump sum, I'm advised that it's about two-thirds on the monthly payment to one-third for the lump sum.

He also was interested in the type of objections that people relate to us with respect to the program. Each month I receive a report from our department with respect to the calls that have been received, sort of a status report of where the program is, and I have the report for the month of June. During that month there were about 244 questions asked by 185 callers. I looked at those just to analyze them between questions for information type of things and those that really related to some form of complaint. There were 228 questions that really related to more information: when do I get my rebate, what's the program all about, et cetera.

The other 16 out of the 244 related to some area of complaint, most of which -- well, they were scattered, actually, in content. Four didn't feel that they should have to pay the \$560 and then await the \$110 later; they would rather just pay the \$450 on a net basis. Three of them complained that they received the wrong letter, which was obviously some sort of administrative oversight. One was upset that the program was mandatory. One, unfortunately, felt that their neighbours were getting better treatment than themselves; they received their rebate a little sooner than the person that was complaining. One felt that the charge was too high. One felt that the interest rate was too high, and the monthly payments. One didn't feel he wanted a phone at his cottage and was required to pay, so had the choice, of course, of disconnecting. Those are the sort of complaints that are coming in. They're not great. I must say that the department monitors them very, very closely and works very closely with AGT so that if there are any areas of substance, particularly with respect to service, they get ahold of AGT, and AGT in turn gets ahold of the individual concerned.

On the PLC matter. I'll have to check into that and, as the member suggests, get back to him with respect to the details on

that. I appreciate his comments on that point.

Edmonton-Kingsway, with respect to the program conversion thing. Again, nothing sinister. It's a set program of conversion that AGT follows in these matters, and they're not influenced by the political arm.

I'm having trouble reading my writing here. Oh, the question with respect to the use by AGT of private contractors. I'm not familiar with that, but I will get that information for the hon. member and provide that in some detail.

Was there another question there? I can't even read it here. I've scribbled something here, but I don't even know what it is.

MR. McEACHERN: The \$5 a month they pay to get back their \$110. They pay \$5 a month.

MR. STEWART: Oh, yes, yes. If a person pays the \$560, then they are the ones that are entitled, obviously, to the \$110. If there is an ongoing matter and the property changes hands and the telephone subscriber changes hands, then they pick up where they left off.

MR. McEACHERN: What if the farm shuts down?

MR. STEWART: Well, if the phone's disconnected, at that point in time there are no longer any payments. There's no one to bill. There's always that out. If indeed people don't want to comply with the program, then disconnection is always an alternative, I suppose.

Those are, I think, basically the answers, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: Obviously, some of these Tories don't have the stamina they used to have, Mr. Chairman.

One question that wasn't answered by the hon. minister was the question of \$110 . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Ready for breakfast, Nick?

MR. TAYLOR: Ah, they're dragging themselves up slowly there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DAY: Ever see the sun come up over the east balcony, Nick?

MR. TAYLOR: I get Red Deer-North coming out of his hole again like a groundhog there this time of night.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order please. Could we get back to the estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, don't worry. If he sees his shadow, he'll go back for another year.

The \$45 million one, how much of that was the \$110 per phone connection that the government has paid? I just wondered if he could take it under advisement if he doesn't have it. Also, the minister mentioned that AGT is using \$254 million of their own top grade. Is that over the whole program, or is that in this budget year we're talking about? Would that be the whole program?

The other is a last comment, and this more on construction. In the construction, as you mentioned, I get many complaints about cleanup: lack of cleanup, excessive noise, and accepting responsibility for any damage. You pretty well have to go to

court to get it. This may tie in to the hon. member, I think it was Vegreville, mentioning the number of private contracts he's using. Certainly, there are the three major utilities: phone, gas company, and electricity. I get about three to four times as many complaints about phones as I do all the other utilities together, nearly all tied into the construction. I'd just like to pass that on so that when he's talking to the managers of construction, he would say they're leaving a hell of an impression, at least with the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, one question. If the member chooses to respond in writing, that's fine. My understanding of the program is such that there is a balance between the private sector and the work that's done by AGT. In other words, the involvement of Alberta Government Telephones is such that there is a fair amount of manpower directly under Alberta Government Telephones working on this program. And when the program does wind down, when it is eventually completed, it is anticipated there is going to be a substantial amount of surplus manpower there. What I'm interested in is: does Alberta Government Telephones have some type of plan or method of an orderly fashion of that required reduction in manpower at that time, whether it's early retirement incentives, whatever? Has that aspect been addressed, looking down the road? It is still some way down the road, but eventually AGT will be faced with it.

MR. BRUSEKER: Just one more quick question of the minister, please. I did have a question about the apparent cost difference per subscriber. I believe the minister had mentioned 48,000 rural homesteads that already received their lines for a cost of \$48 million, and this year it's \$46 million for 31,000 subscribers. I'm wondering why there seems to be an apparent difference in a cost per subscriber. It seems to be much higher this year than it was in the past, and I'm wondering why that is. Or did I misinterpret something?

MR. STEWART: Answering the last question first, Mr. Chairman, the program has been going on for a number of years. The 48,000 has therefore been done in more than during the last fiscal year, so that's why there's what might otherwise have appeared to be a discrepancy there.

The manpower situation. To the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, I'm not sure of the extent to which AGT employs subcontractors, as it were, in order to carry out this special project over the limited number of years in which the program lasts. But I will get that information for the hon. member. The program, as I say, will be continuing on until the summer of 1991, so it has been a fairly extensive program. And it may very well be that over that period of time they have engaged people on a specialty basis to carry them through that period. But on the extent to which this may impact on the manpower situation of AGT and the spin-off effect of that, we will certainly get you that information.

On the refunds. To the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, the refunds that are included in the amount are in respect of two elements. One is the \$110 that we had spoken about. The other is a rebate that relates to those subscribers who had individual line service or a private line in an area that was not yet converted; it was still on a party line basis. During that period of time, of course, they paid a higher surcharge by virtue of their having a private line in that exchange. Part of the program is to rebate

back to them the cost of that surcharge over that period of time, so part of the rebates that are in there are for that particular reason. Now, the dollar amount I have here somewhere, and I could probably find it for you, but since I'm going to respond to you in writing in any event, I'll give you that figure.

MR. FOX: Another question I'd like to direct to the minister this program involves something more than the provision of individual line service to rural subscribers. Members would want to know that when a home is converted to the ILS program, they are also provided with jacks in the home. Four jacks go along with the program to make sure that people can have more than one telephone or move telephones around. That's part of the thing, and it's a service, I think, that makes the charge a little more palatable to people. Then, of course, they have the option to rent a telephone or telephone sets from AGT or buy their own.

But there is a change that I became aware of, that I wasn't aware of before, when they came and converted our home to the program, and that's in respect to responsibility and maintenance procedures. AGT, once a home is converted, takes responsibility for the equipment right up to the box on the home, and the subscriber is responsible for everything from that point on: the wiring, the jacks, the telephones, if they are purchased. I'm wondering if the minister might be able to provide me with some information about the pros and cons that were weighed prior to making that decision. What kind of savings do we expect will accrue to the telephone company by having subscribers responsible for the maintenance of the telephone equipment from the service panel -- I'm not sure what it's called -- onward?

I understand as well that if people are experiencing difficulty with their telephone system, they now have the opportunity to do some quick checks to determine where the problem might exist, and if it exists with the wiring inside the home, that can be determined quite readily by the subscriber, and it's their responsibility. If it's a problem in the line to that point, then it's AGT's responsibility. I just bring those changes to the minister's attention and hope that he might be able to provide some comment at a later date to me on the cost savings and perhaps the reasons behind those decisions.

MR. STEWART: I'll undertake to do that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the House ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

Agreed to:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Total Vote 1 -- Individual Line Service | \$46,358,000 |
|---|--------------|

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

[Motion carried]

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report progress.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again.

Resolved that from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund sums not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1990, for the purpose of making investments in the following projects.

To be administered by the Department of Health: \$2,800,000 for Applied Cancer Research.

The Department of the Environment: \$39,837,000 for Irrigation Headworks and Main Irrigation Systems Improvement; and

\$2,480,000 for Land Reclamation.

The Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications: \$46,358,000 for Individual Line Service.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

[At 11:30 p.m. the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]