

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, April 30, 1990 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 90/04/30

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

As Canadians and as Albertans we give thanks for the precious gifts of freedom and peace which we enjoy.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we rededicate ourselves to the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy as a means of serving our province and our country.

Amen.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that at the completion of question period today I will move to adjourn the ordinary business of the Assembly to discuss the urgent matter of the possible job action of local 6 of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees.

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the 1988-89 annual report for the Department of Tourism.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table the 16th annual report of the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Solicitor General.

MR. FOWLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to table the response to Written Question 225 on the Order Paper.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you today and to other Members of the Legislative Assembly 16 students and two teachers from the Allendale elementary and junior high school in the great, thriving, burgeoning, and gorgeous constituency of Edmonton-Parkallen. With the students today are their teacher Ursula Buffi and the teacher's aide Orlene Anderson. I would ask that they rise in the members' gallery and receive a warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce 28 students from St. Andrew school in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Jay Landry, and they're in the public gallery. I would request that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to members of the Assembly through you 22 students from Concordia College, which has a peculiarly beautiful vantage point overlooking the North Saskatchewan River in Edmonton-Highlands. They're accompanied today by teacher Lloyd Grosfield. Sitting in the public gallery, I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

head: **Oral Question Period**

Smoky Lake Poultry Plant

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. The Premier has steadfastly up to the present time refused to do a decent investigation into the alleged conflict of interest of the Redwater-Andrew MLA. On Friday, literally on a silver platter, I sent him over a cassette of the public meeting held on April 5 in Smoky Lake so he could hear for himself, finally, the comments made by the Member for Redwater-Andrew. The Premier must now have heard the member himself leading the people at the meeting to believe he was still the owner of the property in question. Just four days later the same member stood in this Assembly and directly contradicted that statement, saying he sold that land on March 2. If that isn't enough, the tape also shows clearly the member using his position as an MLA and a government insider to influence the decision of a town council. My question, Mr. Speaker: does the Premier back up the MLA for Redwater-Andrew's contention that it would be years before funding might be available to locate the chicken processing plant in a competing subdivision?

MR. GETTY: It's very difficult to know in such a matter as this, Mr. Speaker, because obviously an application would have to be made, and then it would be assessed by the Department of Transportation and Utilities regarding competing priorities, perhaps if there was already land available, that type of thing. But he's really dealing with a hypothetical situation. It's very difficult to know.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, it's not hypothetical. The Member for Redwater-Andrew said that at that meeting. The Premier must be aware of that if he listened to the tape.

Now, we talked to Mr. Alec Waters, the director of municipal services for the Department of Transportation and Utilities, on Friday. He told us that approximately \$6 million in the 1990-91 budget for municipal water and sewage grants is uncommitted. Mr. Speaker, that's not hypothetical. The chicken processing plant itself might have qualified for assistance from another program that I mentioned the other day. I want to ask this: doesn't the Premier have any problem at all with one of his members standing up at a public meeting and misinforming constituents on the availability of government assistance?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, misinformation is coming right now from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, if we want to talk about misinformation. Perhaps the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities may want to respond, but it's clear that there is always going to be some period of time in which requests, if they come, have to be assessed. As I said earlier, it's a hypothetical situation, and it's very difficult to know how long a judgment would take.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, it's sort of see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

Now, I wonder if the Premier has even looked at the tape that I sent across to him, because if he did, he must admit that what the Member for Redwater-Andrew told his constituents and what he later told the Legislature can't be the same. There are two different statements. The member used his position as a government MLA to back up incorrect information on the unavailability of government funding, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to come back to the Premier: why isn't this enough to satisfy the Premier that a public investigation into this affair is the only way he's going to put this to rest?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I listened to the tape, and there's nothing new on that tape. It was a public meeting; it wasn't a secret meeting. There were people there. They were Albertans who were dealing, as they should, with problems that face their community, and I thought the meeting was handled very well. There were, clearly, debates; there were questions; there were concerns. In the end they were trying to solve a problem facing their community. Nothing sinister at all in that tape.

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

MR. MARTIN: Those who refuse to see will pay the political price, Mr. Speaker.

Social Workers' Contract Negotiations

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my second question to the Minister of Labour. Alberta social workers have now confirmed that they intend to launch some sort of job action come tomorrow to back up their demands for lower caseloads and wage parity with other government workers. Now, despite the fact that regressive provincial laws make it illegal for these social workers to withdraw their services, they feel so frustrated and angry that they believe they have no choice in this matter. The number of cases each worker is trying to juggle is so high that the union says its members may actually be breaking a law right now, may be actually violating their own Social Workers Act, not to mention their own code of ethics. They feel they're doing a disservice to the clients they have to represent. My question is: how does the Minister of Labour defend draconian labour laws that could make criminals out of hard-working, dedicated social workers who simply want to do their jobs properly?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, it's true the talks have broken down insofar as the social workers have walked away from the table. We have directed our negotiators to offer a mediator, and they have indeed done so, and we have also offered a mediator to Pat Wocknitz, who is president of the Alberta Union of Public Employees, the umbrella organization. We are prepared, ready, and able to get back to the table and settle this contract. However, it's impossible to do it if you don't have two at the table. It takes two to tango. The social workers have walked off. We are waiting for them to come back and in fact have offered them a mediator, which so far they have refused. We have heard and understood their concerns. They, however, are not responding to the solutions that we have put forward and that give them an opportunity to be a part of the solution, which I think is only proper that they be.

Let me also say that we are very concerned about those people in need who are their clients: the people who are on welfare and the people who do need intervention in families which are abusive. We understand that those people in need have only one place to go for the services these social workers offer. Because there is nowhere else for those people in need to get those services, that is why social workers are an essential service, and that is why the law says they cannot go out on strike. However, there are many ways to get this thing settled. One is to talk at the table. I would sincerely ask those caring and professional social workers to come back to the table with a mediator. Let's get on to making a solution.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the reason they're out is that they feel their clients are being hurt because they're having too big caseloads to be able to do the job for them in the first place. That's what it's all about. But I want to again ask the Minister of Labour – she's also the minister in charge of women – is it reasonable to have laws that, first of all, make criminals out of nurses, a majority of which are women, and now the possibility of making criminals out of social workers when they are just trying to reduce their indefensible caseloads and do something for their clients? Does that law make sense to this minister?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, Churchill once said that we'll never come to settling our differences if all we talk is war, war, war and we don't talk jaw, jaw, jaw. That is what is missing here. If these people are professionals, and I do believe they are, and if they are caring, and I do believe they are, then come to the table and let us discuss it. We have put a solution on the table, and the Minister of Family and Social Services may well wish to supplement my answer in this respect. We have put a proposal on the table as to how to come to some resolution over the service delivery issue, the caseload issue. But we cannot proceed with that without the social workers at the table. They are an essential part of the solution. I ask once again for the social workers to come back to the table. The government negotiators are ready, they are willing, they are able, and they want to make some solution in this case.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the point is: talk is cheap. I haven't seen any offers from this government. The caseloads have been going up for the last 10 years. That's the reality, and the government's done nothing. I ask the minister. The social workers are fighting for a better system so that their clients will be served better in the future. They are acting professionally, Ms. Minister. I want to ask the question: instead of forcing them to strike, why doesn't the government show some compassion for the poor she's talking about and move to reduce onerous caseloads that are there for social workers now?

MS McCOY: That is the very issue that is being talked about at the table. May I take this opportunity to remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that it subverts the collective bargaining process to try and hijack the whole system of talks and negotiations and mediation into this Assembly. It is no good us talking about this matter, Mr. Speaker. It is up to the two parties to negotiate, and they will negotiate it when those professional social workers come back to the table. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. So we can hear the answers, you know.

Meech Lake Accord

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, today we're at the third anniversary of the signing of the Meech Lake accord. A majority of Albertans, including Liberals, do not like the Meech Lake accord. In fact, the most recent polls show that three times as many Albertans want the accord scrapped as want it kept. Leadership for Mr. Mulroney on this issue has been nonexistent, and leadership from our government has been less than inspiring. We've been more successful at giving in or caving in than in receiving. My first question is to the Deputy Premier. Given that Dr. Meekison is a key resource person in advising the government on Meech and given that Dr. Meekison just only recently appeared before the special Commons committee dealing with the companion resolution, at which time he indicated that provisions of Meech could be separated, my question to the Deputy Premier is this: does this signal a new position of the Alberta government with respect to Meech Lake; that is, the severability of the provisions of Meech?

MR. HORSMAN: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DECORE: Well, it's a good thing to see that the leadership hasn't changed and is still as ineffective as usual, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is that Albertans have not had the opportunity to participate in debate on Meech or, now, on the companion resolution. The special Commons committee has ignored Alberta, won't come to Alberta to hear Albertans speak out on Meech or the companion resolution. My question is this: will the Premier show some leadership and ask his Conservative pals in Ottawa to have that special Commons committee come to Alberta to allow Albertans to make representations on Meech and on the companion resolution?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. leader of the Liberal Party totally forgets, and I guess it's understandable, that the Meech Lake resolution was put before this Assembly and debated in this Assembly. It sat over some period of six months while members discussed the matter with all their constituents, then came and voted unanimously – not split vote, not back and forth across this Assembly: unanimously supported. Now, I wonder if he really understands the fact that this is a unanimous resolution of this Assembly.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, given that the special Commons committee insults Albertans by not coming to our province to hear their views but seems to travel everywhere else, isn't the Premier prepared to do something about that, to say to Ottawa: "Look, get that committee here; allow Albertans, however they wish to make their representations, that opportunity to make those representations"? Will he do that?

MR. MITCHELL: He's just taking us for granted.

MR. TAYLOR: Charter a jet and go down and see them.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I see no difference in the two questions, and I've already responded.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Banff-Cochrane, followed by Stony Plain.

Abortion Clinic

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Henry Morgentaler has indicated an interest in establishing a freestanding abortion clinic in this province. I think everyone in this House is aware that both the federal government and the provincial government have jurisdiction over various matters dealing with this very emotional and very difficult issue. My question is to our Minister of Health. With respect to Alberta's requirement to provide access to medical services, which I personally believe is well done and well considered within the ministry, could the minister indicate what this government's position is with respect to provincial funding for freestanding abortion clinics?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Just to be clear, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Morgentaler did write me this month, and his letter does not ask for provincial assistance to set up a clinic, nor does he suggest in his letter that he is going to establish his own clinic here in Alberta. Rather, what he offers is assistance to help the province set up a freestanding clinic. In response to that offer we will be replying that the province will not take him up on his offer, because we have no intention of establishing a freestanding clinic here in Alberta. As I've indicated before on several occasions, I am not a proponent of freestanding clinics for this particular procedure for the following three reasons. First, it is a procedure that, in my view, can and should be done in the existing hospital framework in our province. Number two, the issue of privacy is far better protected within a hospital setting than in a freestanding clinic setting. Thirdly, a facility fee can be charged in a freestanding clinic, as is the case with other freestanding clinics in the province, which would have to be paid by all getting service at that clinic. It would be a fee that would have to be paid by everyone, including those who can ill afford it. For those reasons we will be responding no to his offer of assistance.

MR. EVANS: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it appears that the College of Physicians and Surgeons has some sympathy and some empathy with the position of Dr. Morgentaler. In light of that and in light of the information the minister has provided to us, will the minister be meeting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons to clarify our provincial government's position and to in turn better understand the position of the College of Physicians and Surgeons?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the issue of whether or not a freestanding clinic can be established in our province for any medical procedure is one that is appropriately decided, I believe, by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, because it is ultimately a question of the safety of a procedure being performed outside a hospital operating theatre and an issue of the qualifications of a physician and the issue of equipment within that freestanding clinic. In our province, in the past as well as now, those kinds of medical decisions are made by the college, and that continues today. There has been, however, a change in the bylaws by the college which would add this procedure to the list of procedures that can be done outside a hospital environment, and that go-ahead, if you like, has been given by the college but

only if the issues of qualification of physicians and appropriate equipment are provided.

MR. TAYLOR: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Stony Plain.

Education Funding

MR. WOLOSCHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is the first day of Education Week and a good time to focus on the challenges in education. Today I'd like to focus on the problem of education funding and taxation equity, which has recently been studied by the Industrial Property Taxation Task Force. The report identifies a school board's increasing reliance on funding education through local school taxes: 33 percent of total education funding in 1987, up from 10 percent in 1971. Supplementary requisitions have increased some 800 percent per pupil between 1974 and 1987. My question to the Premier, then, is this: when will this government realize that the existing funding structure contributes to an unequal access to quality education across the province and, consequently, that the province should fund at least 85 percent of basic education expenses?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Minister of Education will also review the question from the hon. member and perhaps will want to provide additional information. The government of Alberta has identified education as our number one priority. We have provided the dollars that the taxpayers of this province can provide. I remind the hon. member that government dollars aren't different than other taxpayers' dollars. They're all taxpayers' dollars.

MR. WOLOSCHYN: Mr. Speaker, priorities can be talked about. And dollars: I know where they come from. However, the fact still remains that a child in one town may have access to, say, four guidance counsellors where in a similar situation in another town they may not have access to one or even any. The Minister of Education has himself admitted that this type of unequal access could be the subject of a challenge to his department under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Will the Premier make a commitment today to immediately address the critical issue of the unequal quality of education which kids receive in this province?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, that matter is dealt with every day and on an annual basis as well in our budget. I should draw to the hon. member's attention that the whole matter of fiscal equity in education funding is a large part of the Minister of Education's budget, in which he is able to try and make sure that to the greatest extent possible we have equal opportunities in education throughout the province.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Millar Western Pulp Mill

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Six weeks ago it was revealed that fly ash from the Millar Western teepee burner was potentially creating toxicity in Whitecourt soils. At that time

the government's response was to have Millar Western move the teepee burner, and the government also undertook a control test of the chemical components of that fly ash. The results of that test have not yet been revealed publicly. To the minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety: will the minister please confirm that the results of that control test in fact have been found to be disturbing and that they have been sent out to a toxicologist for further insight and test into their actual toxicity?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the tests taken by Environment some three weeks ago are still under study.

MR. MITCHELL: Given that the test is still under study, could the minister please explain why it is that the teepee burner, has been allowed to start burning again before we know exactly what the toxicity is of the fly ash?

MR. TRYNCHY: Well, Mr. Speaker, that question should be directed to the Minister of the Environment, not to myself.

Social Workers' Contract Negotiations (continued)

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Labour. I understand that the negotiations with the Alberta social workers are not progressing as well as expected. My constituency of Athabasca-Lac La Biche, specifically the Lac La Biche office of Family and Social Services, faces the highest rate per capita on welfare, and 80 percent of those are native people, which is a shame. As I said before in this House, the alternative to welfare to my constituents, of course, is jobs and training. You can see that on Friday both the Official Opposition leader and the Liberal leader fought hard to cancel the jobs. [interjections] They love that, doom and gloom.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. minister. So far you have refused to respond to the social workers' request for you to break the deadlock. You are the minister. Why don't you direct government negotiators to come up with a direct settlement that will cap the caseload and bring pay equity for the female social workers?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, what we have done is directed our government negotiators to be ready, able, and willing to come to a solution. In fact, we have also directed them to offer mediation. So far the social workers and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees have refused both – to come to the table with or without a mediator – as of last Thursday. Again I say – and it's for the very people that the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche has mentioned – it is the very people that he is saying who will suffer; that is, those who are on welfare or those who are in abusive family situations that cannot get the social workers' assistance when they need it. It is those very people that we are thinking about and worrying about, and that is why we are asking these caring and responsible professionals to come back to the table where we have put solutions forward: so that they can be part of the solution.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much. My supplement is to the Associate Minister of Family and Social Services. One of the major problems in the negotiations seems to be the caseload of social workers. They indicate that they're overworked and cannot keep up with the caseload and cannot provide effective service to the clients. My question to the associate minister is: what is your department proposing to do with that?

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, I've hesitated to get into this discussion because of the sensitivity of the negotiations that are going on right now, but I would like to clarify a few issues, one of which is the caseload. We have 518 direct professional staff delivering service to some 82,872 individuals on social allowance, assured income for the severely handicapped, fraud investigation, and other things. This breaks down to something like 160 cases per individual. At peak loads when there are demands put on the region, at times there are other people, professional staff, who get involved, and when they do this reduces it to 70 clients per caseload.

As a department we've been reviewing this situation for some time now prior to the negotiations, and during negotiations we've offered to strike a task force made up of equal members of the union and the social services department, chaired by a neutral facilitator, to try to address the specific concerns the union is requesting. This has not been done to this date, Mr. Speaker, which is really unfortunate, because I do feel that the common interest here is the people who are being impacted upon. I think it would really be unfortunate if we couldn't resolve this through some form of good, compatible negotiations and, if necessary, some form of mediation, but certainly not the action that seems to be contemplated right now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Belmont now has the floor officially.

Construction Labour Relations

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this eve of May Day, I too have some questions for the Minister of Labour. I've recently been made aware of a document that was distributed to construction workers in Calgary. The paper is filled with antiunion propaganda that speaks of coercion and intimidation. It urges the promotion of those workers who have a very strong antiunion bias and the demotion of those workers who support unions. Now, given that the document breaches the Labour Code, it probably offends the Charter of Rights, and it may very well fall under at least a couple of sections of the Criminal Code, I'm wondering if the minister will investigate this matter and take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that workers have the right to organize without intimidation.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, if the allegations have any amount of truth at all, they are very serious ones. But let me begin my investigation this very moment and ask the member to please produce the document so that I know what he's talking about. Then, of course, I could have some rational comment to make.

MR. SIGURDSON: I'm pleased to do that, Mr. Speaker, and I'll send it over to the Minister of Labour straightaway. But I'm wondering if the Minister of Labour would also undertake to discover who might be responsible for that document and take appropriate action against those individuals.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, the document is just being delivered now, and I cannot draw any conclusions from having a quick glance at it. This is the very first I've seen of it. I would very much appreciate getting from the hon. member as our first line of investigation, as I say, some more information from him as to where he got it, the names of people who have come forward to him with it, and certainly I would be more than willing to discuss this subject with him at a later time.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place, followed by Edmonton-Whitemud.

Alberta-Pacific Project Report

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Jaakko Pöyry, the Finnish consulting firm, is interviewing members of the Al-Pac EIA review board in the course of their \$400,000 review of the review, the one the Royal Society apparently would do for some \$20,000. Recently the questions that have been asked of panel members are not simply about the scientific evidence, but they've been asking them about the attitude of panel members toward a new proposal on Al-Pac, the subsequent proposal on Al-Pac. I wonder if the Premier would indicate whether he was the one who initiated the change in the mandate of Jaakko Pöyry to get into this new area of evaluating the new and still secret report of the Al-Pac EIA review.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member feels badly that he's unable to direct his question to the Minister of the Environment. We'll certainly take it as notice and have him respond to him.

MR. McINNIS: The singlemost crucial recommendation in the report at page 32: "A monitoring program to study the current degree of organochlorine contamination" should be set up and managed by a committee, which is all outlined in the report. Last week I was told by two Indian bands in northern Alberta that Alberta Environment has dropped out of and canceled meetings relative to monitoring of dioxins and furans on the river. I wonder if the Premier could undertake to reinstate Alberta Environment's participation, which seems to have fallen off the day the Premier decided to attack the Al-Pac report and get us on this new song and dance that we're on already.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, again, there's probably a great deal of misinformation in the way he has posed his question, but I'm sure the hon. Minister of the Environment will be able to review his questions and respond to them.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Whitemud.

Lottery Funds

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week when I questioned the minister responsible for lotteries, his response reminded me of the hit version of Tiny Tim's *Tip Toe Through the Tulips*. He totally avoided answering my supplementary question in particular. Because lottery funds are not accountable to this Legislative Assembly, I must direct my questions in this fashion. To the minister responsible for lotteries: will the minister tell me whether information I have received is correct;

that is, that lottery funds have been used to purchase briefcases for government MLAs or some government MLAs?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there are only government MLAs and opposition MLAs. There are not some government MLAs and some who are not government MLAs. Those MLAs who were elected in the province of Alberta and are members of the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta are government MLAs, all of them, and they form the government of the province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, when the community facility enhancement program was introduced nearly two years ago and when the announcement was made with respect to the program, I made it very clear at that time that this very important program utilizing lottery funds, the return of lottery funds back to the people of Alberta, would be a program the government would choose not to spend a great deal of dollars advertising by way of media advertisements and the like, and made it very, very clear in terms of the paper that went out that the community liaison officers associated with the community facility enhancement program would be in fact MLAs, government MLAs who choose to do it. As part of the package of information that was provided to all MLAs who were to serve as community liaison officers – in essence, there was a package of information that was placed in a briefcase, and such a briefcase was provided to government MLAs nearly two years ago.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, will the minister responsible for lotteries supply this House with a complete, detailed financial picture of lottery funds including all expenditures, revenues, and surpluses and items such as the item he just raised?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the annual report of the Western Canada Lottery Corporation is made available to any citizen in western Canada who would want to have it. The most recent annual report has been made available. In addition to that, there's an annual report of the Western Canada Lottery Corporation, Alberta division, that is a public report that has been made available. I believe that on the 16th day of May 1990 I will have the privilege of appearing before the Public Accounts Committee, in which I would be very, very happy to answer any specific questions with respect to this matter. In addition to that and in a few minutes from now, I believe the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services will have the privilege of appearing before this House to answer questions with respect to the estimates of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services, and if all members would be good enough to look at the last vote associated with that particular portfolio, you'll see there's one item dealing with administration with respect to certain aspects of the lottery fund.

Each and every foundation – the Wild Rose Foundation, the Alberta Sport Council, the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts – has an annual report that lists all of the administration with respect to each and every one of the portfolio beneficiaries of the lottery fund. There are some 20 of them. All of the reports are public, and I would sincerely ask the Liberal Party to make good use of the \$500,000 a year provided to it to do research by simply going down to the library and asking for a copy of the report. If they can't find one there, I'd be very, very pleased to ask any of these 20 foundations I've talked about to send the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud a copy of such report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Health Care Study

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For some months questions regarding health care have been deferred because we were waiting for the Hyndman report, now \$4.2 million, and four months after it has been delivered to the Premier, we're still waiting to hear about it. In the meantime, decisions are being made or not being made about health care: increases in premiums, an increase in nursing home fees, problems with home care for people under 65, freezes on capital expenditures, voluntary hospitals being rolled into regional boards, and so on. My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier please tell the House when that report on the Hyndman commission will come to this House with his analysis and his recommendations?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Health may wish to augment my reply, and I'm surprised the hon. member didn't direct the question to the Minister of Health, who is here. Just to make it clear to my good friend the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, the Hyndman report did in fact break a lot of new ground in its thinking about future health care for Albertans. In fact, it expanded the whole image of health into areas including the environment, education, advanced education, recreation, and of course health and family and social services. So the Minister of Health has the responsibility of co-ordinating the response from each of the departments involved and bringing them together before our cabinet. Then we would, of course, be responding to the report's recommendations.

I think it's an excellent report, Mr. Speaker, that has given us an opportunity to look beyond an annual budget basis to how health care should be delivered in the province in the future, and we are looking to being able to use the valuable information a fine group of Albertans has gathered together for us to allow us to chart our health care into the future.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I still don't know when.

I'd like to ask my good friend the Premier: since we are moving ahead and putting plans and programs in place, does this mean that a decision has in fact been made as to how health care is to be managed and delivered in Alberta without waiting for the Hyndman analysis and recommendations to be before the House?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member and good friend asked the first question of the Premier, my first thought on an answer was: welcome to the world of health. The issues are complex. The issues are dynamic. The issues are changing on a very constant basis. Getting the picture of that in terms of the year 2005, which was the mandate of the Premier's commission, is what we now have before us. And it's a tremendous advantage as we look to planning new programs, as we look to the consistency of existing programs. While the hon. member may look for the simplistic solution of simply a timetable to say when, in fact the far more important issues are how and why. It is in pulling those kinds of issues together that the Premier has asked that I as Minister of Health chair a committee of ministers involving eight ministries of this government, and I think it really speaks to how broad the issue of health is today.

But it is not a matter of just studying, Mr. Speaker. We are taking actions with respect to preventive health, to the long-term strategy on long-term care and mental health, all of which are consistent with the recommendations of that commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Drayton Valley.

Pharmaceutical Hazards

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Pharmaceutical Association has just recently reported that there are over 400 drug-related poisonings in children under the age of five every month in Alberta. Would the Minister of Health indicate what initiatives, if any, are in place to try and curtail these tragedies in young children?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, here's an excellent example of how the province is undertaking preventive health strategies certainly consistent with the direction the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans directed us in. This is a startling statistic the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association has put out, that 400 kids in our province have poisonings related to prescription drug use, and it is in concert – and I applaud the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association for their launching today of the annual Great Drug Roundup. Interestingly, this is the third one that's been performed in our province, and last year over 11 tonnes of dead drugs, as they're called, were gathered and collected for disposal.

MR. THURBER: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Once they've rounded up all these drugs and medications, Madam Minister, what are they doing with them? Are they going to garbage dumps, or what's the procedure in getting rid of those?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, Alberta is a leader across Canada, because we are the first province that was able to be part of the collection of these dead drugs, and they are being disposed of by the Special Waste Management Corporation out in Swan Hills. It's a perfect example of the link between environment and health which was so strongly supported in the Premier's commission and, I think, speaks to the leadership of Alberta on the issue of the environment and our health.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

Human Rights Commission

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Labour. The minister is responsible for the Human Rights Commission. There are a number of situations occurring in Calgary workplaces where there is ample evidence to indicate that workers' basic human rights, especially the rights of new Canadians, are being violated. The ability of workers to advance their cases in these situations is impeded because, first of all, there's a lack of awareness in how to proceed and, of course, this is complicated by language difficulties; secondly, there are lengthy delays in the processing of these cases; and finally, there's a lack of advocacy skills and an inability to proceed on a collective basis. So my question is: will the

minister take steps to see that funding is provided for community-based advocates who would act on behalf of individuals or groups where reasonable grounds exist to believe that discrimination is occurring?

MS McCOY: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say that the Human Rights Commission caseload has increased quite considerably this year over last, and I think the commission has greatly succeeded in increasing its profile, particularly because it meets once a month all around the province, so that every month it's meeting in another location around Alberta. This is one way of increasing their profile and therefore allowing more and more people to know what steps to take in coming in. Certainly, also, the cases are all handled by investigators at the Human Rights Commission in the first instance, and I know that when there is a language problem, they do seek out interpreters and others to help them. They then become advocates on behalf of the person who has come to them for help, and that's the way the Human Rights Commission is set up. But in any event, we are certainly always interested in hearing ways and means of making this service available to more and more Albertans, because it is a critically important institution that we have instituted for 20 years now.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear that the minister is taking steps to inform the public, but there is still a long way to go. I wonder if the minister would assure this House right now that she will introduce measures that would require all employers to notify all new employees of their basic rights under human rights legislation and under the labour code in languages they're familiar with.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to complete this series of questions and to allow the Minister of Advanced Education to give some supplementary information as raised by a question by Calgary-McKnight? Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Minister of Labour.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has anticipated an announcement by very few hours and days. Certainly we are working on the very thing he is suggesting. But let me say this about human rights in Alberta. Human rights in Alberta is not just the Minister of Labour's responsibility, not just the responsibility of the chief commissioner of the Human Rights Commission. It's the responsibility of each and every Albertan. Each and every Albertan must speak up and say that we insist on human rights, we insist on understanding, we insist on respect for one another. I would appreciate the hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn across the way speaking up in a positive way and as often as he possibly can. It's not that we need to get up and say, "Isn't it awful that we have bigots." It's the positive statements that we have to make, and we must insist that other people live up to our standards. That is how we are going to have a province that is in the forefront of human rights and understanding.

MR. SPEAKER: Advanced Education.

Northland Open University

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday last the hon. Member for Calgary-McKnight asked the question as to the criteria considered when the Department of Advanced Education gives permission for an Out-of-province institution to advertise in Alberta. I suspect that's a follow-up to information I sent to the hon. member's caucus back in January. I would point out that at the moment Advanced Education is developing a policy in the whole area of Out-of-province institutions. I would further point out that the criteria we use at the moment is whether or not an institution is legally chartered. Further to that, Northland Open University is a federally chartered institution, incorporated under the Canada letters patent, and therefore there are federal and provincial jurisdictional issues. Mr. Speaker, the permission granted is conditional. If at the conclusion of our review it does not meet that criteria, then certainly that conditional approval will be withdrawn.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. I appreciate that response. My information, however, is that other provinces have not given permission to this so-called university to advertise or to function in their provinces, and I wonder why the minister did not do the review first and then allow the advertising rather than reverse the order.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, included in the information I sent the hon. member in January was a list of some six other institutions that Alberta Advanced Education has given permission to. We don't feel that we sit in a position whereby we should be making judgments as to what Albertans choose as long as certain basic criteria are met. The use of those criteria is whether or not Albertans are interested in an open concept university and whether or not, in our view, the material offered by that institution is of educational value to Albertans.

MR. SPEAKER: For a point of clarification, earlier today the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud asked the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services some questions with respect to the administration of lottery funds. The Chair in retrospect was in error and should have ruled the question out of order, because the Chair felt, when it received notice of the question earlier on – the Chair was not able to check to see whether or not lotteries would indeed be examined under Public Works, Supply and Services. So the Chair apologizes to the House that earlier the Chair should have intervened.

A point of order, Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the point of order is under 495(7), with respect to the hon. Minister of Health referring to letters and documents being exchanged on the proposed Morgentaler clinic, that I believe should be tabled in the Legislature.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, if I may. Far be it from me to correct the hon. mature Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, but referring to the reference raised by *Beauchesne*, Mr. Speaker, I would draw your attention, sir, to *Beauchesne* 495(5):

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate. The admission that a document exists or the reading of the salutation or address of a letter does not constitute citing.

I think the hon. member from across the way has said that because the minister had made reference to it, it therefore has to be public. I don't think, if one peruses *Beauchesne* 495(5), that's necessary. I would probably think the hon. Minister of Health, though, would give the address of Dr. Morgentaler to the hon. member, and the member could simply write and obtain the information.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Minister of Health care to comment?

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I . . .

MR. SPEAKER: No. You only get one shot at this. Thank you very much.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, but a point of order on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. No. There's no such thing as a point of order on a point of order.

MR. TAYLOR: But it's your ruling, Mr. Speaker. The 'point of order is only involved if people involved are supposed to talk. Now, you bring in this . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. member, perhaps the sound system isn't working down there. The Chair invited the Minister of Health to comment.

MR. DECORE: That's not your ruling. You've reversed your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: Just a moment. No. Hon. members, with respect . . . [interjection] No. In terms of the rulings, the House leaders could perhaps deal with their own caucuses as to what the agreement of the House leaders was with respect to points of order.

With regard to . . . The Chair has invited the Minister of Health to stand. She has not taken that opportunity. The Chair reflects upon Westlock-Sturgeon's reference of 495(7), which reads:

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

Now, the Chair doesn't know whether or not the letter referred to today by the Minister of Health is indeed part of the record of the department or whether or not it's a matter of her private correspondence. Without seeing that letter, the Chair has no ability to be able to rule one way or the other on it. So there's that difficulty with respect to subsection 7. The Chair is faced with the situation: we'll have to examine the comments made earlier today with regard to the answer given and report back to the House tomorrow.

Before we get to Orders of the Day, we have a request, Standing Order 30, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

head: Request for Emergency Debate

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under Standing Order 30 to request the House to adjourn the ordinary business of the Assembly to discuss the urgent matter of the possible job

action of local 6 of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. We have had a number of questions and answers today but they really don't deal with the matter, and speaking to the urgency of it, tomorrow it's entirely possible that professional social workers, child care counselors, and psychologists employed by the Department of Family and Social Services may in fact take job action, quite clearly because of the circumstances of their work which include impossible caseloads. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this could leave thousands of Albertans without access to crisis intervention, counseling, emergency services, child protection, family support, income support, support to disabled and handicapped, foster care, adoptions. These in many cases are powerless and frightened people, and we are going to leave them without their accustomed help and advice.

In all the answers this afternoon we have not heard of any plan the government has to deal with this, no contingency plan whatsoever from the government. Constituencies, all of us know, are being called now for advice as to what to do in the event of job action from residents in our constituency. The anxieties are mounting, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Labour today has indicated that the professional workers should come back to the table. Well, it seems to me the government has not come up with anything that is even close to what's needed or the social workers would still be at the table.

Mr. Speaker, the Associate Minister of Family and Social Services has spoken about a task force. We don't need a task force. The workers know what needs to happen and they've made this very plain for months on end. It is absolutely essential that we hear from our government what they plan to do related to this most serious matter. It is urgent. This is a critical situation. It's upon us, and it must be dealt with today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Under the provisions of Standing Order 30(1) and (2), first of all, indeed the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has supplied written notice in the approved period of time. Secondly, now having listened to the request for urgency of debate, the Chair feels that as important as the issue may be, as of this moment the situation is still hypothetical, and therefore the matter as explained by the member fails the test of urgency and is not in order to proceed.

head: Orders of the Day

head: Committee of Supply

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

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

head: Main Estimates 1990-91

Public Works, Supply and Services

MR. CHAIRMAN: These estimates are to be found at page 269 of the big book, with the details commencing at page 115 of the elements book. The hon. the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the Assembly. This afternoon is a proud day for me. It marks the occasion on which I can present the estimates of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. Mr.

Chairman, you've already indicated on what pages of the elements book hon. members might find the details with respect to these estimates.

Perhaps just a few comments at the outset, and I'll be very happy to deal with questions and submissions by hon. members. Mr. Chairman, at the outset we're looking this afternoon at the General Revenue Fund budget associated with the Public Works, Supply and Services department. It totals some \$516.5 million, and that's compared to some \$491.5 million for the previous fiscal year. This budget is comprised of \$321.7 million in operating expenditures and \$194.8 million in capital expenditures.

This department, Public Works, Supply and Services, is responsible for the operation and maintenance of a multibillion dollar physical plant made up of approximately 2,600 owned and some 600 leased buildings throughout the province of Alberta. Annually we would co-ordinate or manage some 400 capital construction projects on behalf of various government departments and agencies, which include some 70 hospital and four reservoir projects. I would like to point out, Mr. Chairman, that this afternoon we are dealing solely with the General Revenue Fund estimates of this department. We'll also find estimates on two other occasions and I'll have an opportunity to appear before the committee dealing with both the Capital Fund and the heritage fund.

Mr. Chairman, as well, Public Works, Supply and Services manages over 700 consultant contracts with a value approaching some \$89 million and some 250 construction contracts in excess of \$410 million. Dollars are included in this particular series of estimates for land assembly, land acquisition. I'd like to point out as well – and it may be of interest to members of the committee – that approximately 625,000 square metres of space is being leased for government departments and agencies, with an annual budget in excess of some \$87 million. This is a significant increase in recent years, since 1981, to say the least, in terms of leased space as compared and opposed to government-owned space throughout the province of Alberta. We have some 2.3 million square metres of owned space with nearly 600,000 square metres contracted out to the private sector for operations and maintenance, and 1.7 million square metres managed by a combination of in-house resources and private contractors. We have substantial dollars budgeted for the government's telecommunication services. We also have a rather sophisticated and large central data processing facility in our province, which is operated on behalf of government departments and agencies.

We, of course, also have to deal with the central vehicle services division. We have an air division, as well, that makes aircraft assembled by the province available for health, environment, forest fire fighting, and other priorities. I might point out, Mr. Chairman, that tragically on Saturday last one of our fleet, a helicopter, went down on Lesser Slave Lake. We're all very, very happy and pleased that none of the passengers in the helicopter were injured. In particular two members of our Assembly, the hon. Minister of Tourism and the distinguished Member for Lesser Slave Lake, escaped with minimal damage to their persons, as was the case with the other individuals involved in this tragic occurrence.

Mr. Chairman, we also are responsible for one other aspect of government operations and management which continues to cause me some interesting concerns, and that's the storage of records throughout the province of Alberta. We are now storing annually some 225,000 cubic feet of records. This is paper that's

been assembled in the history of this province, and if you were to take this volume of records and try to visualize what exactly 225,000 cubic feet of records is, if you visualize the size of an ordinary Canadian Football League football field, you would find records, paper, piled up approximately four feet high in every square inch of that particular football field to give you an idea of how much is at stake and how much is involved.

Our staff complement for 1990-91 is exactly the same as it was in 1989-90. There was a readjustment and a consolidation of some 13 individuals from the revolving fund to the General Revenue Fund. I'd like to point out as well, Mr. Chairman, that the total staff complement in Public Works, Supply and Services is approximately 2,400 permanent positions. That's a reduction of nearly 1,000 from the 1982-83 fiscal year.

As well, Mr. Chairman, this particular department acts as the central purchasing agency on behalf of all government departments and processes approximately 20,000 individual purchase transactions per year with a dollar value approaching some \$300 million. We would purchase asphalt, some \$90 million of that, on behalf of Transportation and Utilities, as well, of course, as gas and lubricants, equipment, heavy vehicles, and structures such as bridges and other sorts of things.

There are also two initiatives in this department that reflect directly on what recent submissions by the Auditor General have been. I'd be happy to deal with that.

I'd like to conclude, Mr. Chairman, by tabling with the Legislative Assembly a document which I think all members should have before them. It has to do with environmental initiatives that we've undertaken in all the departments and agencies under my direction. We've listed for all members of the Assembly very specific new initiatives with respect to the utilization of recycling products and anything that we can do in the area of improving this government's commitment to the environment. As an example, we currently have already purchased in this fiscal year some 46,000 packages, or some 2.3 million sheets, of general-purpose recycled paper. We've set ourselves a target in terms of utilization of recycled paper throughout the system known as the province of Alberta in this year, and will be advancing that level in the years to come.

As well, Mr. Chairman, printed paper products like letterheads, note pads, and business cards which have a postconsumer waste content will be made available. Letterhead using recycled paper is already being made available for all Members of the Legislative Assembly. I want to point out as well that the initiatives I'm going to be talking about now have not only been made mandatory in the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services but also apply to the Public Affairs Bureau, the Wild Rose Foundation, and the agency known as lotteries, major exhibitions, and fairs, as well as Alberta Public Safety Services.

We've targeted 30 percent of printing services from the central duplication plant to be on recycled paper in this particular fiscal year we're dealing with. We've also got a study under way that would be looking at the utilization of paper towels from recycled paper, and that study's under way in several government buildings.

I'd like to point out as well, Mr. Chairman, that all vehicles serviced in the central government garage and a further 50 which are located with the Department of the Environment will use re-refined oil. A tender has now gone out to utilize this particular product, and that will be made mandatory, as I pointed out, in the areas under my responsibility.

Other examples of recyclable materials now being used and

purchased governmentwide: glass beads, some \$1 million per annum from waste glass, are being purchased and used in highway paint by the Department of Transportation and Utilities; grader blades from recycled steel are being purchased; and large dimension tires are recapped or regrooved. We're moving in ensuring that all toner cartridges being used for laser printers will be refilled. Rather than replacing the cartridge, the refilling of the cartridge is being encouraged. We've undertaken and set in place a comprehensive furniture recycling program, which has been implemented provincewide. Of course, used paper collection programs have been in place for the last several years.

It was my good fortune a couple of years ago to be the honorary chairman of the recycling association of the province of Alberta. At that point in time, we contracted with Paper Chase, a group in the city of Edmonton, when I was Minister of the Environment, and today, in April of 1990, approximately 70 percent of government departments are involved with Paper Chase in terms of recycling paper. In fact, Mr. Chairman, some 1,200 tonnes of obsolete government records are pulped annually and used in the manufacture of building products. We also have put in place and will continue to put in place and expand a collection program for used oil with respect to utilization of equipment by government facilities and the like.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, it will be very, very soon that all the foam cups that are being utilized here in the Legislative Assembly and throughout the whole system known as government will quickly disappear, because I've instructed that we simply go to recyclable and environmentally safe products throughout the whole system known as the government of Alberta. When these current inventories of foam cups and the like in this building disappear, there will be no more added, and that instruction has now gone out. There'll be no more purchasing or warehousing of foam cups and plates by Public Works, Supply and Services. We are insisting that all of those private entrepreneurs who do contract work in our cafeterias throughout the maze known as the government of Alberta will have to use environmentally safe containers and the like. So, in essence, we're talking about glass containers for the most part.

Mr. Chairman, those initiatives are under way. I think they're important initiatives. There's no doubt at all in my mind that we will continue to do more, but I thought all members might be interested in knowing where we're at on this 30th day of April, 1990.

Mr. Chairman, this department, I have found in the last year, is a department that I have a great deal of respect for. There are some very competent individuals who are associated with it. It's a major department in the province of Alberta from an administrative point of view, from the border with Montana to the border with the Northwest Territories and, of course, in between our boundaries with both Saskatchewan and British Columbia, and there are some very dedicated individuals. In fact, I've not yet found one who was not dedicated in my 12 or so months of responsibility for this particular department. A number of those officials I've invited to come today to observe the goings-on of the Legislative Assembly, and they are in the members' gallery. I'm going just to briefly introduce them to all members of the Assembly. No response is necessary; no waving is necessary either. First of all, we have Mr. Ed McLellan, who is the deputy minister; Dan Bader, who's an assistant deputy minister of property management and reservoir development; Mr. Tony Hargreaves, the assistant deputy minister of capital development; Mr. Herman Lucas, assistant deputy

minister, accommodation services; Mr. Brian Black, assistant deputy minister, supply management; Mr. Ray Reshke, executive director of finance and administration; Mr. Arnold Pepper, assistant deputy minister, information services; Maureen Clifford, who is the executive director of personnel; Jan Berkowski, who's the communications director; Mr. Gary Boddez, who's an assistant deputy minister in finance and administration and also helps and assists dealing with the last vote that we have in these estimates. We also have two other individuals that are joining us today: Lorna Baker-Perri, who's a budget officer with Alberta Lotteries, and Nash Shariff, who's a budget officer as well with Alberta Lotteries.

Mr. Chairman, I'm kind of proud to present these estimates, and if it's okay to ask for the vote to be called, I'd be very pleased to deal with that as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Before recognizing the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, I'd just like to point out to the minister that the material has been circulated, but it cannot be filed or tabled in committee. That can only be done in the Assembly. So if the minister wishes it to be a permanent record, perhaps tomorrow he could table it.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you.

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

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure we'll get to the invitation of the minister to vote on his estimates, but beforehand perhaps a few comments and some questions may be in order. The minister presides over a very large and important department of government which keeps the rest of the government rolling and stocked with paper and equipment. I daresay that without the dedicated effort of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services the government would grind to a halt. There are some days when some people think that mightn't be such a bad idea, but I know, on balance, we have to say that the work done here is very important to us all.

I note that relative to the spending estimates, we're looking at a 5.3 percent increase in departmental spending overall, which corresponds in my opinion – well, I thought Education was supposed to be the top priority of the government. It only got 3.5 percent. It appears that perhaps Public Works, Supply and Services ought to be designated as the new number one priority of the provincial government, having topped Education spending increases by more than a percent and a half. Quite significant.

I would like some comments from the minister today relative to the Oldman River dam project, which quite curiously, in my opinion, wasn't mentioned in the opening remarks. Last year, I did, being a rookie member in this Assembly, raise what I thought was a timid question of the minister relative to some potential developments in court cases having to do with that project. Well, he shot back, referred to me as "stupid, ignorant, dumb, irresponsible, and completely out of order." So it's with much trepidation that I stand in my place today to ask a question relative to the Oldman dam. But what the heck, eh?

Recently the Federal Court of Canada, Appeal Division, issued its ruling in the case of the Friends of the Oldman River versus the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Alberta as

represented by the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. That decision was rendered in Ottawa on the 13th . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister is rising on a point of order.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, these estimates this afternoon, which are located in the estimates book from pages 117 to 125, deal with the General Revenue Fund of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. The subject matter that my distinguished colleague is referring to is the Oldman River dam. That comes under the Capital Fund, which is another estimate, and I'll have another opportunity to appear before this committee. Those particular estimates are not being dealt with this afternoon, Mr. Chairman. They'll come at another time when the Capital Fund would come in.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is really a good fellow, but he cannot in all honesty and sincerity say that I called him those terrible names last year. I would never do that, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. McINNIS: Relative to the second point of order first, I refer the member to *Hansard*, June 23, 1989, page 514.

On the first point, I perhaps didn't make it clear at the outset that I'm not addressing my remarks to the capital estimates at all but rather to the role of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, which is pursuant to vote 1 of the estimates. I'm dealing with the minister's role in this matter and not with the spending estimates of the department. We will certainly deal with that when the time comes. I'll try to tailor my remarks in such a way so that the Chair can see that, clearly, it deals with the minister's role, because it is the name of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services which is affixed to this court case.

The judgment was rendered in Ottawa on Tuesday, March 13, 1990. I think the relevant portion can be found at page 29 of the judgment rendered by the honourable court, *in* which the court stated:

I must agree with counsel for the appellant that this comparison . . .

This is the contention put forward by the minister in the court proceedings that the Alberta review process on the Oldman River dam was equivalent and just as good as the federal guidelines order. The court found that the

comparison falls down in . . . two crucial respects. The Guidelines Order, unlike the provincial regime, was plainly drafted to allow for the expressing of public concern and the availability of a full opportunity for the public to participate in the environmental assessment and review process.

The courts found that that opportunity was not made available to Albertans relative to this provincial project, which is under the authority of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services' vote 1 of these estimates.

Secondly, there is nothing in the provincial laws which "guarantees the independence of the review panel in any discernible measure." Now, this is the actual nub of the matter. The point that several people have tried to make to the minister and the government over the years dealing with the Oldman River dam project is that the government has failed to give all

Albertans – I'm talking about people in southern Alberta; people upstream, in the headwaters area; people in the rest of the province, who fortunately or unfortunately from their point of view will have to pay a share of the \$400 million price tag of the project – an opportunity to have their concerns vetted in a public hearing on this specific proposal. Not only that, but the scientific research, the engineering work, all of the material that's available to government, upon which a decision might be made to locate a dam in that particular site, the Three Rivers site, was never independently reviewed as to its scientific validity. That has a very serious problem. As the minister well knows, I raised the issue a year ago that he was aware of a concern brought forward by geologists hired by the Friends of the Oldman relative to the basement tectonics and the stability of that particular site.

Now, I did take the minister's invitation of a year ago to travel through southern Alberta and to talk to people about the Oldman river dam, and there's no question that the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services and the Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest and others on the government side from southern Alberta have told people in that area: "Well, you're in dire straits. You're short of water. You're not going to be able to use your toilets. You're not going to be able to drink. In fact, you'll die of thirst in the desert if we don't build you this dam." I know they've been told that. Now, there are some who are less than fully accepting of that argument, less than fully prepared to make the leap of faith just because some politician says, "You're in some danger of being short of water; therefore, we have to give you a blank cheque for \$400 million or \$500 million, " or whatever the total is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. member. The Chair's been trying to hear something that reflects on the minister's conduct as a minister, as was the advance billing of what the member said he was going to do, but in actual fact it appears that we are discussing the merits of the Oldman River dam. Unless there's something really urgent about that being dealt with – if the member carries on in the same vein that he has been, in any event, the Chair wouldn't expect the minister to respond to it on this occasion. He would probably make his response when we are dealing with the Capital Fund, but the Chair really can't see why the merits of the Oldman River dam should be dealt with in these estimates.

MR. McINNIS: I appreciate the guidance from the Chair. My point is relative to the site that was chosen for the dam. There's been a great deal of questioning about that given that the court has ruled that the Alberta environmental process was deficient. That's a given. That's a fact. It's actually something that has occurred during the past year, and it's an item that falls squarely within the minister's responsibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But, hon. member, as a capital project, not as a matter dealing with the department of public works' day-to-day administration. This is a major capital project which we have a special vote for, and I think the hon. member should explain to the Chair how what he's saying relates to vote 1.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I do appreciate that the minister may not wish to discuss this at this time. The urgency is very, very easy to explain. The urgency is that the Federal Court of Canada, Appeal Division, has pulled the construction permit from that project. They have declared it null and void. They've quashed

the permit, and they have ruled, moreover, that this minister is required to have such a permit. Those two things have been ruled by the Court of Canada.

Now, the minister of public works says: "I don't need such a permit. I'm going to go ahead and build the thing anyway" on a site – and this is the burden of my argument – which was chosen entirely for political reasons. That's what we have to try to get to. We've got a dam that's being constructed, on the account of most of the people who have looked at it, on the worst possible site relative to the environment, relative to social, historical, and cultural values. Why would a government refuse to allow Albertans to be involved in a decision to site a dam on precisely the worst place that it could possibly be put anywhere on that river system? Well, the answer that emerged in my travels in southern Alberta was relatively simple: it was a political decision made by this government and this minister because the minister did not want the dam to be located on Indian reserve land. That's the suggestion you find anywhere you go in southern Alberta.

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

MR. McINNIS: Now, it may very well be that the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Three Hills is rising on a point of order.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Well, I don't recall that the Chair specifically ruled on this in terms of relevancy and so on, and I believe it's 23(i) that we relate to. The member has just referred to the minister's decision. The Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, as far as I understand it, makes no decision as to a matter of this nature and, in the end, ends up carrying out the decisions that have been made by the government. Mr. Chairman, I still do not see the relevancy, and I would hope that you would further comment on it, because we're into a discussion of siting a dam, and the administration of the building of it follows after all of those other decisions have been made.

Further, the hon. member's version of what the facts are with respect to that legal judgment certainly could be spoken to by the Minister of the Environment and the Attorney General, but I would take issue with what his version of the facts are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chair really believes that the Member for Three Hills has raised a valid point of order. The member has been debating the matter of the Oldman River dam.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's all the Chair has heard: that it's sited improperly, that the people don't really need it. That is a major capital project. When we're discussing the vote under the Capital Fund for the Oldman River dam, that is the time and the place to make the comments the hon. member has been making.

MR. McINNIS: If I may speak to the point of order raised by the Member for Three Hills, in the first place, we were told by House leaders that we were not supposed to raise points of order willy-nilly in this fashion, but if they want to get into a situation where our benches harass their speakers from every

angle on points of order, we can certainly accommodate them on that score.

The question I'm raising is clearly relevant to the decisions made by this minister. If I ask the Minister of the Environment questions relative to the legal decision . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: But hon. member . . .

MR. McINNIS: . . . I'm told it's not his responsibility; it's public works.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Certainly what you're saying relates to what this minister has done, but it relates to what this minister has done in relation to the Oldman River dam project, which is covered by a vote that is not under the votes we're discussing today. It's in a completely different book. It's under the Capital Fund, not the votes we are discussing today. It's not as if the hon. member doesn't have an opportunity to say what he wants to say about the Oldman River dam. There will be the opportunity, but with all respect, it's not today.

The hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, it might even be further helpful. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has on several occasions said that this minister – and I presume that he's referring to me as an individual – made the decision to locate the Oldman River dam at a certain point. That decision was made, Mr. Chairman, in 1984. I was not a member of Executive Council in 1984.

MR. McINNIS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to debate that decision. I want to debate an entirely different decision, and if you'd let me explain what it is, perhaps we could get over this impasse.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member can do it reasonably quickly, fine. [interjections]

MR. McINNIS: Well, I can if I'm given the floor.

The decision that the minister made was to continue construction of the Oldman dam following the decision rendered by the Federal Court of Canada on Tuesday, March 13. That's the decision we're trying to get to. It was made by the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. Presumably operating on funds that are to be voted under this vote, he made that decision. The question that has arisen is: where does the government get off saying that no longer are permits required in the construction of projects? This minister may say: "Well, it's my opinion that everything I did was done correctly. It was done in the public interest, and I thought I was looking after the people in the area," never mind that the information he gave might have been distorted in some respects. But he's now taking the position that "As minister of public works, I don't need this federal permit to continue to construct this dam."

Now, the question I'm trying to raise with him is: what would happen if everybody took that view? What if you found out that Peter Pocklington was going to build a slaughterhouse in your neighbourhood and had decided, using the logic of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, not to apply for a permit and not to inform people in the area but simply to go ahead and construct? Well, I wager that the minister would take a much different view of it. What if the Alberta-Pacific corporation decided, "Well, we're no longer certain that we need a permit

from the Department of the Environment before we construct this," and went ahead to break ground. In any event . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, the Chair doesn't with relish interrupt the hon. member again, but the Chair must remind the hon. member that when he's talking about the permit and the requirement for a permit on the Oldman River dam, that is a matter that's before the courts now, in the Supreme Court of Canada, an appeal from the Federal Court of Canada, and therefore, on that ground this discussion is out of order.

MR. McINNIS: Well, he can't deny that it was done for political reasons, and whether he chooses to respond or not remains to be seen.

Perhaps I could move to the document which was tabled today by the minister entitled Fact Sheet: Environment Awareness Initiatives Undertaken by Public Works, Supply and Services. He then read it. Now, I thought this document looked familiar and the speech sounded familiar, so I dug out *Hansard*, March 22, and found the self-same speech had been given in the Assembly by the Member for Calgary-Glenmore. Now, I'm not certain whether the Member for Calgary-Glenmore has been stealing the minister's speech notes or whether it's the other way around: whether the Member for Calgary-Glenmore's speech notes were transferred the other direction. Nonetheless, we've had the same speech twice relative to the initiatives of Public Works, Supply and Services on the environmental area and on recycling.

I'd like to say that some of these initiatives are welcome. We certainly do appreciate the indication from the government that in the Legislative Assembly

printed paper products like letterheads, note pads and business cards . . . will be made available. Letterhead using recycled paper is already available for all M.L.A.s.

Perhaps the minister would like to take note of whose initiative that was, because a year ago there was no such material available. In fact I acquired the material at my own expense and brought it to the Assembly administration for testing, and the Legislative Assembly has taken an initiative, which I understand the government is going to pick up on. These efforts to acquire recycled commodities are laudatory and noteworthy in themselves. I simply want to make the point that if we're going to buy recycled products, if we're going to utilize items that have maximum postconsumer waste, we should try to get those things processed, manufactured here in the province of Alberta, otherwise, the minister will be creating jobs all over east-central and the west coast of the United States, where a lot of these things are made, and from other industries throughout the world.

I really would like to see the minister expand the sourcing and the purchasing, but I think we have to look at ways that the provincial government can become involved in building a healthy and viable recycling industry. I think it starts with having a plan to gather up more material. I understand that the minister, when he was Minister of the Environment and more recently, has been a participant with the Paper Chase people in the city of Edmonton, and that's an initiative that should be applauded relative to gathering up the paper products which might be recycled down the road. But what happens to that material? Have you ever asked what happens at Paper Chase with all the material they gather? Well, they have to market the commodity like everybody else. They operate through paper brokers, people like Allied Paper in the city of Edmonton. You take that stuff to the market and it's worth nothing, less than nothing right

now. I think \$5 a tonne is the going price, which does not pay anything like the cost of gathering up and shipping out the material. I think there are things that Public Works, Supply and Services could do to assist with gathering material from the government and from other sources and help to make it more marketable. Sometimes recyclable material can be made more marketable with a relatively modest amount of processing to put it in better form to get to the market, and I think Public Works, Supply and Services could be working with municipalities, people in private industry, to get that sort of thing going.

Public investment in recycling and citizen participation in separating waste could have the effect of subsidizing private industries that don't return a lot of benefits in the province of Alberta. We need to find a way to market the material in a way that maximizes benefits back to the source and maximizes processing in the province of Alberta. I think this would be a good time to think about a comprehensive initiative to try to get some of this paper, the 30 million kilograms of paper that's consumed by the government, reprocessed in the province of Alberta so that when it comes time to buy our recycled letterhead and the 46,000 packages of recycled paper that the minister has bought, maybe some of them might have "made in Alberta" on them and maybe some of them would then result from the employment of the skills and talents and capital of Albertans.

So I think the minister should perhaps investigate a joint marketing initiative for recycling products. I think we need to designate within this department some group of people who are responsible for not just the procurement – I mean, obviously, that's there already – but to look on this as an opportunity for import substitution, to substitute imported, recycled material for things that are made in the province of Alberta. I think we really need to look at procurement policy in that respect, to look at a way that consciously favours the processing of postconsumer waste in the province. You know, Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and economic development have an open cheque book when it comes to pulp and trees to make raw input material for paper that's consumed, but there's very little initiative available anywhere in the province from the provincial government toward establishing those industries in Alberta, and that's where I'd like to see the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services put his considerable energy and effort in the year to come.

Last year the minister was proud of the work that had been done through Applied Polymer Research to recycle plastic. Well, I guess he knows the bottom line on that story: that facility has closed due to the lack of any assistance and involvement from the provincial government. They, in fact, had purchased a large number of pop bottles, millions of them, from the beverage container system for cash, to be recycled in the province of Alberta. They fell on hard times, and there was absolutely nothing much available in the way of assistance when the crunch came, when things were there to be done. So it's time that we look at the processing option and what things the provincial government might be willing and able to do, using the purchasing, the procurement power of the provincial government.

I think we should be also looking at waste reduction. I did note that there is an initiative to use recycled paper towels in some of the government offices. Why do we need paper towels at all? Why not use cloth towels, which can be reused? Then you reduce the amount of waste in that way. Similarly, government cafeterias have been mentioned. If we can reuse plates and cups and flatware and so forth rather than disposable

material – whether it's the more toxic or the less toxic type doesn't matter – waste reduction is a very critical aspect of this as well, and I'm interested to hear what the minister has to say on that score.

I'd like to move to the question of safety services, which are clearly within the responsibility of this minister. You know, recently I raised with the minister in the Assembly back in March the case of another hydrochloric acid spill, and I asked him: when, oh when, Mr. Minister, are we going to have regulations covering the quality and the types of containers that toxic material can be shifted in? In my constituency of Edmonton-Jasper Place – and I wager in just about any one of a number of other MLAs' constituencies – every day there are toxic materials traveling by, some of it literally in plastic pails in the back of pickup trucks. Occasionally these things literally fly off the back of the truck and contaminate roadways and possibly expose people to an unnecessary risk in the area of toxic materials. Well, a year ago the minister told me this thing was on the way to being resolved. In March he told me in the Legislative Assembly that the problem was already solved – I didn't know what he was talking about – that the order in council had been passed that very day to fix the problem. Well, the problem is not fixed. We don't have safety standards for the containers. I don't know what the minister was thinking of on that occasion, but he obviously wasn't thinking about the fact that there are no regulations relative to the strength and consistency of the containers that material is handled in. We still have the Byers Transport mess in Fort McMurray, which is not yet straightened out.

I wonder if I can move quickly to talk about government offices. There's still an outstanding question as to why the government is sitting with empty offices in the federal building which the government has taken over, the one just up the hill here, the old government of Canada building, why the minister was saying a year ago that we had to have a study as to what our needs were, whether we needed to move into that space and who would occupy the space, what the costs were, et cetera, et cetera. Why was no such study done before they took a flyer on the Olympia & York project? Why did this government lease 400,000 square feet of triple A downtown office space with no public tender? They still haven't revealed the lease cost. I'm told it's in the neighbourhood of \$20 a foot. Now, if it's \$20 a foot or anything close to that, the government has been rooked royally. We'd be looking at maybe a \$160 million lease cost over 20 years on that project. Why it is that the government, which has agreed to purchase a whole office building which sits there empty and it can't figure out what to do because it hasn't got the studies and hasn't been able to make up its mind what it's going to do with the old federal building, is capable on the spur of the moment, the seat of the pants, to go out and lease 400,000 square feet on a project that's not yet built, defies logic at the very least. I mean, there should be some consistency in the way things are approached.

The minister indicated a year ago that he's very pleased with the balance between leased space and purchased or owned space on the part of the government. I'd like to know how he can say that when the government seems to be unable to accommodate government departments in areas where they're needed. Let me give you the example of the social services office in west Edmonton. It's in Centennial Mall, which is being demolished for new retail construction. It's now called Mayfield Common. The best public works was able to do in terms of relocating that office was lease space on 124th Street in the city of Edmonton.

Well, 124th Street is at the very far eastern end of the district dealt with by that office. They cover an area that includes hundreds of thousands of people, and their clientele, as the minister I'm sure well appreciates, includes a lot of elderly people, a lot of disabled people who have a heck of a tough time getting around. Now they have to somehow travel from 180th Street and further west than that all the way down to 124th Street so that they can deal with a government department.

I think it has a little bit to do with the policy of leasing space wherever possible and not developing projects and not looking. When you go to the market, when you're stuck going to the market to try to find the space that's available, it's not always there where you need it. That's why we have to have the option of going both ways. Now, I'm sure my constituents would rather have a social services office they can access somewhere in the west end of Edmonton rather than having \$180 million, or whatever the actual total is, poured into that downtown office address of the Olympia & York plaza in downtown Edmonton. I repeat: there has to be something in the equation here why it's possible that the campaign manager of the Premier can be allowed to go out and assemble properties quietly, behind the scenes, which then result in a very large lease agreement being signed on behalf of the taxpayers with Olympia & York, why that kind of thing can go on on a project that's not built, but we can't find an office that's suitable for the people of west Edmonton to deal with social services for the very real problems that they face.

So the issues, I guess, are not showing a lot of signs of changing over the current year, but we can all look forward with anticipation to our resolving these in the year to come. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before recognizing the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, the Chair would like to point out that the minister really doesn't have to respond to the comments or questions about Alberta Public Safety Services because those are also dealt with under another head, hon. member, and that is Executive Council. The Chair thought it should point that out in case the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place's comments might lead other members to believe that that subject is open for discussion today, which it is not.

Also, before recognizing the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, the Chair has received a request from that hon. member that he be allowed to divide his time with the hon. Member for Calgary-McKnight, as we have done before. Is there agreement to that?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first thing that came to mind was when the hon. minister mentioned when he introduced his staff that no recognition was necessary. Mr. Chairman, you'll notice I thumped the desk quite loudly because I'm sure I'm joined by many others here thinking that anybody that has to work with the hon. minister should be recognized anyhow.

To move onto the next item, this goes with the regional response improvement program. This may be similar to what you just mentioned, and the minister may not want to answer it,

but I would be curious, because I do get requests from around the province. He shakes his head. It'll come under . . .

MR. KOWALSKI: They're another estimate. They're not these estimates.

MR. TAYLOR: Not in these estimates. Okay then. He's saved himself a bruising on that, Mr. Chairman. I was loaded for bear, so I'll move on here.

The other area impinges on the Oldman dam but not directly. Maybe the hon. – and I'm not positive the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. member. Just so we are clear, the dam in general is funded through the Capital Fund. If the question is about the permit, that's sub judice and can't be discussed. But I guess I should let the hon. member . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. Actually, I think this question is all right, but if it's not, you can certainly jump in, and I'm sure the hon. minister will tell me, Mr. Chairman.

There is a question of land that was taken over around the Oldman dam going up, the leases, I believe, north of the Oldman dam mostly. I believe that in the original takeover the idea was to give it out in 160-acre parcels because it is arable land. But now I understand there's a bit of a rhubarb developing by some of the committee the minister has going that wish to lease it out in larger parcels for grazing. I'm not taking sides either way, but if the minister would care to enlighten me on that, or enlighten the House, I would appreciate it. I think there's something to be said to looking again at the idea of putting land out in 160-acre parcels, because that means the farming and changing of the use of the land, and it might be easier to keep it in its natural state if it's set out over larger acreages. But I'd be just interested in an explanation of what's going on here, because all I know is what I've read in the papers. That is not always the best source of information, but neither have I found the front bench any better at times. Anyhow, I'll leave that question.

The next one I go on to is with respect to the community development enhancement program, the famous or infamous Lottery Fund. I've read twice in the last couple of weeks where a rural, Conservative MLA, a government MLA, told some of their constituents that their budget is being exceeded or is approaching being exceeded. In other words, I'd just point-blank ask – I know we in the opposition haven't had any budget from the lotteries minister as to what we can propose and push in our area, so I'd be very interested to know whether in that briefcase or in that package a budget has been assigned to different backbench MLAs as to what they could reasonably expect to get in community enhancement grants. I'd be very interested in that.

Next, Mr. Chairman, I would also like to know whether – after all, Saul did carry on a life of debauchery and persecution of our Lord, but on his way to Tarsus, he fell off his donkey; some people say he fell on his ass, and that from then on he led a correct life. I was just wondering if the minister could have fallen off his donkey in the last year and has now decided to release the contract with Olympia & York for the office developments downtown. They would be very interesting, I know, and I'm sure we, like the Israelites of old, would really appreciate it if indeed the light has hit the minister and he has decided to open up to the public just what little secret deals are going on with office management downtown.

I see the Member for Red Deer-North grinning, Mr. Chairman, and I am rather pleased to know that he has at least read the Bible far enough along now that he's moved into the New Testament. When I left him last, he was floundering in the Red Sea with Moses on a raft of bulrushes.

To go on with questions to the minister, I'd like to examine different votes: votes 1, 2, 3, and 4. One thing hits you, Mr. Chairman, and that is the obvious increase in administration. It's rather puzzling why the costs are going up so much, yet overall, admittedly, the minister is holding things in line. But he thinks a little bit like the Department of Agriculture. To use an old farm saying, the cream coming out of the separator is a lot less. The amount of milk going into the top may be the same, but there's very little cream coming out to the taxpayers. But a lot of cream seems to be ending up in administration and in the minister's office. For instance, a 39.2 percent increase in the budget for running the minister's office, in vote 1. Many of the electorate would like to run the minister right out of town for that amount of money.

Communications has increased by 26.2 percent. Is this to try to convince us what a great job the minister is doing with the Lottery Fund? These are usually signs of terminal illness, Mr. Chairman. If indeed there is such a thing as cancer of public administration and there is a surface expression of that cancer, it nearly always shows up in the increased administration in the budget in communications. Because if there's anything an incompetent department likes to do, they spend more money on PR to try to convince the people that they're indeed doing more work. So we have a 39.2 percent increase in the Minister's Office, and 26.2 percent in Communications Administration.

We move on into vote 2. Information and Telecommunication Services is 17 and a half percent. Well, with the minister's assertion today that he is using recycled paper, I wonder why the 17 and a half percent. Here again one gets a little suspicious that inefficiency is being masked by money spent on PR work rather than on effective use of money.

The Management of Properties: a 29.8 percent increase. Now, unless the minister suddenly decided to hire a bunch of window cleaners – because that's usually one of the ways you can tell whether the property is being administered by the minister or not; it has the dirtiest windows in the block. But unless suddenly he has put a lot of money into window cleaning, why does Management of Properties jump 29.8 percent in vote 3.1?

Hospital Construction Administration. Mr. Chairman, this is a puzzler. I couldn't figure that one out, vote 4. Up 41.1 percent. Is this a case of the Kananaskis being overhauled, or are we going to get a constituency office for the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane out there in Kananaskis? What would jump things 41 percent? I'm sure many of the constituents think that as long as the wild animals had access to them, they wouldn't mind moving them out there, but nevertheless, 41.1 percent is a lot. I'm sure that may not be in administration, but the first thing, knowing this minister and knowing how he subscribes to Confucius' old law that he who shall not toot his horn, his horn shall not be tooted, you wonder whether or not he is not putting more money into PR for some sort of shrine, some sort of Lourdes, so the hon. Member for Barrhead may be raising his fine marble head somewhere in the woods of our province. But I thought I would bring it up and just see what he's after.

Anyhow, total spending for Planning and Implementation of Construction Projects – you notice "planning and implementation": great words, but really what it means is beggar-all.

They're not doing anything. It's people shaking hands with each other, running faster and faster around the haystack until they run into each other. But that's up 26.7 percent. I wonder what the hon. member's trying to do: employ his whole constituency? This shows the government is not really serious, I don't think, in cutting spending. Spending is being cut out where it could do people good. It's being cut in hospitals. It's being cut in ambulances; it's being cut there. But it's not being cut at the central core, and this has to worry us a great deal.

I go to vote 5, Executive Director's Office for Procurement. It's a very nasty word, and I heard that some of the backbenchers wanted to legalize it. The Executive Director's Office for Procurement, Mr. Chairman, has increased by 85 percent. Now, mind you, I'll agree it was very small before probably, but why?

They put all these together, and what you see is a cancer creeping through this government, probably more symptomatic or more evident in this department than others, where we are cutting the money and the services to people, yes, but we are not cutting the money and services to ourselves and to each other and to the little group that's doing all the planning and implementation. That's a nice word; I like that word.

Lastly, before I sit down, I have this fact sheet and I just bring this to sort of bring things down nicely. To show the minister that I'm not always mean, I want to suggest something fairly positive. His last item, Mr. Chairman, tabled today, was that "foam cups and plates will not be purchased or warehoused by PWSS," Public Works, Supply and Services. I would draw to the minister's attention, in all spirit of co-operation, that there's quite a little literature out now, particularly out of Australia, that indicates that a lot of the first hatred or dislike directed towards plastics by the environmentalists has been misplaced. For instance, the amount of carbon dioxide created, put off into the air and chemicals put into the air, by plastic cups is equal to what it takes – a glass bottle, for instance, would have to be used 17 times to equal the plastic. So what we're getting here is a bum rap against plastic in many cases. Although it is not reused, the glass bottles and so on that are supposed to replace them certainly weren't being reused 17 times either. If a glass bottle, which on the average is reused about six times – if we go to glass, it means, literally, that glass is polluting the atmosphere three times as much as a plastic cup. So let's use some common sense when we jump onto these antiplastic bandwagons.

The other thing that was of interest, Mr. Chairman . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Good point for once, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry. Did you have a point of order?

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no. You scored, so you can sit down.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh, I see.

It says that plastics will not be purchased, and I'm just suggesting that he's a bit panicky. The other thing about plastics which new research shows is that they are inert in landfills. They don't decompose and pollute the subsurface.

However, I just mention those, some final points. I'd like to turn the rest of the critique time I have available over to the Member for Calgary-McKnight, who is not going to be as kind to the minister as I've been, Mr. Chairman.

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

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My concerns today are basically with the lottery funds and the community facility enhancement program. They're concerns that have been brought to my attention by a number of my own constituents and, of course, the constituents of other members of our caucus.

We feel that spending without prior legislative approval is undemocratic and erodes the traditional legislative control over that spending. As it is now, the minister can arbitrarily make decisions regarding the spending of lottery funds, and we feel that sometimes these decisions are not made for the best of reasons. As a matter of fact, we see the lottery funds, and specifically the way they're used for the community facility enhancement program, as being nothing but pork-barreling. We really feel that spending of the Lottery Fund should be debated and approved by this Legislature.

As I've said, the community facility enhancement grants seem to be used for vote-getting. The local MLA, be that an opposition MLA or not, works with the community group, helps them to prepare their recommendation, their proposal, approves the proposal, and having spent some considerable time with the group, sometimes having toured the site and reviewed all of the documentation, when that proposal is approved – and it's a one-man decision in the final analysis. I know a committee does the screening, but it comes down to the minister's desk, and he makes the decision. If the group gets the funding, then the neighbouring government MLA comes into the constituency and presents the cheque. Well, the community groups are not impressed with this nor are they fooled by it. They quite often will call the following day or several days later and say: "We wish you had been there. We wanted you to be there. You're the one that worked with us, and we were not impressed when a government MLA was sent in to present the cheque." So this is a type of chicanery that really should end if people are to have respect for the minister and for this program.

Now, I'd like to get on just quickly to the matter of the briefcases, which was referred to earlier today during question period. On the pretext that government MLAs are now community liaison workers, the minister indicated that they were given briefcases as part of their packages of information regarding the community facility enhancement program. I have a number of questions about this. Was it only government MLAs who received the briefcases? Did those who were not re-elected get to keep the briefcases? For instance, in my particular situation I replaced a government MLA. Has he kept that briefcase, and if he has, why? Why wasn't it turned over to me? I am as much a liaison worker with that community as any government member is. I would like to know also if the newly elected government members received briefcases after the last election, and why didn't the opposition members?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. It's been some time now since I was minister responsible for lotteries, but I do recall that in the estimates in my department, when it was in Career Development and Employment, it was the same as it is now in Public Works, Supply and Services. There is no connection between the votes in public works and the community facility enhancement program that the member's talking about. So I would encourage her to get on with the debate with regard to public works, not lotteries.

MR. TAYLOR: In answering the point of order, I think the Minister of Energy has made a very good point, indeed, in that you shouldn't be asking questions during estimates if it's not in

that department, but that presupposes that it's in some other department. But in this particular case lotteries have been left out of all departments deliberately, as a company policy. So the only way anyone in the House can ask questions is to ask the minister responsible.

MR. ORMAN: But, Mr. Chairman, we debated this very issue when we had before this Assembly Bill 10. The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon made his case in an impassioned way to this Assembly, a vote was taken, and he lost the vote. I want to get back to the principle. He has acknowledged that he should not, nor should the Member for Calgary-McKnight, be debating this issue. I accept that. He, and I are both on the same wavelength. Now I'd ask that this Assembly get on with the votes that are before the Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, the Chair is . . . There is vote 7, which deals with the Interprovincial Lottery Act, and . . .

The hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I might help the understanding of the members. If members look at page 125 of the elements book, you will see a vote 7 that's associated with the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, but it is for a specific allocation of dollars dealing with Financial Assistance to Major Exhibitions and Fairs. It deals with pari-mutuel rebates, and it deals with capital grants. Now, horse racing occurs in this province by the system of the Financial Administration Act that we have in this particular province of Alberta. That's what that vote 7 deals with.

My colleague the hon. Minister of Energy was very correct in indicating that in 1988 this Assembly had before it a Bill known as Bill 10. This Bill was brought to the floor of the Legislative Assembly, it was debated, and it was approved by the Legislative Assembly, which gave legal responsibility for a particular member of Executive Council to deal with the Lottery Fund. Irrespective of this, the law is in existence, the law is in place, and the minister himself is responsible. But it's not part of these estimates today, the same way that the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon was having difficulty understanding the department known as Alberta Public Safety Services and chose to raise questions on that – that would come under Executive Council – the same way that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place was asking questions in other areas of responsibility that I have. It turns out that I have five special areas, five specific areas. So an hon. member – I guess it's incumbent upon him or her to know which estimates we are dealing with on a particular day.

MR. PASHAK: On just a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. If the hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn wishes to participate in this point of order, he must do so from his seat in the committee. The hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: But earlier today it seems to me that when the member raised questions on this very matter, the ruling of the Chair was that these questions could not be put because the subject matter was going to come up later today in the estimates. Well, now we're into the estimates, so would the Chair and the Speaker of the House at least be consistent in terms of their rulings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member. That was sort of what the Chair thought he heard in question period today, that this was the appropriate forum. But, in any event, if it's not, the minister doesn't have to respond.

The hon. Member for Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Chairman, if I do continue, I will continue in the same vein. It is your judgment as to whether I should or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MRS. GAGNON: Okay. I just want to end my comments, then, with a few questions which I don't expect answers to, I guess, after the brief discussion we've just had. I would just like to know why only government MLAs were given these community liaison worker briefcases . . .

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, point of order.

MRS. GAGNON: . . . why they did not turn them over to those who replaced them.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, I at this point request a ruling from you on this issue. In the votes of the Minister for Public Works, Supply and Services there is no provision for the expenditure of lotteries funds with regard to this program, and we have been through that in the discussion. I do not think and I will not accept, Mr. Chairman – unless you or someone else in the Assembly can lead me to another conclusion, it is highly inappropriate.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, just in answer to that, I think your office has already made the ruling. Earlier today the question was disallowed, and it was said that the questions on the lottery would be handled in this afternoon's debate. Obviously, the Speaker's office has made the ruling. You've let the debate go together . . . I think it's just out of a plethora of power over there that they're ignoring the Speaker's ruling twice today, saying that you can go ahead.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. We did not get an opportunity to debate the Speaker's ruling on that issue, and if it is brought up tomorrow and we can have a discussion at that particular time, then I would be willing to participate in that debate. At this particular time in Committee of Supply the issue of lotteries expenditures, beyond what the minister has explained are in his vote, are not part nor should be part of the discussions in the debate here today. It seems pretty clear to me. As a matter of fact, I recall, having brought forward to this Assembly estimates in Career Development and Employment, that the same ruling was made in two subsequent estimate years. It's very clear, and if we're looking for a precedent, I would suggest that we go back to the rulings that were made in, I believe, 1986-87.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I find it amazing that the members would be asking this question about the briefcases and about presenting cheques. When we stood in this Assembly on

Bill 10, we had a standing vote. The government voted for the Bill, supported the Bill. The opposition voted against it, so then it becomes a government program. Now they want briefcases, and they want to present cheques. What do they want to do? The best thing they can do is become the government, and then they can have the briefcases and present the cheques. But it remains to be seen that they stood in the Legislature under a standing vote and voted against the program, so that showed by the parliamentary system that they want nothing to do with it, nothing about the presentations. They told us how bad it was going to be. Now they're changing their minds because they see the success of the program that exists out there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The ruling this afternoon was that the questions relating to lottery funds that are dealt with in vote 7 could be dealt with in the committee, but not every question about lotteries is going to be in order. Hon. members, I would point out that this question about briefcases is really not relevant to any vote before the House, because if there were briefcases provided, they were provided in the 1988-89 fiscal year, not anything to do with '90-91. So therefore I would suggest that questions about briefcases are out of order in the context of the estimates that are before the House.

The hon. Member for Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will accept that ruling and just end by saying that we don't particularly like the program any better now than we did earlier when it was approved, and we would suggest a return to funding of the community recreation/cultural program, where municipalities received equal shares of money on a per capita basis. This is fair, this is equitable, and this is what we suggest should happen with lottery funds.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for St. Paul.

MR. DROBOT: Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to take part in the discussion of estimates this afternoon. It is obvious that the minister and his department have put much thought and work into preparation of these estimates. They represent a carefully prioritized and well-balanced spending agenda. I think all of the members of the House should lend their support to the minister and congratulate him and his department for a job well done. Certainly in the St. Paul constituency the new modern regional courthouse, the various community enhancement projects are a tribute to the minister and the department and are much appreciated by the citizens of that area and, I'm sure, by all people of Alberta.

Mr. Chairman, when I was a little boy we had a phonograph, the kind you wind up with a crank. One of the records was *Red River Valley*, and the other one was *Ol' Man River*. I accidentally dropped the record, and it used to get stuck on "Ol' Man River, Ol' Man River, Ol' Man River . . ." until someone moved the needle.

Mr. Chairman, I do, however, have a few questions which I would like to direct to the minister. I understand that the operation for acquisition of landfill sites has been transferred from the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services to local waste management authorities. Would the minister elaborate as to the reasons for this transfer?

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, will the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services advise us how the government will ensure that reclamation of these sites is done during the course of the landfill operation if title to the land rests with local authorities?

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to make a few comments with respect to the estimates here. They're related to three areas basically. The information services and computers, specifically, and the second area I'd like to make some comments on and ask some questions on is the old Correctional Centre at Fort Saskatchewan. Thirdly, I'd like to deal a little bit with the procurement policy of the department.

But, first of all, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to extend my congratulations to the minister, because in my opinion, I find that the dealings I've had with the minister and his department and his staff to be just excellent, to be ones where the minister and his staff are very effectively providing a service not just to my constituents but also to all of the residents in Alberta. I would judge him to be competent and extremely fair. So I would want to congratulate the minister on the way he handled the requests that I have come forward with on behalf of my constituents. I would echo the remarks by the hon. Member for St. Paul: the opposition members seem to be stuck in a particular groove on an old record. It shows me that there is a definite lack of thought on some of the issues we are facing now and will be facing in the future.

Mr. Chairman, let me deal with the computer situation, the electronic data processing. There are a couple of questions that I have. I view the electronic processing and the computers that are installed as a time-saving and a very effective way in order to maybe achieve some of the benefits that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is talking about, some environmental concerns. Let me elaborate a little bit more, and the way I might do that is through an example. I use computers in my constituency office: a personal one, as a matter of fact, and one that I have received through information services. I find that when letters come into my constituency and I write letters on the computer back to my constituents, I do not necessarily reproduce a hard copy of the letter that I've written back. There's a referencing system that occurs with a letter that comes in such that I can locate my response to that particular letter on a particular disk within the system. Now, I'm effectively cutting down on some of the paper that is generated, and I would hope we would view that in that fashion.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

But let me talk about computers and the automation and the electronic data processing that we are undertaking in the government's central computing services. The questions that I have include: how are costs for these systems managed and controlled? Secondly, I would want to be assured that we receive some value for what we are spending our money on, for the money that we're spending for the system, not only for the hardware but also for the software. Thirdly, how electronic data processing expenditures are comprised, how much of it might be an internal cost, and what proportion might flow back into the private sector: I'm very concerned about that.

I'm also concerned about the security of information, Mr. Chairman, and basically two points here: the security of

information that we have and also the integrity of information. I think both need to be addressed. As far as security is concerned, there are two things here. The first one is that we have considerable information on our systems, and what mechanisms do we employ in order to ensure that some of that confidential information is in fact protected from access by, say, hackers or even people that may want to access that information illegally? I think that's a critical point. Now, I feel that in some instances security systems can be designed – it may in fact be extremely costly, but there's always a way, by a person that's determined enough, to get around that security system. So where's the balance of how much money one needs to spend on a security system in order to be assured of a reasonable amount of protection for data that exists? The second one is on integrity of the system. I've been reading a little bit of information about that because I'm interested in computers, and the information I'm reading is that we're being invaded by some viruses in the computing world which are destroying some of the systems or deleting data banks of whatever. I wanted to ask the minister: what initiatives are we pursuing in those areas that might assure that the information we have assembled will be there when we actually need it?

On my second point, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to discuss the old Correctional Centre. For the benefit of the members here, I'd like to just indicate that we have the old jail property in the city of Fort Saskatchewan. It's a considerable piece of property. It has some significant buildings there, but it hasn't been used for the past two years. We've been fortunate in Fort Saskatchewan that there has been a new correctional facility built, a modern, up-to-date facility, and the constituency is very appreciative of that new facility. However, within the old Correctional Centre we have some significant buildings that some community groups are lobbying to use for particular purposes. There's an old gymnasium that would fit in well with some of the initiatives that are being pursued by community recreation groups. There are baseball diamonds. There are other types of facilities that might be quite actively used in the community. There have been negotiations going on between the minister's department and the city of Fort Saskatchewan and some of the community groups. On behalf of my constituency I'd like to extend an invitation to the minister to come out and visit the facility and to tour the facility and to have the opportunity to sit down with the decision-makers in the community to maybe arrive at a satisfactory arrangement and agreement with respect to the final utilization of these facilities.

I should note that the land area that is related to this particular facility is comprised of two basic geographic formations. The lower area, the flatlands close to the North Saskatchewan River, has been designated by a community plan for the total old correctional property as a recreational centre, and our government has taken the initiative and provided a commitment for funding for the development of the lower portion of these lands. Under the urban parks program we've provided an approval for \$3.6 million to actually utilize those lands effectively for the community. So that portion is in place.

However, the upper portion of these lands is designated for residential development, some recreation and parks development, and historical development as well. That area also includes the old jail property. Now, it would be my suggestion that these lands that may be used effectively for community purposes, for historical preservation purposes – the old courthouse is there, which now serves as a museum, and it's been recently designated a historical site – and some of the

other areas that could be used for recreation and community purposes might be transferred to the community for a nominal sum.

The other areas that might receive more active consideration for development, either private or public – and I assume it probably will be private – are the residential and commercial areas. I would feel that we as a government, particularly in light of our thrust to balance the budget and reduce the deficit and our accumulated debt, would need to look at that as a fair market value situation. That then leaves the buildings that exist on the site, and I think there is where we may have some difficulties, because certain buildings – the old jail buildings – may be suitable for preservation and utilization as historical sites; others may not. We need to make some decisions with respect to that, about which buildings should remain and could be actively utilized in the future, not just as a building there to be visited.

I view preservation of historical buildings as something that takes a more active part, where people actively use the building. Let me give you as an example the CN station that exists in the same area. It's being renovated, and there has been an application for a historical site there as well. Once that building has been renovated, even though it might be designated as a historical site, it will actually house the offices of the chamber of commerce. Now, that's an appropriate utilization, an ongoing utilization of a historical building. So I view the old jail buildings in the same fashion. Where we can find some future use for these buildings, I think there, then, we might provide some effort and support, both municipally and perhaps provincially, to utilize these buildings in that fashion for the benefit of the community and also for the benefit of Albertans. I must say that this site that we're talking about – and Fort Saskatchewan, you have to remember, is one of the oldest communities we have in Alberta. It's the second site for the Mounted Police – the fort was located there – and it has some historical significance. The community has actually identified the old jail property with that significance for law and reform. I think that's an excellent initiative that they've pursued and that we might want to pursue in the future.

Although I have some definite opinions about what we might be doing with the site, I think the important part is for the minister to perhaps make some time available, whenever it's convenient, to come out and meet with us in Fort Saskatchewan to see what actually can be accomplished with that particular site.

I'd like to move on, Mr. Chairman, to our procurement policy, which I'd like to say a few words about. I'd like to put them in the context of my environmental concern and the environmental concern that all Albertans have, particularly with reference to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, who indicated that maybe we should be looking at cloth hand towels rather than paper. It sounds like a reasonable idea, but let me put that a little bit in perspective. If one wants to weigh environmental considerations, one needs to follow the thought process through completely.

Certainly if we use paper towels, they are used and discarded and they may or may not be recycled. Hopefully they are; we are pursuing those initiatives. But let me deal with the alternative suggested by the hon. member. The alternative he suggests is that perhaps we should use cloth towels. Now, that's great; it sounds fine, but what does happen with the dirty towels we have then? We need to follow through and actually clean them. Now, recent studies have shown that if you use detergents to

clean those particular towels and if those detergents are phosphate-free, they do not quite remove the encrustation on the fabric that is there, nor do they, perhaps, reduce all the bacteria that is there. So if we want to do a proper job, then we have to use detergents which, again, pollute the environment. Now, one needs to have a look at this situation and see where the balance is. To me it would appear that the more sensible solution might be to use paper towels and recycle them. It might be more environmentally sensitive than the alternative suggested by the hon. member.

I feel that in a number of areas some of these suggestions that come forward with respect to initiatives, particularly related to the environment – these alternatives haven't been thought through completely to their logical conclusion, because I'm not sure whether the alternatives being suggested actually are more environmentally sensitive than what we are doing presently. I believe truly that we do need to improve whatever we do, and we need to have that consideration in mind to protect our environment, but we need to do it in a rational, logical fashion. We need to think the matter through.

Mr. Chairman, I think I've covered my three items that I wanted to cover. I want to thank you for the opportunity to ask these questions of the minister, and I await his response.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comments to the minister will be brief. I'd like to concentrate on the section on lotteries administration, and mostly I have questions about the administration of the lottery system in Alberta.

I'd like to start by asking the minister if it is still the minister's policy to freeze individual ownership of lottery kiosks and not allow the individual kiosk owners to transfer their . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member.

First of all, could we have order over here, please?

Which particular part of the votes are you referring to, hon. member?

MS BARRETT: The section is vote 7.

I understood that up until last year owners could sell their kiosks just like any other business but that Alberta Lotteries froze those sales last year, and now only Alberta Lotteries or the owners of the mall where the kiosk is located can sell the kiosk. So I'd like to ask the minister if that's the case still or if he has any understanding of why people would believe that. I have had a complaint about that.

I've also had a couple of complaints about retailers, who don't want their names brought forward to the attention of the minister and who are willing to wait several months before I could get to the minister on this broad subject, who are concerned that the awarding of kiosks has more to do with political favouritism than it has to do with whether or not the business is viable in the given location.

I've also been informed that the change in the sales rep procedures are slowing down the ticket deliveries – these would be the noncomputerized lottery ticket sales – to the point where it is estimated that millions of dollars a year are now lost in sales. I wonder if the minister knows anything about that. It's very possible he doesn't at this point, but he may wish to look into it. God forbid that I'm encouraging people to go out and bet, but these complaints have come to my attention, and I

would like to bring them to the attention of the minister. The policy that comes into question with respect to awarding retail licences has to do, I understand, with a certain threshold. That is, certain potential kiosk operators are being told that if they cannot generate a million dollars a year in sales, they can't get a kiosk, even though in some towns in Alberta there's never a chance that a million dollars' worth of sales could be achieved.

So I would like to know if the minister would comment on those questions and also if he's at this point prepared to agree to a request that has been consistent from the Official Opposition New Democrats since Bill 10 was introduced; that is, the Bill that basically legitimized what previously had not been legitimate according to the Auditor General's observations, and that is the disbursement of the lottery funds by one minister without prior approval of the Assembly. I understand that this government has fallen into a serious bunker mentality and wishes to present as little information as possible to the Assembly. I'm somewhat sympathetic with that mentality, given that most people on sinking ships do fall into ruts like that. They don't want to take the time to deal with the crisis that is causing the ship to sink. But I wonder if, despite all that, the minister would consider even an all-party committee of the Assembly to have a look at the requests for expenditure prior to them being disbursed, to remove the public perception that some are favoured and some are not.

I can anticipate the minister's response to this. He will suggest that the Member for Edmonton-Highlands has a riding that has been fortunate in the granting of money under the community facility enhancement program, and he would be right in making that observation. The people of Edmonton-Highlands have indeed been lucky. On the other hand, I don't think the people of Edmonton-Highlands would like to consider themselves lucky if they knew that it was at the expense of other worthy projects. Now, the Bissell Centre expansion into new facilities was an extremely important project, and I'm glad the government chose to fund that project. I do, however, wish that it had been an all-party committee of the Assembly that made that decision or the Assembly itself and Committee of Supply. So I wonder if he would consider at least establishing a committee of the Assembly to deal with those requests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, perhaps it would be appropriate to respond to a number of questions which have been raised this afternoon, few of which have anything to do with the estimates that are before us this afternoon that have to do with the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. I think I do want to make some comments with respect to lotteries, because there has been some outlandish information provided to this Assembly this afternoon. I would like to respond in the reverse order to which the questions were raised.

The Member for Edmonton-Highlands stood in her place just a few minutes ago and made some really strange statements, and I hope the hon. member will pay attention to what I'm going to say right now. First of all, the administration with respect to the lottery system in the province of Alberta is governed by a board of directors independent of the minister. We've had in this province the Western Canada Lottery Corporation Alberta division made up of a board of directors with representatives traditionally from both Northlands in Edmonton and the Calgary Stampede board in the city of Calgary and with several members appointed at large. That particular organization administers and

deals with the management of the lottery system in the province of Alberta.

For the hon. member to suggest that there has been a change in policy with respect to kiosks is absolutely incorrect. There are some individuals – I want to say very conclusively, Mr. Chairman, and without one moment of hesitation at all; I'm very carefully choosing the words – who are in my view in the quasi-criminal element, who would like to move in and take over control of a lottery distribution system if they could in this province. They are no different than perhaps what may have been attempted in other jurisdictions. The Western Canada Lottery Corporation Alberta division has maintained a policy that it is the Western Canada Lottery Corporation Alberta division which owns the machine and owns the distribution system. Those systems are not owned by any individual. There are some individuals who have taken positions and rented space in various malls and what have you around this province of Alberta who have attempted to go in and corner the market and get the best locations here, there, and everywhere, and then at some point in their own business have attempted to sell the location and the right to the lottery machine and system as part of their business.

We have maintained steadfastly that that would not be permitted – not be permitted, period, Mr. Chairman – and that's one of the reasons why the integrity of the lottery system in our province has been so pronounced. There has never been a take. There's never been a suggestion from anyone that there is any hanky-panky going on. The only area that that comes from is from those who want to control the market and attempt to buy the kiosk and control, via sale of a goods and service to someone else, that they own the right to that particular machine. They do not. They do not own the right to those machines. And we've had some individuals who have even raised controversies in the media and what have you, and it's very difficult for an individual like myself to say, "Hey, be careful what you're doing."

In terms of a suggestion made by the member that it's politics that determines who gets a lottery kiosk or who is awarded to sell the tickets, that's simply nonsensical. A policy, a very clear, publicly stated policy is in place: that individuals get the right to sell lottery tickets on the basis of the volume of their sales. It costs approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year to own, maintain, operate, and provide security with respect to an electronic terminal. The only way you get the right to have one of those terminals, some 1,700, I think – and I may be out a couple *in* numbers there – in the province of Alberta, is that you graduate by way of sales into a particular category. That's the only way you get one of those. No one else gets one other than by graduation into a sales category. At each sales category there is a review, a check, on the character, morality, history, business acumen, and honesty of each of those individuals. To my knowledge, not yet in the history of the lottery system in this province has there been a suggestion that anybody has absconded with a ticket, anybody has manipulated and a dollar has been lost. I think it's extremely important, Mr. Chairman, that we have that clarified here right now.

In terms of the other wild suggestion that millions of dollars are lost because of sales procedures, that's astounding to me. We have pretty conclusive evidence of where we're at in terms of the revenues, in terms of the administration, and in terms of the shortfalls, but if the hon. member has some inclination of any information whatsoever that would suggest that something wrong is being done, then I would ask the hon. member to do one of three things and perhaps all three things. If there's any

suggestion in her mind that there may be any suggestion of wrongdoing with respect to the lottery system, I'd ask her to take that suggestion, that evidence, to the RCMP, not to me but to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Secondly, if there's any question whatsoever with respect to the internal administration, I would ask her to take it to the attention of the chairman of the board. The board is housed here in the city of Edmonton. There's a board of directors. They're public people; they put out a public document. I have not interfered in terms of who would get a machine, who would not get a machine, who would become a salesman, and who would not become a salesman, and I don't want any hon. member to bring that information to me. I will direct them to the administration with respect to the Western Canada Lottery Corporation Alberta division.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member feels that she cannot get satisfaction by way of investigation, be it by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Western Canada Lottery Corporation Alberta division, then I would ask her to bring it to me, the final resort, but not at the outset. I think that in terms of credibility and in terms of security, that's extremely important.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Clover Bar raised a series of questions with respect to electronic data processing, the Correctional Centre at Fort Saskatchewan, and procurement in the province of Alberta. The responses with respect to procurement in the province of Alberta might go hand in hand with the question raised by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon when he basically looked at one of the votes and said, "Hey, there was a pretty substantial percentage increase." But I'm not sure that the hon. member was good enough to give me the number of the vote he was talking about, so I can only guess that in essence it had to do with a substantial dollar increase for a certain executive director. Oh, yes; it's vote 5.2.1, Executive Director's Office, under Central Services and Acquisition of Supplies, and there's a figure that shows an 85 percent increase.

Well, Mr. Chairman, it was not too long ago that Alberta created in concert with British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba something called the western purchasing information network, and there was a costing figure of approximately \$85,000 to \$90,000 to set up the mechanical equipment, the computer equipment. We made public by way of an announcement in the early part – I think it was January – that now an individual entrepreneur in the province of Alberta can by way of our computer systems tie into what government tenders are in these other three western jurisdictions and have access by way of tender to that particular thing. Now, that figure of \$85,000 to \$90,000 is built into that budget, the Executive Director's Office, and that accounts for that percentage increase. I know the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon is sometimes a little loose in terms of some of his statements, but government is most serious about controlling its spending. I've also indicated publicly that should there ever be a request from the private sector to take over this system, we will be very, very pleased to privatize it. It's a forum and it's a mechanism to make sure that individual entrepreneurs in our province have an opportunity to, in fact, go out and avail themselves about private entrepreneurs and what have you.

The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon also raised a number of questions; he quoted some percentages here and there, and I've just given an example. There's a rational explanation, hon. member, to each and every one of those. You know, I simply don't get up in the middle of the night and say, yeah, we're going to give 48 percent here or 32 percent there. There is an explanation, and I would like to just advise . . .

MR. TAYLOR: That's why I asked.

MR. KOWALSKI: And I appreciate the advice given.

But I'd also like to just quote for the hon. member some advice given to all of us by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud in *Alberta Hansard*, page 634, April 9, 1990, when the hon. member said:

But let's not only look at percentages. We've heard this argument so many times, even within this House, that percentages in themselves don't mean anything without looking at the figure that percentage is based on.

Of course, that sage advice comes from the hon. member's own colleague in the Liberal ranks, and I'm sure that such a statement would apply in principle and in generality with respect to some other of his questions.

But back to the Member for Clover Bar with his questions on procurement. I've provided a response to one aspect of the procurement side of it. In terms of procurement throughout the province of Alberta, in all, hon. member, approximately 62 percent of our electronic data processing dollar goes to the private sector. That's a pretty substantial number, and it's a number, in fact, that gives us an opportunity to get the best of the information that's existent out there in the marketplace and also provides us to make sure that the people who are associated with the administration and implementation of the program across the whole government have access to that finest, most up-to-date information, but also provides us to make sure that our individuals are in fact trained, disciplined, and also have an independence with respect to not being captured by a particular entrepreneur or not a particular entrepreneur.

Security is an extremely important matter with respect to electronic data information. We have an ongoing review with respect to security: adequacy, preparedness, appropriateness, effectiveness. I think that all hon. members would agree that perhaps it would not be in the best public venue for the minister responsible to provide in detail all of the steps that are taken to protect security with respect to computers. But I want to assure the member that Public Works, Supply and Services serves as the custodian of information on its computer facilities, and access to any electronic information is only with the written consent of the department responsible for its creation and maintenance. Secondly, the hardware and software at PWSS's premises are constantly reviewed, tested, and upgraded if necessary to maintain the integrity and the confidentiality of the information and prevent any unauthorized access and use. Of course, we're constantly monitoring and attempting to get the most dated information with respect to the security side.

In terms of Fort Saskatchewan, that is really a very significant matter in our province. What we're going to do with the old Correctional Centre is, needless to say, very important information to the people living in Fort Saskatchewan. There are a number of aspects with respect to the old facility that have been in place. It's been vacant for almost two years. We're having an ongoing dialogue with the city of Fort Saskatchewan and, I'm pleased to say, with the hon. member himself, who has shown a great deal of interest with respect to this, that it's my understanding that the city would like to turn part of this facility into a major tourist attraction that would be financially self-supporting, that would not become a drain on the community or the region or the province per se. It would be my intent to offer some portion of these lands that are commercially developable to the city at a market rate. There would be some other portions of the site with respect to the Fort Saskatchewan jail that are of recreational and historical significance, and they've

already been offered to the city for nominal consideration. It's my view that in terms of Fort Saskatchewan there would be considerable revitalization.

I should like members to know as well, Mr. Chairman, that there is maximum utilization of the old site itself right now with respect to what we're offering to nonprofit organizations. Examples are that the RCMP are using it for training their emergency response team once a month. The city of Edmonton goes to this other community called Fort Saskatchewan and the city of Edmonton police department uses one of the buildings for tactical training exercises. The city of Fort Saskatchewan will be leasing two buildings and the outdoor ice arena for use by various community groups. And, of course, the old Fort Saskatchewan jail in itself is a major attraction for the motion picture industry. During 1989 a very major, major Hollywood production was filmed, and they utilized the old cell blocks and what have you in Fort Saskatchewan. So there are a lot of innovative ideas, a lot of things we want to deal with and want to proceed with with respect to Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chairman, I understand by way of a message from the Chair that one of my colleagues would like to conduct a certain procedure prior to the conclusion this afternoon. So perhaps I'll just wind up by indicating to the Member for St. Paul that one of the things that we've attempted to do in this department in the last year is in fact get a transfer or put in another place things that should be maybe more efficient for other departments. In the past, Public Works, Supply and Services was responsible, on behalf of Alberta Environment and local municipalities, to go out and purchase lands for landfill sites. As of April 1 of this year that responsibility is being taken out of Public Works, Supply and Services and being left with Alberta Environment or the local municipalities, where we think it would be much more efficient and effective, because people closest to the action basically should be the ones in there. But one of the items that we are going to maintain is to ensure that reclamation becomes a mandatory, important responsibility with respect to this. Under another funding procedure of this Assembly, the Heritage Savings Trust Fund of course, there is a program for reclamation.

Mr. Chairman, I think we're almost to the time where my responsibility is to ask that the vote be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

My hearing of the motion was that there be a report. Am I correct, hon. minister? Not that there be a vote but that we rise and report? Correct. Okay. That's what we voted on.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

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

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard the report, does the Assembly concur therein?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

Before anything else, I was wondering if we might have unanimous consent to revert to Tabling Returns and Reports to allow the Minister of Health to table a document.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

(reversion)

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the point of order raised by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon earlier today, because the letter has been widely distributed publicly, including to members of the media, and although I didn't quote from the letter, as a courtesy I would like to file a copy of the letter referred to in the question from the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane earlier today in question period.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the business of the Assembly tonight will be Government Bills and Orders, dealing in this order: third readings as are on the daily Order Paper, second readings, and Committee of the Whole.

[The House recessed at 5:26 p.m.]

