

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, March 23, 1983 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **PRESENTING PETITIONS**

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to present a petition today, signed by 5,000 citizens of the province of Alberta, petitioning for legislation to control Sunday shopping hours.*

To the Honourable, the Legislative Assembly of Alberta in Legislature Assembled

The petitions of the undersigned citizens of Alberta ... how that we are gravely concerned over the detrimental effect of widespread Sunday shopping on the quality of family life in Alberta.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to pass an Act designed to control this practice and to impose effective penalties for violation of the Act petitioned for.

And as in duty bound your petitioners will humbly pray.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the '81-82 annual report of the Department of Municipal Affairs. It includes the annual report of the Alberta Planning Board. Both are required to be tabled pursuant to statute.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the annual report of the Department of the Environment for the year ended March 31, 1982. I would also like to table the annual report of the Surface Reclamation Fund for the year ended March 31, 1982.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following reports, copies of which were previously made available to members of the Assembly: the 1981 annual report of the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission; the annual report of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources for the year ended March 31, 1982; the seventh annual report of the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority for the year ended March 31, 1982; and the 1981-82 annual report of the Alberta Petroleum Incentives Program Fund.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Legislature Library copies of 16 advanced education institutions' [annual reports] for the year ended March 31, 1982. Copies will be made available to all members.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file copies of the audited financial statements of the five Crown hospitals for the year ended March 31, 1982.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm tabling the annual report of the supervisor of consumer credit for the years 1981 and 1982.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure today in introducing to you and to members of the Assembly some 40 students from Sifton elementary school, in the constituency of Edmonton Beverly. Accompanied by teachers Victoria Archer, Steven Shamchuk, and Bob Androschuk, and parent Mrs. Haddock, they are seated in the public gallery. I ask them to rise and receive the usual welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to introduce to you and to Members of the Legislative Assembly a group of 10 grades 6 to 9 students from the Centre of Learning school, located at Nisku in the Wetaskiwin-Leduc constituency. They are accompanied by group leaders Debbie Knall and Cheryl Gietz and are located in the members gallery. I ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, today I'm delighted to be able to introduce to you and members of the Assembly some 18 enthusiastic grade 6 students from Sherwood school, in the progressive constituency of Edmonton Glenora. Accompanied by their teacher Mrs. Rybock and by Miss Burke, who is a student teacher, they are in the members gallery. I'd ask that they stand at this time and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, 15 special guests, members of the Edmonton, Calgary, and Red Deer Quality of Life councils. They are in the public gallery, and I ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege yesterday of introducing a grade 9 class from Cochrane. Today I have the pleasure of introducing to you and to members of the Assembly 36 additional grade 9 students from Manachaban junior high school, in Cochrane. They're accompanied by Mrs. Bonnett, who has been instrumental in many of these trips, by Mrs. McLenahan, and by Mr. Holstein, who was here yesterday.

I had the privilege of spending an hour or so with them last summer, when they were a lot less mature but just as interested in our political activities in Alberta. Would they please rise, and would the members welcome them to the Assembly.

MR. DIACHUK: Mr. Speaker, for a second pleasure today, I wish to introduce to members of the Assembly a former page of this Legislature, Michael Tryon, who served us well several years ago. He has now taken time off from university studies to assist and escort a visitor from the state of Illinois, Pat Hunt. Would the two of them stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

*See Hansard, March 23, 1983, page 252, left column, paragraph 6

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Power Rates**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Attorney General, first of all, and then supplementaries may flow to the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. In view of the province's position of increases of 5 per cent to pensioners, school boards, municipalities, et cetera, is the Attorney General in a position to advise the Assembly why no effort was made to intervene during Public Utility Board hearings which resulted in a 15 per cent rate increase for TransAlta Utilities?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as to the actual merits of the applications to the board, perhaps my colleague the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications will indeed supplement this answer. But as far as it relates to the operations of the Public Utilities Board, which, because of legislation, does report to the Assembly through the Attorney General, I would only point out that as important as are the matters that the board deals with, and as much as they bear upon the concerns of all of our citizens at the present time, at this time I am not prepared to see a political type of interference with the deliberations of what is a quasi-judicial board.

Mr. Speaker, if it's not going on too long to say so, I would just point out to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that the board has functioned in a regulation of rates capacity for perhaps more than half a century, as all hon. members well know. Its course of history has been marked by the fact that politicians have not been interfering. It would be a very different type of board if that were done.

I realize there is a debate that perhaps should be had — and certainly can be had — with respect to the role of the board in difficult economic times. But to this point, my position would be as stated: I don't think the time for political interference has arrived.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General, in the absence of the Premier. Could the Attorney General describe to the Assembly the reasons it was considered correct for the government of Alberta, through the Premier, on one hand to make comments about arbitration awards with respect to public employees in this province as "not being in the real world in which I live", and yet on the other hand remaining silent on rate increases, granted by the Public Utilities Board, which are far in excess of any of the awards granted to the employees?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. NOTLEY: What's wrong with that?

MR. SPEAKER: It's really not a question. What is the substance of this? Let's just calmly take a look at this so-called question. I note the look of surprise on the face of the hon. Leader of the Opposition. The opposition is saying: look at how inconsistent this government is.

DR. BUCK: That's right.

MR. SPEAKER: On the one hand, somebody complains. That is debate, and that is perfectly well qualified for debate. I am sure there are many hon. members who

would like to bring up, in the Assembly, possible inconsistencies of other hon. members or of the government. But that is really not a genuine search for information. That is simply saying: here, look how inconsistent you're being. And that is debate.

MR. MARTIN: Why?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is arguable. Now, if an hon. minister now gets up and debates whether there were inconsistencies and justifies the thing, there is simply further debate. Under the circumstances, I am going to suggest that if an hon. minister wishes to answer, that is just fine. But it seemed to me that this would be a timely occasion on which to draw attention to this kind of question.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a point of order? I do not believe there is any prohibition, in any rules of order that I have seen, that denies a member of this Legislative Assembly from asking questions in the question period about what appear to be inconsistencies in government policy and to simply ask, as I did, to explain the reasons. With great respect, sir, I say you are too quick to see motives.

The question is put directly to the Government House Leader, in the absence of the Premier. I am sorry the Premier isn't here. But if there are explanations, then the Government House Leader has a right to give those explanations. When I as a member of the Legislature see inconsistencies, and if I am not allowed to ask a question, in Oral Question Period, relating to that, then we stifle the whole purpose of the question period.

I remind the Speaker, sir, that if there is any doubt, *Beauchesne* makes it very clear that the Speaker must render a judgment in favor of free speech, in favor of letting the matter be put. I say to you, sir, with great respect, that it was a simple request of the Government House Leader to explain the differences for what appears to be a contradiction. I put it to the Government House Leader again.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would have welcomed the opportunity to speak on the point of order, because had there been a way of urging the hon. leader to ask his question in a way that I could respond to it, that would have pleased me. The opportunity is at hand, Mr. Speaker, and I would simply point out to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that the subject matters are vastly different. It's clear that whatever economic issue we choose to discuss in these times will definitely have a bearing on citizens in their individual and collective capacities. No one denies that.

When I say the subject matters are different, Mr. Speaker, and would then briefly address myself to an alleged contradiction, I would simply state the case in this way. When we speak of the cost of government and the enormous amounts of tax revenue required at present by governments of a federal, provincial, and municipal nature, in order to maintain services, we know that the majority of those funds are for the payment of salaries. In some areas, the vast majority of funds used are for the payment of salaries. In the hospital field, some 80 per cent of grants to hospital boards are used for the payment of salaries. That's an example, because the hon. leader's question doesn't relate specifically to that area but to the public service of Alberta. The similarities should be apparent.

It's the government's position that given the large salary settlement of the last year number of years, there is a time when some restraint has to be practised in that area. I, as well as other members of the government, made some reference to the arbitration awards in that light. I certainly pointed out that because of the extent of the cost of government and the taxpayers' burden that is there as the result of the cost of public sector salaries, the legal capacity of an arbitrator to make an award is, in effect, an indirect right to tax the people. If that isn't clear to anyone, I may be able to assist in making it more clear. But that is the position I wanted to present to the hon. member at the present time.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, with regard to utility matters, I said earlier that I'm not sure whether there should be some public debate about the way rates are set but that it was my belief that the time for any political interference in the existing process had not yet arrived. I don't know if it's information hon. members have, but certainly there are jurisdictions where some constraint has been placed on the increase in rates paid by individual consumers and business, and not directly by the taxpayer in that tax-paying role. The difficulties that result from that in the ability of those utilities, whether they be government-owned or otherwise, to do things like borrow in the market with such a faulty balance sheet — that sort of difficulty is known in other jurisdictions.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. It flows from the minister's first response and the very last few words of his last response, with respect to a hands-off approach. For the question, I refer to Public Utilities Board Order E83001. The gist of it is that the board does not feel it can comply with 5 or 6 per cent restraints. They go on: "it would be arbitrary and beyond the powers of the Board."

Mr. Speaker, in view of the PUB statement that any sort of pushing onto the board [of] the real world that the Premier talked about in arbitration awards would be beyond the powers of the board, has this government given any consideration to amending the legislation so that the PUB would have to take into account the overall economic aspects that I suspect in a few days' time we are going to see placed before arbitrators on public service awards?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I've indicated that the relationship the hon. leader would like to make between the two areas does not exist, in my view. Comparisons can always be made, of course, but the relationship between the work of the Public Utilities Board and the work of arbitrators in public sector salary settlements is simply not there.

In reference to the board having said, in coming to their conclusion, that there are certain things beyond their jurisdiction, I think what is involved is that the statute which establishes the board — which is established in the same way that public utilities type of boards are established throughout North America — does indeed have within it statutory provisions that state the manner in which the board must carry out its duties. The board obviously has reference to those statutory provisions. They would be well known to all members, but basically require them to take into account the cost of providing the service that is being provided. Whatever remarks might be made in that context are the remarks of the spokesman, be he the chairman or some other member of the board, and are not remarks of hon. members here.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. Is any independent review done by the Department of Utilities and Telecommunications with respect to the profits enjoyed by regulated private power companies, which enjoy a monopoly position and don't have to meet the challenge of the market place? In particular, what specific assessment has been made of the 1982 profits over 1981: the increase of 56 per cent for Canadian Utilities and the increase of 27 per cent for TransAlta? When most corporations saw profits drop in this same period, we have very significant increases for regulated utilities in a monopoly position. What assessment of that information has been made by the department?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, as the Attorney General earlier indicated in response to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, regulated utilities come under the Public Utilities Board. The legislation governing the Public Utilities Board falls within the mandate of the Attorney General. The mandate for the Department of Utilities and Telecommunications is not overlapping in the area of pricing; it is, however, in the area of supply. In that capacity, this department works very closely with the various utility companies in Alberta to ensure an ongoing supply of utility sources for the residents of our province.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of arguments by the utility companies that in their view rates have to go up in order to finance capital expansion, and therefore expand the supply the minister is referring to, what specific assessment has the department made of these profit increases, as to whether or not they are not somewhat larger than the amount needed to finance both the equity and the debt expansion of capital required by the province?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may not have heard all of my reply. As indicated, for those utilities which are regulated, any questions relating to price fall under the Public Utilities Board. It is not the role of the Department of Utilities and Telecommunications to get into those matters.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the Attorney General then advise the Assembly whether there is any way of monitoring such matters as the amount of rate increase necessary to borrow money on the capital markets in order to facilitate expansion, such things as debt/equity ratios? I raise that because at the present time, we guarantee the utility companies — I believe the latest figure is 16.25 per cent on all equity. At the present time, debt instruments are somewhat less expensive. The question of debt/equity ratio is a very important one, in real dollar terms, to consumers of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Might we come directly to the question.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Attorney General is: what particular assessment of this matter has the Attorney General made, in concert with the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications — not the board but the two ministers?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as to actual monitoring, I don't know if the hon. leader perceives some sort of table, running average, or something like that, that would

be done based on rate decisions. Certainly that sort of survey could be made over any time period, in respect of the decisions that the board has been making. No doubt this is presented to them, in argument, by groups all the time.

The sort of factors that go into it and which are well established — and on occasion the board has made public declarations as to the factors that go into their decision-making — certainly include the cost of raising capital. Everyone knows that this past two years and, to some extent, up to three years, has been an extremely expensive period of time to raise capital by way of debt capital.

Perhaps there are some things that bear upon this in other ways, and that is the fact that the present legislation requires that a utility facility actually be on stream before it's built into the rate base. Over the years, there have been discussions that perhaps it would be wise if the board could consider work in progress. That is certainly a possibility. These are the sorts of things the board considers. They're well established. They definitely relate to interest rates and the cost of capital. The return on the equity is based, in their view, as being sufficient to attract investment. That's the same test that is applied, in some form or another very much like that, in any public utilities board.

MR. SPEAKER: Might we go to another topic . . .

MR. MARTIN: Just one supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: We've had six supplementaries on this one. I have eight members who are waiting to ask their first questions and a number of ministers who wish to supplement information previously given to hon. members.

Calgary Olympics — Ski Site

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks. It's with respect to the submission today by Ski-Action Alberta, the Alberta Wilderness Association, and the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, with respect to the Olympics development in the area west of Calgary. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly the reasons there has been no serious effort to involve the broader public — and by broader public I mean the towns, planning commissions, and representative groups — in this process of planning for the Olympics?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, in our ongoing discussions with the Olympic organization and with the towns involved, such as Canmore and others, we just recently appointed an Olympic co-ordinator who is working very closely with all these groups. I'm not aware of any request to me for participation in these discussions, and I'd be glad to hear from the hon. member who they are.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would be glad to do that. I've just had a submission from a number of organizations.

I'd like to ask what role the government is playing in the determination of which mountain will be used as the site. Is it totally left up to the Olympic organizing committee, or has any representation been made by the government of Alberta, the Premier, or the minister, with respect to any of these particular mountains?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the choice of the mountain, there are a number of associations involved. Possibly the Minister of Tourism and Small Business would want to supplement, because his department is asking for proposals. At this time, we have before us some five proposals, which are being evaluated. As the evaluation takes place, we will be coming to a decision shortly.

But as far as the innuendo that I or the Premier or somebody else has been involved in picking a mountain, I think that should be disregarded entirely.

DR. BUCK: Try and pick one with snow, Peter.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Then the hon. minister can assure the House that at no time did any official of the government of Alberta or a member of Executive Council approach Dr. Leighton with respect to the choice of Mount Allan as a site. The minister can give that assurance, can he?

MR. TRYNCHY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister can give the assurance that this minister did not consult with Dr. Leighton or anybody else and suggest that we should pick this mountain or any other site. I can say that with certainty. I might also add that we worked very closely with the MLA for that area and with the MLAs surrounding that area, and their input is very valuable to us too. But certainly if the hon. member is asking me if I made any commitments, suggestions, or otherwise, to anybody with regard to picking a site, that's completely false.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Followed by a supplementary by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm advised that the minister hasn't. We may pursue this line of questioning another day, when other members are present.

But I'd like to ask the minister what serious consideration has been given to Mount Allan, in view of the rather serious obstacles that would strike me: lack of snow, severe wind problems. Are we talking about a world ski championship or roller-skating? Why would the committee even be considering for the Olympics a choice of a mountain which seems to have so many serious obstacles?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm unable to perceive that as qualifying as a supplementary. The hon. minister has just assured us that he's had no discussions about the matter, and now the hon. member is asking him to give the reasons on which a certain committee apparently based its decision. I can't recognize that as a supplementary.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps on a point of order I could clarify the distinction between what appears to be some problem, in your mind, with the question. First of all, the question was whether or not any direct representation was made by the minister. The minister says no. I accept that; no question about that. However, the question I led off with was the process of consideration which, as I understand the minister's answer — and I want to give him a chance to clarify it — involves consideration by the government of Alberta. We have a

co-ordinator of the Olympics, and one of the things that is being considered is the site of a mountain. I simply ask the minister if he could advise the Assembly what considerations by the department have been involved, as far as Mount Allan is concerned.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty whatsoever with that question. For the information of the hon. member and others, I should probably explain what is taking place.

The government of Alberta has asked for a proposal for a recreation ski site. We asked the industry to come back to us with a number of proposals that they thought they should develop for the province. We did not ask them for a specific site, nor we did direct them to a specific site. So that's ongoing today, Mr. Speaker. The proposals are before us. As I mentioned, the Minister of Tourism and Small Business is handling that, and he might want to supplement. But no direction has been given by this government to anybody out there in the private sector to pick one site over another.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I might just try to clear up some of the confusion that appears to exist, relative to the question. In my capacity as Minister of Tourism and Small Business, back in July we asked for requests for proposals to develop a recreation ski area to the west and south of Calgary. That included some sites we had named at the time — and I don't have those right at my fingertips. But the Mount Allan site became a part of that package when the industry itself, one of the proponents, proposed that as a site.

Now, one of the conditions we asked for in our recreation ski area package — and this is nothing to do with the Olympics — was the contingent requirement for snow-making equipment. That, of course, applied to any site selected; the ones we suggested they might consider and any they as industry considered in this case. Mount Allan was proposed by a number of the proponents that have submitted proposals to us, and are presently under review by the technical committee.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I have just two short supplementary questions to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. Can the minister indicate or confirm if Mount Sparrowhawk was the designated area when the proposal was made in the presentation to the Olympic committee? Can he indicate if he knows if that was the proposal by the committee?

MR. TRYNCHY: I believe that's correct, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, then in light of the fact that we still haven't chosen a site or a developer, can the minister indicate if the facilities will be completed in time for the mandatory pre-Olympic events? There has to be a certain length of time before the Olympics are run. Can the minister indicate if that deadline will be met?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the sites should be completed two years prior to the Olympics, and my further understanding is that that will take place.

Power Rates (continued)

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question

to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. Would the minister advise the Assembly if the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency has caused an increase in the power rates to the city of Edmonton at this time?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency came into effect on September 1, 1982. The main purpose of the agency is to equalize the wholesale price of electricity across the province of Alberta. To achieve that goal means that of the three major suppliers — TransAlta Utilities, which serves the city of Calgary and most of central and southern Alberta; Edmonton Power, serving most of the needs of the city of Edmonton, with some supplemented by TransAlta; and Alberta Power, serving northern parts of the province — in essence the latter two, Edmonton Power and Alberta Power, have higher rates than TransAlta. So the effect of the pooling process is to see the wholesale price of power equal out at something between TransAlta, on the bottom end — recognizing that TransAlta serves between 60 and 65 per cent of the total power needs in the province — and the Edmonton Power rates, which were the second highest.

In short, Mr. Speaker, there's a net saving to the city of Edmonton as a result of the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. In the calendar year 1983, that saving should work out to in the neighborhood of \$15 million to \$20 million. That's a net saving, Mr. Speaker, and does not take into account the lesser benefit — and I emphasize the lesser benefit — that Edmonton would have received under the program prior to September 1, 1982, where in essence all Albertans were subsidizing the power rates of Edmontonians, in that there was a special provision for Edmonton Power under the natural gas price protection plan.

MR. WEISS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the response, Mr. Minister, are you suggesting that rural customers are being subsidized by urban customers, such as the users of the city of Edmonton?

MR. BOGLE: No, Mr. Speaker. If anyone is subsidizing anyone else in this scheme, it's the customers of the TransAlta area — that's primarily the city of Calgary and southern and central Alberta — because that's the lowest cost power in the province, recognizing that the city of Edmonton and northern Alberta are the beneficiaries of the program.

MR. WEISS: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may. What will be the long-term effect upon the agency, upon the power rates in Edmonton and northern Alberta?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to get into a speculative discussion. I would indicate that the preliminary studies undertaken by the department prior to the implementation of this agency, and the most current appendages to those studies, indicate that the city of Edmonton will be a net beneficiary in 1983. In 1984, 1985, and possibly '86, they will either be at the break-even point or at a slight loss. Very clearly, with the coming on stream of the city of Edmonton's Genesee power plant, there will be a very substantial savings for the city of Edmonton. The costs of that plant will be spread over the entire province, not just the customers in the city of Edmonton.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications indicate what form the new studies will be taking? When we discussed this matter in legislation in November, or in the last spring session upon introduction, no adequate studies to indicate what the rates would be were carried out across the province. Could the minister indicate whether these studies will be adequate to indicate what the new rates will be for Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, and other areas in the province?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I well recall the debates the hon. member has referred to. They occurred in fall of 1981. It's my understanding that a number of variables have to be taken into account. It is not possible to come up with a study today that will give us a precise, definitive answer as to what rates will be two years from now or five years from now.

Keeping in mind the role of the Public Utilities Board, it's also fair to say that the TransAlta rates have gone up far more substantially this year than anyone anticipated. The factor that caused that was the stored-up costs for the new Keephills plant, which is just coming on stream, and the high cost of borrowing money for TransAlta.

So in a nutshell, all we can do is try to keep a bead on a running target, and give our best estimate as to what and how the rates will go up when new plants come on stream. We're primarily looking at Sheerness, which is a joint venture between Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities, and then the city of Edmonton's new Genesee plant.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In earlier remarks, the minister indicated that the electrical rate increases, let's say from Edmonton and into southern Alberta, were not in a large amount due to the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. Could the minister confirm or deny that at this time?

MR. BOGLE: In answer to previous questions, Mr. Speaker, I said that the increased rates for electricity in the city of Edmonton are not a result of the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. Edmonton is a clear beneficiary of the program in 1983.

DR. BUCK: That's not what city council says.

MR. BOGLE: Well, that's what I'm saying, Walt.

In southern Alberta, including the city of Calgary, there is a shielding program through the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. Therefore, in the current fiscal year, customers in that area are fully shielded from the effect of the agency. As all hon. members will recall, it's intended to be a five-year phase out of shielding, which will mean that the taxpayer in the province of Alberta, through the government, will provide to customers in the lower cost areas subsidies which will be in excess of \$275 million. That subsidy will phase out over the five years.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency, could the minister indicate that the areas of southern Alberta will be compensated 100 per cent for any increases? As well, in terms of the city of Edmonton, the city indicates that 7.2 per cent of the 8 per cent increase is due to the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. Could the minister confirm those two facts?

MR. BOGLE: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member is well aware, from the debates which occurred in the fall of 1981, that the government's shielding is to be phased out over five years. I well recall the hon. member being in the debate. So there should be no misunderstanding in the Assembly today: government shielding is to be phased out over the five-year period of time.

What I am saying is that with regard to the current charges in the city of Edmonton, which were approved by city council, none of those costs can be associated back to a negative as a result of the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency. The city of Edmonton is gaining from this program. In the calendar year 1983, the net benefit for the city will be somewhere between \$15 million and \$20 million.

School Jurisdictions

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Education. Could the minister indicate if he is in a position to tell this House whether or not his department has established an optimum size for school jurisdictions and, if so, if he has available guidelines that would determine how large school districts should in fact be?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, Alberta Education has not done any research in the area. We are aware of research that has been done in other jurisdictions, and I'm advised by officials of the department that such research as exists suggests that the optimum size for a school jurisdiction — having in mind not only the quality of instruction but economies of administration and operation — is in the order of 20,000 pupils.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In light of that information and the fact that the Calgary public school district is about four times that, has the minister considered the possibility of splitting the Calgary public school jurisdiction, at least in half?

MR. KING: I hadn't until I read the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate whether or not he has looked at the possible efficiencies that might be realized in such a split, particularly with respect to problems in communication between the Calgary board of trustees and parent groups and teachers, specifically related to school closures and other such issues?

MR. KING: As I said in response to the principal question, Mr. Speaker, we have not done research in the area within the province or in the Department of Education. But the issue having been raised, we will certainly address ourselves to the questions that relate to the issue, and those such as the hon. member has raised here in this House will be among the first we will consider.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood, then the hon. Minister of Agriculture would like to deal with some previous question period question.

Social Allowance

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Social Services and Community

Health. Is the government planning to do away with the shelter adjustments for social allowance recipients?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is probably referring to news reports of some weeks ago. I indicated that for the next two years as Minister of Social Services and Community Health, I saw my responsibilities as building in cost efficiencies and good management of resources. I used two examples in describing that. One of the examples posed a question related to the business of shelter allowances, that we have to look at that whole area to see whether or not we can come up with any efficiencies. The other area was with the aids to daily living. I simply used those as examples, to demonstrate that in this time of restraint we have to look at every possible way whereby we can make cost efficiencies.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I'll repeat my question, because I'm not sure of the answer. Are you planning to do away with the shelter adjustments? You indicated that you ...

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member please use the ordinary parliamentary form of address.

MR. MARTIN: The minister said he is planning to look into the whole area. My very direct question is, are you planning to do away with shelter adjustments for social allowance recipients?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I believe I answered the question by saying that we are looking at not only that area but a number of areas, in terms of looking at cost efficiencies.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister is saying that he and the government are looking at the issue. Is the minister in a position to give the Legislature any more definitive information as to when looking becomes a definite policy change which the minister will be suggesting to his colleagues, either in this House or in Executive Council?

DR. WEBBER: Not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

Product Advertising — Agriculture

MR. FJØRDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, in response to the questions raised by the hon. Member for Little Bow, I would like to advise the Assembly that the government does not provide advertising subsidies directly to Alberta distilleries and that the Department of Agriculture does not advertise or promote alcoholic beverages.

I would like to point out that the beverage industry does add significant value to Alberta-produced grains and that they belong to the Alberta Food Processors Association and, as such, participate in the promotional programs, where possible. Mr. Speaker, they do have certain restrictions by which they cannot participate, some of which are coupon advertising, no sampling allowed in display booths, of course, and restricted media advertising.

Alberta Agriculture provides assistance to the Alberta Food Processors Association on a matching basis, which is determined on income from an annual membership fee, which is \$400 for a full member, and member contributions to its own programs. Allocation of the grant to specific member-initiated programs is administered by the

association through their board and various committees. The department support to the association for the fiscal year '82-83 and '83-84 is \$375,000 a year.

I would like to advise the hon. member that the association assistance program is available to all members, and in fact all Alberta food processors who wish to join to facilitate a common-front approach to promotion and marketing of Alberta processed food products. We are supportive of value-added processing in this province, Mr. Speaker, and we recognize that this assistance is very fundamental to the success and development of Alberta's food processing industry. Association memberships are comprised of many processors in Alberta, and a number of large retailers are also involved as associate members. Food processor members are presently 82, and expected to reach 90 by '83.

In summation, Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that the Department of Agriculture is committed to the role of supporting the food and beverage industry in the province and will continue to develop programs and work with all applicable groups to increase the consumer utilization of Alberta's value-added processed products.

MR. SPEAKER: Before I call on the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, I realize that the information given by the hon. minister is very important, and it certainly dealt with the general topic of the question. However, I respectfully ask the co-operation of hon. ministers in refraining from introducing into the question period the equivalent of a ministerial announcement, because that is going to cause some strains in the question period which may be difficult to deal with.

DR. BUCK: A short question, Mr. Speaker, just so I can understand what the minister said. There is no direct grant going to the distilleries, but indirectly there is. Is that what the minister said?

MR. FJØRDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we fund the Alberta Food Processors Association, and they in fact choose who joins. It's open to all Alberta processors, and they make that decision.

MR. SPEAKER: We've actually come to the end of the allotted time for the question period. Subject to the unanimous consent of the Assembly, we might hear the hon. minister. Otherwise, we might have to defer that to perhaps tomorrow's question period.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Sour Gas

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'll be brief. Yesterday I was asked a question regarding the location of the Lodgepole inquiry and, at the request of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, undertook to report back to the Assembly. I can advise the Assembly that while the principal inquiry will be held in Drayton Valley, no decision has as yet been taken by the Energy Resources Conservation Board as to whether or not a portion of the inquiry may be held in Edmonton.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, yesterday questions were raised to me, amongst other ministers, with respect to the monitoring and control of sulphur emissions in the province of Alberta. I would like to respond briefly with some information I have been able to obtain in response to those questions.

First of all, I advise the Assembly that in fact the percentage of sulphur emissions recovered from the raw sour gas in Alberta is greater than 97 per cent, on a province-wide basis, and that includes all 109 sour gas processing plants in the province. As well, through its processing plants, Alberta processes approximately twice the amount of sulphur as the combined total of the Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba industries. Nonetheless, as the result of our emission control standards and requirements, the sulphur emissions in Alberta are only 13 per cent of the combined total of those other three provinces. Finally, in response to questions, I should advise the Assembly that Alberta's ambient air quality standards are amongst the very strictest in Canada. In 1982, conformance with our license requirements was 99.96 per cent for sulphur dioxide and 99.57 per cent for hydrogen sulphide.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the subject matter of my responses is dealt with, as are many other related subjects, in a document put out by the Energy Resources Conservation Board, entitled *Sour Gas Processing in Alberta*. Given the very considerable interest expressed in this Assembly in the last number of days with regard to this important subject, I would like to file with the Assembly copies of this document, which was a result of some public hearings regarding certain sour gas plant license extensions and which I feel will be very informational for members of the Assembly. I would like to file those copies with the Assembly at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: I regret that there were four hon. members who were not given an opportunity to ask their first questions. I believe there were also four other ministers who wanted to deal further with previous question period topics.

I realize that some members may say, well, whose question period is this? Does it belong to the members or to the ministers? But we have questions without notice. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Mother of Parliament, all questions come in by way of written notice beforehand. Here, in common with other Canadian parliaments, we have questions without notice. If a minister takes a question as notice and wishes to answer it later, it would seem to me that must be done in a later question period. So I make no apology for recognizing hon. ministers for that purpose.

It would seem that in a House of 79 members, we should be able to make do with a 45-minute question period. I realize that earlier in the question period there was reference to an assumed attack on the right of freedom of speech. As we all know, a generous exercise of the right of freedom of speech by some people may cut off other people's rights altogether.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to correct an error I made earlier in my presentation of the petition on Sunday observance. I'm happy to report to the House that this has little to do with *Beauchesne*. It's a pure exercise of Murphy's Law. I read the subtotal, which was 5,000, in error. I should have read that the number of signatures on the petition was in fact 31,000.*

I appreciate the opportunity to correct that and offer my apologies.

*See Hansard, March 23, 1983, page 245

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might correct a statement I made in debate last evening. In my enthusiasm to recognize the ancestry of our Sergeant-at-Arms, I intended to say that we certainly have to recognize our Sergeant-at-Arms, who claims to be one of the living descendants of Father Lacombe's family.*

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

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

ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND CAPITAL PROJECTS DIVISION 1983-84 ESTIMATES OF PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

Department of Recreation and Parks

1 — Fish Creek Provincial Park [Development]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the minister wish to make any preliminary comments?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, do you want me to respond to just Fish Creek park or in total?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your privilege.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, last year, going back to November 6, 1981, I spent some considerable time making available to members of the House the progress of Kananaskis Country and where we were at. I just want to say that planning and development of Kananaskis Country projects are continuing, and the project will continue in the development of roads, major buildings, facilities, utilities, campgrounds, picnic sites, trailheads, trails, fish and wildlife projects, et cetera. Most of the work in the next year will be performed on a contracted basis and, in some cases, work will be done by department or government crews.

Last year's budget, 1982-83, was some \$73 million. We'll have expended approximately \$50 million this year, and we'll have an underspending of some \$23 million. This has occurred for a number of reasons. Some of those are: we underspent in our major building facilities and campgrounds; we've also had some cases where we've had some difficulty acquiring right of way for roads. Of course, a number of our contracts came in lower than we estimated, which was positive.

This year, Mr. Chairman, we're asking for \$28 million for ongoing Kananaskis Country projects. I say "some" \$28 million; it's not evened out. This request is somewhat less than in previous years, and there's a reason for that. We are taking into consideration the government's program of restraint and, hopefully, we are completing a number of projects and will see the completion of Kananaskis Country within a short while.

The request is broken down, as all members have before them, into six categories. We can review them through questions. To date, there have been some \$113 million to March 31, 1982. As I mentioned before, the estimated expenditures for this year, ending March 31, 1983, would be some \$50 million, bringing it to a total of \$163 million.

*See Hansard March 22, 1983, left column, paragraph 1

Before we get into this further, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go back to last August 16 in this House, when I was asked two questions, one by the hon. Member for St. Albert and one by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. The first question dealt with the names of towns, villages, and so on, that our visitors to the William Watson Lodge come from. That's a wonderful facility, which provides accommodation for disabled and handicapped persons. Within the last year, we provided some 7,021 overnight accommodations for our guests throughout the province. There were some 40 locations within the province, from Acme to Wildwood. We've had visitors from Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and even from London, England.

The second question asked if I would provide the names of persons and companies which the government rents equipment from. That took some considerable time, and I wish to report that we have over 160 names of firms and persons that performed work within Kananaskis Country. I'd like to table that information for anyone who is interested. I'm sure members will appreciate that there are a number of small tenderers, contractors, and local people who work within Kananaskis. If that information is not satisfactory, I will try to provide the answers if there are any specific requests. You might consider also that we rent power saws, trucks, and a number of small items, and those names are there.

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned, we are moving very successfully within Kananaskis Country. Last year I gave a list of some 96 projects and where we were with regard to completion. If you look at *Hansard* of November 6, 1981, those will become quite clear.

This last year we've had a number of visitors to Kananaskis Country. I understand that people visiting there have increased some 50 per cent over last year. We're moving along very nicely with the golf course. That will be opened next July, with possibly 27 holes ready for play. Hopefully, by the end of summer 1983, the whole golf course, all 36 holes, will be developed and playable.

I'm sure there are a number of issues members would like to ask. Hopefully, that gives them some idea of where we're at, and I'm prepared to answer questions on all three items.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are now dealing with the first vote. Could we have those now, please?

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I gather that we'll talk about the second vote, so I'll defer that in case there are any questions then on Fish Creek, and we'll take them then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions or comments on the first vote?

Agreed to:

1 — Fish Creek Provincial Park (Development)	\$1,085,000
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2 — Kananaskis Country Recreation Development

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to take a moment and go over these figures so that I have them correct. We have \$113,373,000 spent as of March 31, 1982. The estimate last year was \$73 million, but the minister tells us that \$50 million was in fact expended, so that brings us up to \$163 million. We have an estimate of \$28 million this

year, which I gather would bring us to \$191 million.

My first question is, what is the estimate as to the final total? I take it that we will not complete the project this year. The minister has indicated that the \$28 million estimate is at least partly scaled down due to the government's restraint policy. I'd be interested in knowing what the final estimated total is, when the project is completed.

Secondly, I'd like to know where things stand with — I believe it's the Ribbon Creek alpine village project, if my memory serves me correctly; whether there's been any discussion between the government re the Ribbon Creek alpine village and Mount Allan, which I believe is adjacent. I don't know whether there's any link there or not, but I'd be interested if the minister has had discussions on that matter with any officials of the organizing committee. I hope that the Ribbon Creek project could stand on its own, but I'd like a report from the minister on just where that matter stands now in terms of its viability. I believe there was some effort to involve the private sector, if my memory goes back to the discussion in 1981. I'd be interested in just what has happened subsequently.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, in regard to the total cost of the project, I think we can all recall that last year I quoted a figure that the total project cost in 1983-84 dollars would be some \$258,414,000. That, Mr. Chairman, could be somewhat reduced if we have hold-the-line budgeting, such as this year.

We are completing projects that are ongoing, such as buildings. We will delay developing new trails. We could delay a number of projects, and one of the larger ones would be in transportation. We can all recall that the highway budget for Kananaskis is well over \$100 million, and we might want to just take another look at that and see whether we continue developing and paving these roads or leave them in the gravel state. So the total projected cost would remain the same. Whether we reach that goal or not will be decided in future budgets.

With regard to the Ribbon Creek alpine village site, I wish to report that we are negotiating with the private sector. It's ongoing. We have proposals in that are favorable for two of the three sites, and negotiation is ongoing now with the Department of Tourism and Small Business for the developers to take on the third site. That will all be handled by the private sector. The alpine village will stand on its own. To my knowledge, there is no tie-in with Mount Allan or the alpine village site, and hopefully we'll have something to report shortly on how close we are to finalizing the alpine village contracts for the three sites.

MR. NOTLEY: Just to further supplement that question. Could the minister, or perhaps the Minister of Tourism and Small Business — I presume he has been working closely with the minister on the issue. Could we have some information with respect to the number of... When the request for proposals was made available, how much interest was there in the private sector for these three sites? How many proposals did the government receive? What was the process of determining government... The minister indicates that in the next short while, it looks as if we have proponents for two of the sites; they're hoping to complete decisions with respect to the third. Mr. Chairman, during deliberation on this appropriation, perhaps either hon. minister could bring us up to date on the number of proposals that came from the private sector and when, in fact, the government anticipates making a formal announcement.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, the minister may want to supplement my answer. We've had, I believe, some five proposals on B and C, and those are pretty well firmed up. We have people that are interested, and I don't think we're too far away from reaching agreements on two of the alpine village projects. Project A: we've had two proposals, and we are negotiating with one party now to see if we can reach a conclusion to solidify the contract and start to develop it. I'm not sure I can give you a specific time as to when we can expect this to take place. We would hope to see all three alpine village projects go on stream at the same time, and I'm not sure whether it will be sometime this summer or this fall before we have a definite answer. The Minister of Tourism and Small Business might want to supplement that.

MR. ADAIR: In relation to some follow-up on the alpine village, Mr. Chairman, back in October 1982 there were initially some 60 private-sector developers that showed or expressed an interest in receiving the parcel. After review and looking at their financing and the likes of that, that was limited, I believe, to about 12, and then down to three on parcel C and the ones on parcel B. We ended up with two, and possibly three — two and a half in a sense, if I can use that — on parcel A. So I'm just supplementing what the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks has said by saying that quite an interest did occur when we resubmitted the proposals to the public back in October.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, could the hon. minister indicate whether the alpine village is more a summer or a winter proposal? Is there some concern with its not being a year-round kind of operation?

MR. ADAIR: Basically it was to be an all-season type of package. It would include summer, winter, fall, and spring; in other words, activities in the adjacent area. Obviously, with Kananaskis Country adjacent to it, you have trails for fall hiking and the likes of that, bicycle trails, and all the other pieces were basically in the area. So it was really what you could call a four-season concept.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Were all three proposals able to meet those requirements, or were there some inadequacies? Is that one of the holdups at the present time, in terms of the operations being able to support themselves and earn a profit?

MR. ADAIR: In the broad sense, they could generally meet all those requirements. I think the biggest one was financing in their own particular capacity. They are looking at that, and we are looking at that.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, in terms of Mount Allan, related to the alpine proposal, can the minister confirm that Mount Allan's being developed would be an asset to the alpine village? Is it a necessity in terms of the alpine village going ahead and earning a profit?

MR. ADAIR: I don't think you can tie the two together at all, Mr. Chairman. I think any recreational ski area in Kananaskis Country would be an asset to the village, wherever it was located. But obviously Mount Allan, as presented by one of the — I can't say one, because I believe three of the proponents had suggested Mount Allan as a site, and its proximity to the village was quite

close. So there was obviously that advantage, but it was not considered a condition.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. In terms of the Snowdance location — and it is located in the Kananaskis park — is there any problem with regard to that area being developed? Do the Kananaskis park regulations or by-laws prohibit development of that site?

MR. ADAIR: I would refer that question to the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks, in his capacity as the minister responsible for parks. But I might point out that when we sought the proposals, we were seeking them for any specific area in that region. The only one I am aware of is that, at this point in time, we have not accepted the commercial development of a ski area starting from scratch. I say that in the sense that in Cypress Hills a ski hill was developed in that park by the local people before that time and was accepted as part of it after.

MR. TRYNCHY: Just to supplement that, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of any difficulties in having a ski hill in a provincial park. The minister alluded to Cypress Hills. Just last year we also completed, with a lot of volunteer people, a ski hill within a provincial park in the Cold Lake region. So we have not excluded that from our minds at this time. But we've never had a proposal come to us suggesting that they want to develop in a provincial park.

Agreed to:

2 — Kananaskis Country Recreational
Development

\$28,314,900

3 — Urban Parks

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, the \$22 million. I'm curious what went into the parks; I haven't seen them. Can you just give us an overview of the types of things that were put into these parks throughout the province?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, this was started last year, with some \$6 million allocated to the development of urban parks. There are five parks in question, at Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer. This is a somewhat different concept than the province developing the parks. We allow the communities to develop a concept, approved by us, and then we fund it through grants, the same as our MCR program. I guess the best that I could speak about is Medicine Hat, where I was last at. It is probably more developed. It is river valley and most of it is trails and bicycle trails, upgrading and paving of roads, development of buildings and amphitheatres, and things like that. It's quite an exciting program.

But the cities do this on their own; we don't tell them what to do or how to do it. They've come to us with a proposal, and we've accepted it. As long as they make sure it's open to the public — our greatest criterion is to make sure that all these parks are available for the public. In this way, we hope that our rural parks will not be so congested. Some of the people, such as the people in Lethbridge, would have a park to go to on their own, instead of travelling to areas outside the cities. It's really an ongoing thing with the cities. They develop it through our funding, through grants, and they're pretty well on schedule and doing a tremendous job.

MR. WEISS: A supplementary, if I may, to the minister. Is there any further commitment at this time to expand this program into other areas, such as Fort McMurray or communities of that size?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I don't think I could give a commitment that we would be expanding the program beyond the five we have now. I want to make the members aware that some six years of development will go into the five urban parks on stream now. We started with two, in Edmonton and Calgary, and now in the next five cities. Certainly if time proves to us that we should move on further, and the funds are available, I would not want to say that it will not happen. But to suggest that I can make that commitment today to you or to anybody here, Mr. Chairman, is impossible. Let's hope we can, but we will have to wait and see.

MR. MARTIN: Just a follow-up on the member's question. This program is meant to end with these five projects — you mentioned two before that — is that correct? This would be the end of the project. You have no intention, unless it was a specific project — but this actual program would be ending with these five.

MR. TRYNCHY: I just answered that question. Hopefully we will continue on a yearly budget request to the Legislature that we can complete the five parks we have before us. Then, as a body, we will decide whether we move on to other parks or not.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. In terms of the total cost of the five projects, we have \$6.5 million already expended and another \$22 million to be expended in the coming year. Will that be the final expenditure, or does the minister see these expenditures over the next two, three, or four years? Are there some estimates as to what the total cost of the projects will be?

MR. TRYNCHY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. When I brought this forward at the initial stage, it was a five- to six-year program. We have expended some \$6 million, and \$22 million will be sought for this year. It will be spent at Grande Prairie, \$4 million; Lethbridge, \$7 million; Lloydminster, \$1 million; Medicine Hat, \$4 million; and Red Deer, \$6 million.

The total estimated projected cost of these five parks in 1982-83 dollars is \$86 million. So we have four more years ahead of us, and of course we will watch this very closely. Whether we scale back and say, we'll complete . . . Most of these parks are done in three or four phases. Hopefully we can do them as planned by the communities.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Chairman, I can't let the opportunity go by without making reference to the urban park in Red Deer. I made reference to it last night in my speech; I would like to make reference to it again briefly today. This park in Red Deer is without any question one of the great benefits of our city and will be in the future. The minister has pointed out a number of the facilities available in this park; he hasn't touched on all of them. Certainly our park in Red Deer has a great variety of facilities. There is going to be an equestrian day-use area on the Hooper property. It will provide day usage for people to horseback ride in a very large area, hooking up with the Fort Normandeau area. The park is interlinked and connected all the way down the Red Deer River

corridor. There are bicycle and walking trails connecting all sorts of existing Red Deer city parks throughout the Waskasoo Park. The plans include, in the future, a public golf course. The facility is truly going to be one of terrific pride for our city. In years to come, our children will be most thankful for the foresight of this government in having provided an urban park for recreational facilities.

Thank you.

Agreed to:

3 — Urban Parks	\$22,252,500
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MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I move that the votes be reported.

[Motion carried]

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration and reports the following resolutions:

Resolved that from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, sums not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1984, for the purpose of making investments in the following projects to be administered by the Minister of Recreation and Parks: \$1,085,000 for Fish Creek Provincial Park, \$28,314,900 for Kananaskis Country recreation development, \$22,252,500 for urban parks.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the words "request for leave to sit again" were not added. This completes the study for the committee at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: With that amendment, does the Assembly agree with the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. On behalf of the Government House Leader, I'd like to ask unanimous leave of the Assembly to revert to Introduction of Bills so the two appropriation Acts with respect to these estimates could now be introduced.

MR. SPEAKER: Has the hon. Provincial Treasurer the unanimous agreement requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any dissent? . . . It is so ordered.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 24

**Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings
Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)
Supplementary Act, 1983**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 24, the Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Supplementary Act, 1983. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The purpose of the Bill is, of course, to provide funding for the two capital projects referred to in the supplementary estimates which have just been completed by the committee.

[Leave granted; Bill 24 read a first time]

Bill 25

**Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings
Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)
Act, 1983**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 25, the Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Act, 1983. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide the funding for the capital projects which have just been reviewed in the Committee of Supply with regard to these estimates for the next fiscal year.

[Leave granted; Bill 25 read a first time]

head: **CONSIDERATION OF HIS HONOUR
THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNORS SPEECH**

Moved by Dr. Elliott:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Frank Lynch-Staunton, Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate March 22: Mr. Zip]

MR. ZIP: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wish to congratulate you on your reappointment as Speaker of this House. Your presence here, sir, is a real compliment to this Legislature. May God grant you good health, strength, and may He add many more years to your fruitful life.

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

I also wish to congratulate the members for Grande Prairie and Calgary Foothills, and the other members who have spoken so well in this House over the last two weeks. It has become a hard act for me to follow. I hope I follow it well.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the members of this Assembly on their election. I am truly impressed with the talents in this House and feel most privileged and honored to be here as the Member for Calgary Mountain View. I wish to thank all of those who worked so diligently on my campaign. I wish to thank, most of all, the electors of Mountain View who worked and voted me in with a such a strong majority. I humbly pledge to serve all 20,600 of them, supporters and non-supporters alike, to the best of my ability. May the Good Lord grant me the wisdom and understanding to help meet their needs in these difficult times.

The residents of Mountain View make up as complete a mosaic of peoples as can be found anywhere in Alberta, or Canada for that matter. This multicultural diversity goes back to Calgary's earliest days, when settlers from Europe, who came here to work for the CPR, moved into Riverside and Bridgeland, which is now part of Mountain View. I am happy that I could express myself in the mother tongues of some of my constituents. I have a good working knowledge of Ukrainian and know many words in Polish, Russian, Croatian, Serbian, and French. I wish I knew more of the mother tongues of Mountain View.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

The early days were not easy for the people of my constituency. We should remember this, particularly now when so many of us are experiencing economic downturns, perhaps for the first time in our lives. Mountain View extends eastward from 10th Street N.W., between the north bank of the Bow River and the south side of 16th Avenue, to Barlow Trail on the east, taking in Vista Heights north of 16th Avenue between the Deerfoot Trail and the Barlow Trail to 24th Avenue N.E.

As I mentioned earlier, the west end of Mountain View constituency got settled in the early 1900s, a time when there were few people in Calgary or, for that matter, all of the west. It wasn't until much later, during World War II and immediately after, that Renfrew was occupied. Before that, curiously enough, it was the site of Calgary's first airport. The 1950s saw the development of Belfast followed, finally, by Mayland Heights and Vista Heights in the late 1960s.

New construction has recently taken place in the extreme east end of Mayland, off McKinnon Drive, and in Vista, due largely, incidentally, to Alberta Housing initiatives. A significant housing development in the constituency has been Holly Park, a major luxury condominium facility so prominently visible from the downtown area. Calgary Mountain View is the home of *The Calgary Herald* and of CFAC, in Mayland industrial park. There are a number of significant light industrial businesses located there, and it is also the site of the proposed [Firestone] park complex, a major development of offices, high-rise apartments, and a hotel where the one-time Firestone plant was located.

Numerous major improvements have been made to expressways in Calgary Mountain View, giving excellent access to other parts of the city. Deerfoot Trail, which crosses the constituency, is now completed from the north to the south end of Calgary. The Trans-Canada Highway, 16th Avenue, runs along the north boundary, while Memorial Drive, which is still undergoing improvements, runs along the south boundary. An improved Barlow Trail runs on the east boundary. The northeast leg of

Calgary's LRT is currently crossing the river, and footings for it are being laid on the median of Memorial Drive. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, there's a heavy involvement of provincial funding in all these transportation amenities in Mountain View.

To repeat, Calgary Mountain View is a very established community. Because of its strong European influence, there is a certain predominant outlook there which I would like to convey to this Assembly. When these people came to Canada in the early 1900s and settled in Calgary Mountain View, they had to work hard. They faced many difficulties; however, they kept going because they believed in the certainty of this new country, this new province, and their new city. They gave up a rich heritage and the beauty of Europe to face hardship and privation in this country, Mr. Speaker. They came here because they had assurances from the government of Canada that it would welcome initiative and that they could participate in building this country without the oppressive presence of the governments they left in their homelands. Even though they did not have the amenities of back home, they had freedom of opportunity, and they welcomed this in spite of their sacrifices.

Again in the post-World War II period, more people escaped the tyranny of eastern Europe to come to the freedom of Canada. This re-emphasized to the inhabitants of Calgary Mountain View the importance of freedom and democracy that this country represented. As well, we have the very important group of people from Britain and eastern Canada in Calgary Mountain View. They settled in Mountain View as well and brought with them their crucially important traditions of democracy and fairness, to be firmly implanted in Canada and in Alberta.

The biggest concern of my constituents at the present time is the economic situation in the province and in the country. Rising costs and rising taxes head the list of problems for my constituents. So many of them are seniors on fixed incomes. They see a compelling need for sound, responsible government that will keep in mind proper fiscal management. They know that ever-increasing taxation coming from government has to be met by business, through higher prices, and by workers, through higher wages. They know that taxation and borrowing by government are the main causes of inflation. As a result, they are very pleased to see, in the Speech from the Throne, the emphasis our government is placing on sound financial management.

Much appreciated too has been our government's sensitivity to special needs, as expressed by the home mortgage assistance plan to home-owners and the interest subsidy to farmers and small business men. Special needs met through the proposed Alberta widows' pension program reaffirms to my constituents this sensitivity of our government to special social needs. I must add that even this morning, I had a call on this very point. This dear old lady emphasized to me her happiness that our government is meeting its election promises.

My senior constituents are very happy with the new seniors' home improvement program, providing additional assistance to seniors in home renovations, and the senior citizens' home heating protection plan, which helps with the cost of heating a home. All these programs and more, as described in the Speech from the Throne, are welcome as a way to help them cope with their living expenses which, unfortunately I might add, are still rising, despite the economic downturn.

The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, needless to

say, provides my constituents with a growing sense of respect for the wisdom of our government in setting up this fund in 1976, when times were good, to help our people cope when times are bad. They place great importance on this fund.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to emphasize that our best resource in this province is people who are prepared to acquire new skills, to become disciplined, and to work hard. With my extensive background in business, business development, and government, coming from a farm where I grew up in tough times, I am prepared to work hard and will strive to be of real assistance in this House in making the right decisions that will help our beautiful province through our current difficulties. I pray for God's help in this undertaking, and I know that He is with us as long as we are with Him.

My years with the city of Calgary as their business development economist, taught me from experience the importance of providing incentives to investors. I met hundreds of them in my time and witnessed first-hand how confidence on their part toward Canada faded with growing interventionism in this country, particularly on the part of our federal government.

Yes, investors do have many choices as to where they invest their job-creating dollars. Once they get the feeling that the government of a country is anti-business and pro-socialist, they have other places to put their money. Somehow in the higher echelons of federal bureaucracy, the tendency has been to forsake the real world of market place economics for the Platonian cave of Galbraithian theory. Incentives to produce, a long-established prime objective in Canadian society, have been replaced in priority by policies of income redistribution, government ownership, close government direction, and heavy taxation of the remaining private sector. These misguided policies bear a large measure of responsibility for the economic strait jacket Alberta's economy is currently subjected to.

These are sobering times for Alberta. These are times for commitment to hard-nosed reality. I see this commitment appearing in the budget speech. I wish to commend the government of Alberta for this, particularly the Premier of this province for his diligent and vigorous promotion of this wonderful province of ours, despite the difficulties placed in his path by federal interventionists and apparatchiks. At the present time our Premier is the best asset in Alberta and in Canada. I wish we had two Premier Loughdees, one to keep here and one to send to Ottawa.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise in turn to deliver my maiden address to the Assembly with much trepidation, having heard before me so many extremely thoughtful debates on the throne speech. I hope in some way to add some thoughts to those already expressed. Being near the bottom of the list of speakers, I hope not to sound overly repetitive, but there are certain very important items I would like to address.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to you on being re-elected to the Speaker's Chair, a position you are filling for a fourth consecutive term, making you the senior Speaker in Canada, if not the whole Commonwealth. It is indeed an honor to work under your guidance.

I would also like to congratulate the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview on his new role as Leader of the Official Opposition and to express my happiness at his

finding a friend who could join him in the ranks of the opposition.

As one of the 19 new members of the 20th Legislature of Alberta, I am extremely proud to take my place in this hallowed Assembly as MLA for Edmonton Belmont. Many great public figures in Alberta's history have served here, and I am humbled by the opportunity to be here. What makes my presence even more exciting and challenging is the fact that I am the second youngest sitting member, fortunately leaving the title "baby of the Assembly" to my esteemed colleague the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

Looking around this room, one can see the tremendous mixture of personalities present, all unique in their contribution to this Assembly, and herein lies our strength. This great province of ours has a wide cross section of regions and, by getting to know the representatives of various constituencies, I'm coming to know my province much better. I sit in fascination listening to the debates presented by government members, a look on my face, which by the way should not be mistaken for confusion, as I hear about the many differing constituencies within our province.

I would also like to thank those members who have gone out of their way to help the new members here. Many have taken the time to explain small or significant details which, if unknown, would cause unnecessary embarrassment for new members. Another thank you to you, Mr. Speaker, for hosting new members in your suite and enlightening them on the ways of the world. In the short time I have been here, I have made many new friends and, for that alone, becoming an elected member has already proven to be an invaluable experience.

I must also express sincere gratitude to the voters of Edmonton Belmont, who have made it possible for me to take my place in the Assembly. Edmonton Belmont is located in the northeastern section of the city of Edmonton and has a population of approximately 21,000. It is a very typical urban riding, which is difficult to isolate in character from the rest of Edmonton. In the south end of the constituency, we find many old homes and businesses built in the 1920s on the Fort Trail leading out of the city to Fort Saskatchewan. As one heads north, the neighborhoods become more modern, ending in Londonderry and Steele Heights.

In the last two years there has been increasing residential construction in the northern sections of the riding, but this new home construction has been tempered by the demand for new housing. However, there is tremendous potential in this new area, much of it acquired by Edmonton during the land annexation of 1982. My parents and I first moved into the riding in 1969, one of the first new families in the area. There were only a few homes there at that time, and our front window looked out on vast expanses of fields awaiting the developer's arrival. Today this area is composed of beautiful neighborhoods and communities taking an active part in the life of our city.

The most significant construction presently taking place in the Belmont riding is the building of the new Londonderry senior citizens' complex, which has the most modern facilities for seniors in the way of self-contained units. Also under construction on the site is St. Michael's nursing home, sponsored by the Ukrainian community, which will be composed of half nursing beds and half auxiliary beds. Both these projects are scheduled for a May opening. These senior citizens' facilities will be a great addition to existing facilities in the area and will

allow many more senior citizens to remain close to their children and grandchildren, helping to maintain strong community ties.

Additionally, one of the most interesting and magnetic establishments located in the Belmont constituency is the Transit Hotel. Located on the Fort Road for over 60 years, it has long been a favorite community gathering in the tradition of the British pub. It is also a fine watering hole for thirsty travellers entering or leaving the city. The strategy for many a political career has been embraced in the confines of this historical establishment, a building which I might add has been designated an official historic site. In order to introduce all members to the Transit Hotel, I would invite all members to be my guests at said establishment any time at their convenience. Fortunately, tie is optional.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you buying?

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne addresses many important issues which this Legislature will have to consider this session. The questions and issues facing us all are not going to be easily dealt with. Members of the government are going to have to face some of the greatest decision-making challenges of their political careers. From 1973 until the beginning of 1982, this province experienced unparalleled prosperity. We the people of this province were like children in a candy store. Nothing seemed beyond our reach, as increasing energy revenues paid for ever-increasing demands and expectations. Providing the capital expenses in many projects was only a marginal cost compared to the operating expenses the government must now incur to maintain these projects.

Now, with the uncertainty of energy revenue income, we must take stock of our present and future positions and face realities. Holding the line is the realistic approach which must be taken, and priorities must be firmly established. As the elected representative of the constituents of Edmonton Belmont, I will maintain a position; I will follow this principle of holding the line on government expenditures. It is of utmost priority to eliminate the budgetary deficit which has suddenly struck this government through changing world conditions.

It is all fine and well for the opposition to insist that government step up job creation expenditures, but there is another important matter that must be looked upon and taken into consideration with respect to this serious problem. In order to understand the unemployment problem on a national level, we must look at factors other than global economics. Our economy is presently facing great population stress from that age group born between 1945 and 1960. This generation, referred to as the post-war baby boom, has placed tremendous pressures on society, as it steadily advances and ages. I am part of that generation, Mr. Speaker, and believe I understand its problems as well as anyone. When I began grade school, there was always a shortage of educational materials or facilities. Classes were always overflowing. When I completed high school, there were great demands and competition on postsecondary educational facilities. Throughout my formal schooling, there was always a high level of competitiveness, which certainly helped prepare my peers and me for future challenges. This group has since put great demands on the housing industry and on recreational facilities. In turn, we have seen our school enrolments quickly dropping, and only in the last couple of years have enrolments stabilized.

Then this group moved en masse into the job market, a very lucrative one in Alberta throughout the the 1960s, 1970s, and until just very recently. Those individuals born during the early years of the post-war boom entered into the job market easily, as the opportunities were plentiful. Slowly but surely we were building up a backlog of surplus workers, who were absorbed by the heated economy. To compound this problem, Alberta had tremendous net in-migration during these years, and these out-of-province workers were absorbed into our work force as well.

Mr. Speaker, we all realize what has transpired since that period of euphoria. The constituents of Edmonton Belmont have repeatedly expressed to me that they are afraid of the future. Who will carry the tax burden for these facilities built for the boom years, as the work force gets older and, in turn itself, is in greater need of aging facilities? Are their pensions secure? All this information is presently being summarized in a report initiated by the Member for Calgary Currie.

The question then is one of trimming fat and belt-tightening in government expenditures. The uncontrolled growth of the 1970s has largely stopped, and this is a good opportunity for all of us to stop and catch our breath. As a member of this government, a priority of mine is to make us all attempt to become more accountable and efficient. If we are to become competitive again in world markets, we must improve our standards of performance both as a province and as a nation.

There is no better place to begin, Mr. Speaker, than in the area of education. It is our youth who will suffer the most if they are unprepared to face the harsh realities of these changing times. In the throne speech, the Minister of Education has taken a very positive step in the right direction by addressing the problem of comprehensive examinations in our high schools. It is what the public wants and expects. We must hone our competitive skills again as a province and a nation to regain our competitive edge in a fiercely competitive world.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to believe the claims made by some overreacting sections of our society, in their demands for more money in order to keep our performance and level of services high. Money is not always the answer. Can we not find solutions through serious deliberation? I find it hard to believe that the firemen and policemen cannot live with the new economic realities without adjusting accordingly. Our cities will not become Sodoms and Gomorrahs overnight because of new budget constraints. I find it hard to believe that the quality of medical care or education will drop because of tougher budgetary constraints in these departments.

We should not continue to spend money on questionable transportation projects such as LRT, simply to wave at passing rail cars, empty little white elephants. We must stop commissioning consultants' reports that cost thousands of dollars and only make suggestions we can no longer afford anyway. These areas and many others must be of utmost concern to all members in the House.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of people in this province are hard working and determined. They want value for their tax dollars, and we as a government must set the example. We must turn the corner and return to the fundamentals that have made this province as great as it is. The heart of the solution lies in the people of this province who, given individual incentive and less constraint, will return our economy to previously desired levels of economic performance.

A large percentage of people living in Edmonton

Belmont fall into that category, the middle-income, post-war boom generation striving to meet its goals and objectives. These people do not want the government to give them anything, save one very key factor. That element is confidence. It is the most important environment we can create to put us on the road to recovery.

Mr. Speaker, one final note of major concern for many of the constituents of Edmonton Belmont deals with the question of protection for our citizens. It is with rising alarm and concern that we see the rights of criminals in our society strengthened, and the rights of citizens deteriorating. Is our obligation as a government to the perpetrators of crime or to protecting innocent citizens? It is unfortunate that this Legislature has only limited recourse to affecting or implementing the federal laws of this country, so I will not go into depth on this matter. But there is one area we can act upon firmly.

Indeed Bill 201, presently before the House for debate, addresses one of these very important issues. That is the topic of dealing with drunk drivers, I will leave debate on that motion for the appropriate time, but I would strongly suggest that this is one area where we can strengthen our position very clearly. There are many laws that must be tightened up. We must face that task as our responsibility.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and welcome the new pages who are so conscientiously performing their functions for us in the House. We hope to see some of them return in the future as members of this Legislative Assembly. But in the meantime, I would like to wish them a pleasant stay, and the best in their exemplary studies at school.

Mr. Speaker, my presence here in the House has been relatively short, but I already possess the greatest reward of the privilege in serving this Assembly. That is the right to tell my future children and grandchildren that I have had the honor of working with the greatest Premier in our province's history. It is a proud statement that all my colleagues can share.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech is taking us in the right direction. I would therefore urge all members to support the motion by the hon. Member for Grande Prairie, seconded by the Member for Calgary Foothills.

[Motion carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

7. Moved by Mr. Crawford on behalf of Mr. Lougheed:

Be it resolved that the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor by such members of the Assembly as are members of the Executive Council.

[Motion carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (Second Reading)

Bill 10 **Rural Electrification Revolving Fund** **Amendment Act, 1983**

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 10, the Rural Electrification Revolving Fund Amendment Act, 1983.

The purpose of this Bill is to increase the maximum moneys available in the revolving fund from \$45 million to \$55 million. This amendment is necessary to assist rural families who are bona fide farmers and have access to the fund in receiving rural electrification through their membership in rural electrification associations.

This fund has been instrumental in assisting Albertans choosing to live in rural parts of the province, and served by rural electrification associations, to receive power at a reasonable cost. Over the past two fiscal years, we have seen some 2,400 new services provided at a total cost of in excess of \$16 million.

It is my recommendation, Mr. Speaker, that the Assembly give due consideration to this Bill, as it is fundamentally important for one of our major policies in assisting the rural electrification associations.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a second time]

Bill 15
Department of Transportation
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 15 is a very simple but important amendment. It provides an increase in the amount that would be provided by the Provincial Treasurer to the revolving fund of the Department of Transportation. That fund is utilized in a variety of ways, most particularly for all the vehicles utilized by the department, and for such things as crushing gravel that's held in stockpiles until such time as it's required for road building projects. The sheer size of the Department of Transportation's present programs has dictated a need for an increase in the fund, which we believe will be effective in providing the necessary funds over probably the next four years.

[Motion carried; Bill 15 read a second time]

Bill 3
Registered Music Teachers' Association
Repeal Act

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 3, the Registered Music Teachers' Association Repeal Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to repeal the Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association Act. The Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association has reincorporated itself under the Societies Act and is now known as the Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association, 1982, thus making the old Act redundant.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wonder if the minister could correct her terminology and indicate that it was second reading, not introduction of the Bill.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Excuse me, second reading of Bill No. 3.

[Motion carried; Bill 3 read a second time]

Bill 8
Professional Statutes
Amendment Act, 1983

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading of Bill No. 8, the Professional Statutes Amend-

ment Act, 1983.

Alberta was the first province in Canada permitting medical doctors, dentists, chartered accountants, and lawyers to practise their professions using companies incorporated under the Companies Act. In 1975 the Companies Act and various professional Acts were amended to accommodate this action. Companies incorporating under the Companies Act, including professional corporations, are required to file a memorandum of association which includes, amongst other things, the name of the company, the objects of the company — in other words, the activities the company will carry on — a statement that the liability of the shareholders is limited, and the numbers and kinds of shares the company is authorized to issue.

Approximately 4,000 professional corporations were formed prior to February 1, 1982, when the new Business Corporations Act became effective. With the exception of not-for-profit corporations incorporated under part 9 of the Companies Act, all companies under the Companies Act are required to continue or to reincorporate under the Business Corporations Act prior to February 1, 1985.

The amendments proposed in this legislation are at the request of the professional associations and with the approval of the Registrar of Companies, who administers both the Companies Act and the Business Corporations Act. No professional corporation can now incorporate under the Companies Act nor, in the opinion of counsel for the medical or dental profession, can such companies as now exist continue under the new Act, because the professional Acts make reference to objects and a memorandum of association, whereas corporations under the new Business Corporations Act have no memorandum of association and there is no mention of objects *per se* in articles of corporation or articles of continuance which have replaced the memorandum of association.

In summary, the proposed legislation will remove the bar in existing professional Acts and leave them free to incorporate or to continue at will.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, I ask for support for second reading for Bill 8.

[Motion carried; Bill 8 read a second time]

Bill 14
Attorney General Statutes
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No 14, the Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1983.

Mr. Speaker, there are four items dealt with in the Bill. I think some small amount of explanation is required with respect to each of them. The first one is an amendment to the Alberta Evidence Act. It adds to a list of excluded agencies, primarily governmental agencies or large institutions, the health units of the province in order that in proving certain types of claims in court, copies rather than original documents might be used. This is not a departure from any existing philosophy in respect to the legislation, Mr. Speaker, because that is the position at the present time for municipal councils, school boards and, of course, the federal and provincial governments. So that just clarifies, in fact at the request of the local board of health for Edmonton, that particular provision in the Act.

The next one, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Arbitration Act, rectifies an error that had been made in carrying

forward this legislation at the time of rewriting it for the purposes of the *Revised Statutes of Alberta 1980*, when all the consolidations of the statutes were done. There was a provision in the Act at the time that if a person was going to take an application before a superior court judge because of an alleged error on the part of an arbitrator in grievance arbitration, that had to be done within a certain time limit, which I recall was 30 days. That particular provision was inadvertently left out and, because of that, at the time of the revising of the statute did not remain as part of the law. The proposal now is to reinstitute a time frame, suggesting 45 days as a reasonable time.

I make clear, Mr. Speaker, that this is not interest arbitration; it's grievance arbitration. It's normally just the interpretation that an arbitrator chosen by the parties would make in respect to terms of an existing collective agreement. The feeling is that since the parties should be able to rely on the decision made within that process, if someone with one of the parties is going to move to upset it, based on a claimed lack of due process or jurisdiction, or an error in law, he should make that move within a time limit so the parties don't begin to act upon the arbitrator's decision and then find the appeal to the judge comes at a later time. Forty-five days is the proposed period for that time limit.

The change to the Court of Appeal Act is a small one, Mr. Speaker, but useful in that it's clear that the court might now have registrars in both Calgary and Edmonton. As the court now has nine members and in almost all cases sits in panels of three or five, the need for a registrar in both cities is there and the original Act simply referred to registrar in the singular.

Perhaps the most substantial of these amendments is the last one proposed, Mr. Speaker: two changes to the Fatality Inquiries Act. It was thought that it should be entirely clear that a fatality inquiry which had been concluded could be reopened. It may sound self-evident that that should be able to be done, but speaking as Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to be entirely clear that there would not be circumstances where it was beyond my reach to reopen a fatality inquiry. The reason for that is that the whole essence of the legislation is much dependent upon the trust people put in it.

Whenever there is an unexplained death, of which in the first instance, there are about 4,000 a year in the province, a very careful and complete examination of the circumstances must take place. I would point out that many, many unexplained deaths, which are unexplained in the first instance, do not have anything to do with criminal matters. They have to do, though, with the need for an investigation to determine the cause.

In order to be sure that people will trust the process, and knowing as we do that those most directly affected by an unexplained death are at the same time the most deeply affected and the most concerned, since about 70 of these unexplained deaths per year go to an inquiry before a provincial court judge, there remains the possibility that even when concluded, someone who is directly interested in it may come forward and say that there is additional information or that some aspect of the inquiry had not been completely dealt with.

The result of this proposed, change, Mr. Speaker, would enable the Attorney General at that point to be sure that if the circumstances appeared to warrant it, there was no technical obstacle in light of the fact that the inquiry with respect to the same death had already been concluded. So that's the purpose of that one, Mr. Speaker.

The last one — that a public inquiry might be stayed in order to allow a police investigation to proceed uninhibited is, I think, the best way of characterizing it — is an important change as well. There is no doubt that the police have the right to pursue the investigation in any event. What is aimed at here is that a person may be in basically a civil process, which is an inquiry as to the manner of death in previously unexplained circumstances, and that person, subject to a civil process, may be under investigation at the same time by police, and may therefore — a person who may be a witness in the one may become the accused in the other. That's the key to the importance of this change. He may merely be a witness in the civil proceeding under the Fatality Inquiries Act; there may be an ongoing police investigation which could lead one of those witnesses to the position where he's the accused in a criminal proceeding.

There is in essence a double jeopardy involved in that, and since the Attorney General directs the police investigation and the prosecution of any criminal offence, I take it as being a position of greater merit that the criminal proceeding must take precedence in those cases, and not the reverse. Therefore, there should be the ability to stay the fatality inquiry in those circumstances.

If it transpires that the criminal charge, if there is one, once heard, doesn't resolve the matter, then — and in most cases I think this would be the case in any event — the fatality inquiry should proceed to its conclusion. But it's a matter of clarifying the position of the law enforcement agencies and at the same time clarifying the position of a provincial court judge who would be hearing a fatality inquiry.

Mr. Speaker, those are all the remarks I would like to make in respect to second reading of Bill 14.

[Motion carried; Bill 14 read a second time]

Bill 27

Chattel Security Registries Act

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move second reading of Bill 27, the Chattel Security Registries Act.

Once again, I think in fairness to hon. members this deserves some explanation. There are numbers of ways in which chattels are made the subject of security interests in the province. By that I mean that under the conditional sale agreement, for example, there's a procedure for registration, the effect of which is to leave the title in the name of the vendor until all payments are made. Under a chattel mortgage, which is also a registrable item, the title to the property involved remains in the name of the borrower but subject to the claim of the financier who has loaned the money with respect to it, if money has been loaned.

The other prime legislation, I guess, although there are some lien Acts also involved — not the Builders' Lien Act, but the Garagemen's Lien Act might be involved in a security situation, and the Assignment of Book Debts Act. All these items deal with security that people are entitled to have and entitled to register, and how they claim their priority in respect to their rights when they're registering their claim with respect to movables. Vehicles are involved because of the central vehicle registry, and all other manner of movable property is also involved in a central registry.

So times are changing, Mr. Speaker. I well remember going to the court clerk's office on different occasions to

search registers, and running my finger down the long page. I think they were 17- or 19-inch pages in the good old manual system, and every entry was made in the careful hand of the clerk. I remember, too, looking through card indexes and the like to see if a particular serial number was there. But computerization and electronic marvels are at hand. They have been for the past few years.

MR. NOTLEY: Even overtaking the law.

MR. CRAWFORD: Even catching up with the lawyers. The Leader of the Opposition is quite right.

The type of electronic progress we've had so far is not great. We now have the ability to do some searches, for example, on a screen rather than physically. But we aren't able to put the record keeping system itself fully into any programmed data base. The ultimate objective is to be able to do all of that, so that searches showing people's interests and titles can be made in a very reliable and very quick way. Admittedly, our system is now behind, so that people trying to register in respect to transactions they may have involving personal property are sometimes delayed numbers of days, if not up to two weeks, in order to be sure that a memorandum or a certificate from the registrar can in fact assure them of who owns what. That is not a satisfactory situation, so computerization is the way we're going.

However, this is also a long and expensive process. We have developed the programs; the software is being developed in respect to it. A certain amount of the hardware necessary for computer units that will be involved here is being planned for. What we need is the capacity in legislation to allow these changes to take place, because the previous law contemplated something quite different. I think the legislator frequently finds that he must do that; it's an updating. The principle remains the same but, to the extent to which legislation deals with the mechanics of it, changes are required.

I should say that because of the phasing-in time, there would not be an early proclamation of this Bill. It is timely, however, to see it before the Assembly and to pass it. The proclamation could well be into next year, but by then this legislation will be ready and in place.

I add this: we went through this exercise two years ago. We passed a similar Bill, and there was value in doing that. It was not proclaimed. The value in doing it was that people had a chance to look at it and say: now that we're learning more and more about it, there are some further changes you should make. That's what we've done. We've brought forward the further changes. It's such a fast-moving field, Mr. Speaker, as we all know. Other features of the Bill, including the very important one of the assurance fund, are simply maintained in the basis of existing legislation. That would be an important part of any Act of this type.

Mr. Speaker, I think that gives the general flavor of what's involved here, and an opportunity to explain a little bit to hon. members about the changes we hope to see in this important area of personal property.

[Motion carried; Bill 37 read a second time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, before asking the Clerk to call another Bill, I thought members of the opposition might want to hear from me. I have had some difficulty selecting the Bills we might proceed with this afternoon, because my judgment of the course of the

other business, the estimates and the throne speech debate, was such that I did not give any indication to hon. members of the opposition as to what the Bills might be.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, that I intend to call only one more Bill this afternoon. I don't expect any difficulty over that particular one. I wanted my inability to give information beforehand to be subject to the understanding that had there been any concerns, we would be glad to adjourn debate on any of those Bills. Hon. members have not raised those concerns. That's why it was done with less notice than usual.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Clerk now to call Bill No. 20.

Bill 20

Rural Gas Amendment Act, 1983

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading of Bill No. 20, the Rural Gas Amendment Act, 1983.

Firstly, the Bill makes the changes which are in keeping with the departmental changes and responsibilities in setting up the new cabinet. The Bill will allow the minister to make changes to regulations instead of going to cabinet for those changes in regulations. Section 6 of the Bill will increase the maximum consumption which a gas co-op can supply to customers. This enables the gas co-ops to hook up commercial customers — by the way, that's small commercial customers — in their own franchise area, which were previously denied hookups. Originally the Rural Gas Act only extended to home-owners, and this quite often left the viability of gas co-ops in jeopardy. Over the new maximum, the utility company in the area and the franchise gas co-op would be able to bid or tender for the opportunity to serve larger gas users.

Section [27] is changed to add "purchased". It already says "the Minister may . . . construct, operate and maintain". He may also purchase. That's for the purpose of purchasing high pressure gas lines which will serve the rural gas utilities.

The last major provision is to add, in section 10, "rural municipal authorities", which makes them subject to the same provisions as rural gas co-operative associations with respect to rural gas utilities.

Discussions have been held with the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops to assure adequate debate on this Bill. They have been made aware of the changes that are proposed.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a couple of very brief remarks during the principle of second reading. I certainly subscribe to that section with respect to how we deal with bidding on annexed areas. It's important, I think, that gas co-ops have an opportunity to bid on annexed areas. It may well be that with the economic slowdown in the province, annexation is going to be less of a burning issue in the next several years than it was in the last 10. But I know from some of the problems encountered by the co-ops that have come to me, that has been a concern in the past, and I support the change.

The caveat I would register on this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, is with respect to moving away from the Executive. Council making regulations and allowing the minister to make regulations. I think we have to be very careful any time we move in that direction. I guess it would be worth taking members back to the problems that occurred in this House in 1974 when the then Minister of Culture undertook certain grants.

I think the resulting report by the Auditor General drew to our attention the point that regulations in fact should be made by the Executive Council. I know that's sometimes cumbersome. I know that in the fast pace of dealing with especially very technical information that must be put in regulation form, it is easier to assign that responsibility to the minister.

But I would say to the members of the Assembly that any time we move away from the concerns that the Auditor General expressed so clearly — the occurrence took place in 1974; the Auditor General's report, as I recall, was in 1975. Perhaps the hon. Member for Little Bow can help me if I'm wrong. But I recollect the debate taking place in the Legislature at that time. I say to hon. members that we must be very cautious any time we reduce the obligation in statute for Executive Council itself to take the ultimate responsibility for all regulations under a piece of legislation passed by this Legislature.

I appreciate — as the hon. Member for Drayton Valley has pointed out — that there has been extensive consultation with the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops. Clearly the spirit of the Act is one that my colleague and I can support. But I do want to register that caveat at this time and ask members to ask themselves whether there are not other ways the matter can be dealt with before we complete this Bill. I don't think it means that second reading can't proceed. We will certainly support the Bill on second reading. But we do want to flag the concern, and we may very well pursue the matter in a little more detailed way when we get to committee.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the hon. member conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify a point for the Leader of the Opposition. I don't believe the

Bill deals specifically with annexed areas as you outlined, but with the franchise area. I recognize the problem that arises, certainly for the gas co-ops, when a portion of their plant is absorbed into an annexed area. That's an ongoing discussion with them.

[Motion carried; Bill 20 read a second time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, before calling it 5:30 I indicate that, as hon. members know, the Budget Address is tomorrow evening. Perhaps that makes it appropriate that I say something about Friday at this time. We intend to call the budget debate on Friday morning in order that the Leader of the Opposition can give his traditional response at that time.

MR. NOTLEY: So I can have lots of time to prepare.

MR. CRAWFORD: I think the hon. leader will find himself in the position where there will be so little in the budget speech to complain about that it won't take long. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, I mention that because it wouldn't be our intention to continue the budget debate for all the time available, because of the desirability of looking at some of the appropriation items in committee. They include some important ones. The proposed interim supply for the Assembly itself has not yet been dealt with. So we would be calling items like that for Friday.

I think that's all I can say about House business at this point, Mr. Speaker. I move we call it 5:30.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you agreed that we call it 5:30?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:10 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

