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Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)

TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 1975

Afternoon Sitting

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TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1975

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I would like the House to welcome a delegation of students from Cariboo Hill School — it's a continuation of a visit from yesterday — which is in the magnificent constituency of Burnaby-Edmonds.

HON. D. BARRETT (Premier): I would like to welcome a group of students from Centennial High School in the District of Coquitlam.

MRS. D. WEBSTER (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a group of constituents from Vancouver South who are seated in the Members' gallery today to see democracy in progress.

MR. R.T. CUMMINGS (Vancouver-Little Mountain): Mr. Speaker, today we have a large number of students from Eric Hamber Secondary School. Their teachers hope that the opposition will behave.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

HON. MR. BARRETT: We have as a guest on the floor of the House the only opposition leader in the Province of Alberta who was successful in holding a seat in that province's recent election, Mr. Grant Notley, leader of the New Democratic Party in Alberta and also, in effect, the Leader of the Opposition in that province.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): Mr. Speaker, could I, with a great deal of feeling, welcome Grant Notley to the Legislature?

Presenting petitions.

MR. H.W. SCHROEDER (Chilliwack): Mr. Speaker, I beg leave of the House to read a petition.

"To the Honourable Legislature of the Province of British Columbia, the Legislature assembled: the petition of the undersigned, Andy Shadrack of the City of Nelson, humbly sheweth that I respectfully and earnestly object and protest against the curtailment of the students' summer employment programmes and therefore present to your honourable assembly a petition on behalf of the residents of the Nelson area of British Columbia; wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Honourable House may be pleased to recommend that the summer student-employment programme not be cut for the summer of 1975, and as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray."

MRS. P.J. JORDAN (North Okanagan): I wish leave of the House to present a petition. The petition is as follows:

"To the Honourable Legislature of the Province of British Columbia, in Legislature assembled. The petition of the undersigned, S. Locking of the City of Winfield, British Columbia, humbly sheweth that I respectfully and earnestly object and protest against the disregard for the terms and conditions established under the Public Utilities Act with respect to services rendered by Winfield Utilities Ltd. on property known as Hillcrest Properties Ltd., Winfield, British Columbia.

"Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Honourable House may be pleased to recommend that the water rights branch of the Province of British Columbia ensures that the terms and conditions set under the Public Utilities Act with respect to Hillcrest Properties Ltd. at Winfield, British Columbia, be observed on behalf of the petitioners.

"And, as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray."

Dated April 22, 1975, S. Locking, as signed by Patricia Jordan.

Introduction of bills.

MORTGAGE BROKERS AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

On a motion by Hon. Mr. Macdonald, Bill 48, Mortgage Brokers Amendment Act, 1975, introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Oral questions.

CONSUMER SERVICES' MONITORING OF GOVERNMENT PURCHASES

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question today to the Hon. Minister of Consumer Services. Does the Department of Consumer Services monitor and investigate purchases by other departments of the government to ensure that the biggest consumer of all, which is the government of the province, receives value for dollars spent?

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): No, Mr. Speaker, we do not.

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MR. SPEAKER: I would ask the Hon. Member if this is within the field set out in the statutes. If it isn't, it is beyond the responsibility of this Minister.

MR. PHILLIPS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the Department of Consumer Services, or the Minister personally, received any complaints within the last month from any government departments regarding high prices paid for furniture?

HON. MS. YOUNG: Not to my knowledge, but I'll take the question as notice.

MR. PHILLIPS: Would you take a supplementary question as notice, Madam Minister?

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, this does not come within the terms of my department or the legislation I administer. I think these questions are out of order if they're directed to me.

MR. PHILLIPS: Would the Minister investigate a complaint I have had regarding the high price paid for stacking chairs for their office in Prince George — 18 stacking chairs purchased at a price of \$92 per piece for a total of \$1,656 for your office in Prince George? Would you investigate that purchase from a Danish importer? Would you also advise me at the same time if any Canadian furniture manufacturer was given an opportunity to bid on these stacking chairs?

MR. SPEAKER: I think that's a question for public accounts. I'm afraid it's out of order, really.

APPLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CODE TO GOVERNMENT SUMMER JOB PROGRAMME

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): To the Minister of Labour: will the Minister assure the House that the Human Rights Code provisions respecting no discrimination with respect to employment will apply to the summer

employment programme of the provincial government?

HON. W.S. KING (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's within my responsibility to assure that the law applies equitably throughout this province. I think that when the Legislature passes a law, that law is applicable to everyone within the community. Naturally, they are obliged to live by it. I do not enforce law; we simply hold legislative responsibility. But I would hope that if any Member of the Legislature can provide an incident of violations of the Human Rights Code or any other statute, they would come forward with that kind of information and lay a complaint with the human rights branch.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister then explain why the employment programme section of the Minister's department applied to the Human Rights Commission to suspend the provision in section 8 of the Human Rights Code, which deals with equal opportunity to employment as it applies to employment discrimination, so as to enable the 1975 summer employment programme to give preferences?

HON. MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, if the Member will read the Human Rights Code closely, he will find that there is provision in the code to provide preference or affirmative action programmes which will allow for the acceleration of opportunity for certain groups who have been historically disadvantaged in society, such as women's groups, native Indian groups and so on. There is no amendment or no waiving of the legislation necessary to accomplish that purpose.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, do I take the Minister's statement as being that to rectify historic disadvantage, section 8 of the Act, dealing with equal opportunity for employment, will not apply?

HON. MR. KING: I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the legislation is quite clear. There's no amendment required to provide the flexibility to the human rights branch to allow for affirmative action or for acceleration of opportunity for minority groups.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Could I then ask the Minister to take as notice a question, as clearly he is unaware that his employment programme section has applied to the Human Rights Commission? Could I ask him to look into this matter, come back and report either by letter to me or to the House?

HON. MR. KING: I'm not aware of any application, but I certainly will check into it.

PORT COQUITLAM JUVENILE CURFEW

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Port Coquitlam council decision to impose an 11 p.m. curfew on juveniles, does the Attorney-General consider that it is constitutional, or does it not interfere with the basic right of the freedom of the individual?

HON. A.B. MACDONALD (Attorney-General): The first part of your question should be addressed to a lawyer (laughter), but there is a section in the Municipal Act, I think it's 869, which may — and I can't make a legal decision on this right at the instant here, maybe another Minister can — allow this kind of a bylaw to be passed. But again, there may be larger

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constitutional, civil libertarian principles involved where the courts would intervene, even if it is properly framed under that section. I think the law, even if valid legally, is not sensible. I think this is a matter of parental responsibility to make the.... You know, the police play a game of cops and robbers with youngsters on the street. I think it's a mistake. I think they have more important crime problems in that community and in other communities in B.C.

MR. WALLACE: I tend to agree with the Minister that perhaps it's not a wise decision and perhaps unenforceable. I'd like to know if the Attorney-General will be having any communication with Port Coquitlam

council so that some situation might be avoided, and whether in fact he would intervene if a penalty were to be applied either against a juvenile or the juvenile's parents in the light of such uncertain constitutionality of the bylaw.

HON. MR. MACDONALD: Well, it's premature to decide whether or not there will be a court challenge of the bylaw if the council continues with it. That might initiate locally, and at that stage we might be called upon to intervene.

MR. WALLACE: Will you be talking to council? Will you be contacting them?

HON. MR. MACDONALD: Ordinarily we don't. If it is within the municipal ambit of authority and it's lawful, I don't phone them up and ask what they have done — if it's allowable under the Municipal Act. But we'll look at it in terms of its constitutionality, and I'm sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs will be interested in it also.

MR. WALLACE: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The very nature of the legislation is somewhat provocative and it may, in fact, lead to some kind of confrontation such as the Minister alluded to in his first answer. Will the Minister not say that he will try to take preventive action by contacting council?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I think that there are remedies at law. This is a solution to a legal proposition, which is not permitted under question period.

LEASED ESQUIMALT OFFICE SPACE

MR. W.R. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Public Works: could the Minister confirm that his department has leased 15,000 square feet of office space for 10 years in the 900 block Ellery Street in Esquimalt?

Interjection.

HON. W.L. HARTLEY (Minister of Public Works): Yes, they're coming closer to home, in Esquimalt. I would like to take this as notice. (Laughter.) I know of no recent lease. Mr. Speaker, I think you'll understand why I say I would like to take this as notice, because the question that was asked on April 15 related to a vacant parking lot adjacent to a Kentucky-fried stand. (Laughter.)

MR. BENNETT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I would point out to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition that he has asked a question and the Hon. Minister has taken it as notice. It's hard to place a supplementary on that.

MR. BENNETT: I have a supplementary which he can take as notice, because we've been questioning a series of public buildings. While he's taking it as notice on this building, could he check further that this building was leased effective July 1, 1974, and was still not occupied as of April 21?

HON. MR. BARRETT: Is this a take-out order?

MR. BENNETT: There has been a waste of apparently \$35,000 for unused office space.

I would like to ask a supplementary because we've been trying to find out how the Minister leases his office space. I was looking to see in the career opportunities of the Government of British Columbia whether we were trying to fill the space as fast as it was leased, but I find two of the categories that are looking for people are for property negotiators for the Department of Public Works in which the job is to seek further leased premises for the government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Hon. Member is consuming the question period with speeches.

MR. BENNETT: I'd like to ask the Minister whether this advertisement is for new property negotiators

because of the mistakes of the negotiators in leasing space over a year in advance, or whether he is making further attempts to lease more space at great public expense before they have departments to fill it.

HON. MR. HARTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if I could follow the great harangue, I'd certainly be pleased to take it as notice. I'll certainly check it in the *Hansard* Blues.

MR. BENNETT: The public has the blues; it's their money you are wasting.

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FEDERAL FISCAL CONSTRAINTS ON EDUCATION

MR. P.C. ROLSTON (Dewdney): A question to the Minister of Education. What constraints have the federal government put under their share under the fiscal arrangements Act for higher education. Is B.C. especially constrained? If so, what are you doing about it?

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Hon. Member like to answer?

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): Yes, I just happen to have that answer here. (Laughter.)

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, the constraint placed upon us in the post-secondary fiscal Act is a 15 per cent ceiling. I think we are all aware that costs in British Columbia and other jurisdictions have increased considerably above 15 per cent for post-secondary financing. We are making representations to the federal government because we are deeply concerned with the fact that originally they were supposed to be picking up 50 per cent and, now that they have set this limitation, it is going well below 50 per cent of cost-sharing.

ICBC ANNUAL REPORT

MR. G.B. GARDOM (Vancouver–Point Grey): To the Minister of Transport and Communications. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister if the annual report of the Insurance Corp. of British Columbia is completed.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Would the Hon. Members be silent so that we can go on with question period?

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): I was still working on it this morning, but I fully expect it will be on deck before my estimates are up for discussion. I am hoping I will have it ready for Friday, as a matter of fact.

MR. GARDOM: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

A supplementary to the Hon. Minister. Has the Minister now received the true and proper payroll breakdowns of the insurance corporation? You filed a memorandum before which was quite incomplete.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Yes, I told you that I understood the question. I have the further completion of that coming.

MR. GARDOM: Will this be filed before your estimates, too, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Well, I hope so. I checked on it last Friday when I was in Vancouver.

ROUTING OF GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Yesterday I answered a question with regard to who is responsible for aircraft. I said the dispatcher and the Deputy Minister were. It usually goes to the Associate Deputy Minister first and then to the Deputy Minister. On occasion I am asked for a decision, and it requires my permission before any government aircraft can leave the province.

COMPLAINTS FROM PRINCE GEORGE CONSUMER SERVICES OFFICE

MR. H.A. CURTIS (Saanich and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Consumer Services. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House if she has received any complaints whatever with respect to the operation of her department's Prince George office. By operation I mean the handling of complaints or inquiries which come to the office.

HON. MS. YOUNG: No, I don't believe I have. I don't recall having received any, but that does not mean that there might not have been. What my practice is is to immediately investigate the complaint.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! Isn't that question too general, really? You could do that with every Minister and it would mean nothing unless you had some basis for it.

MR. CURTIS: The question has considerable meaning.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, if you have a basis for it, I will accept the question.

MR. CURTIS: Mr. Speaker, the supplementary to the same Minister is to determine if there has been any indication through the Prince George office that that office is not prepared to handle or otherwise deal with complaints concerning ICBC.

HON. MS. YOUNG: I have had no complaints that way. If I do receive a complaint of that nature — in other words, a complaint about one of my staff people or the function of my office — I immediately look into it. I have not received any complaint of that nature.

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MR. D.E. SMITH (North Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My point of order has to do with the procedure on the floor of this House. Yesterday, and at times in the last few days, we have heard the Hon. House Leader indicate and try to create an impression that the Whips have a responsibility for determining the procedure on the floor of this House and the length of time that will be taken in debate on estimates. I would like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there is nothing really further from the truth. The Whips have a responsibility to try to correlate what will happen in the House, but the House itself will determine how long an individual Minister's estimates will stay on the floor of this House. That has nothing to do with any agreement between Whips.

I would like to remind the House that the government introduced closure when they decided to limit debate to 135 hours. The government decided to introduce selective closure when they determined by memorandum how the order of speakers and how the order of Ministers would come before this House. It is a procedure that has made a mockery out of the parliamentary process in this House. We have been asked to limit debate on important portfolios...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. SMITH: ...to less than three hours. That is making a mockery out of the parliamentary process, and it is a deliberate attempt to frustrate the honest endeavours of the opposition to solicit answers to important questions which the Ministers must be responsible for answering to the Members of this House.

[Mr. Speaker rises.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I wonder if the Hon. Member would be seated.

On a point of privilege or on a point of order, I first must determine whether it's a point of order or a point of privilege. It doesn't appear to be a point of order because the House is not cognizant of what is happening in committee and what estimates are dealt with in committee. Consequently, the only way that it could be brought to the House is on report from the Chairman of the Committee, as determined by the committee in its own deliberations.

Secondly, the other aspect that presents a problem in the House is that the rules that are adhered to.... We discussed this last night; I don't know if the Hon. Member was in the House then. When we were discussing this very point, I pointed out that the House and the Speaker had no power to alter the order of business with respect to what occurs in committee because...

Interjection.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! ...when the estimates are called it's the prerogative of the Ministers concerned which estimates they call or what vote is before the committee. Consequently, they can deal with that particular vote any day because, as I said yesterday, the initiative rests in the Crown, and always has in the history of parliament. If you want further details on the authorities for that, I'd be glad to furnish them.

The point is that I've looked at it very carefully because I understand the complaint. I'm concerned about it too, as we all are. We can't do anything in the House on the matter unless there's a motion or some initiative in the House upon which a debate can be formed. There is no motion or order of business before the House on which a debate could take place. Therefore, you are exceeding the bounds of your objection in you start a debate on whether it is a good thing or a bad thing or the merits of the case. That's not a matter for the House to debate at this stage without an order of business before it.

[Mr. Speaker resumes his seat.]

MR. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, it's the House Leader who continually refers to the fact that the Whips will determine it. It's not the Whips who will determine it; it will be determined on the floor of this House. It's making a mockery of the process in this House when we don't even know from one hour to the next what estimates will be called. We have no guarantee that the department that is called this afternoon will be debated for more than three and a half hours maximum before it's pulled out and another Minister's estimates will be brought on this evening. I say that that is an abuse of the Members of this House and our rights as Members of this Legislature.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, as the other Member has had an opportunity to bring this up, I would like the opportunity to make a comment. I would like to make it quite clear, on a point of order, that I as House Leader have given a letter to the other House leaders, and I would like to repeat what is in the letter. "I wish to point out that any suggestion from the opposition party on reasonable notice as to which departments they wish to be called and in what order will be satisfactory to the government."

Mr. Speaker, the government Whips are meeting this afternoon. I pointed out to the Member who just spoke....

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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HON. MRS. DAILLY: I pointed out to the Members....

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! I think the House listened to the complaint. The answer should be listened to as well.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, to the opposition Whip who just spoke: I pointed out to him on the phone this morning that the government Whip would be available, coming in at 11:30 this morning. I understand a meeting has been set for 2:30.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to proceed with the order of the day.

MR. SPEAKER: I really must say that it isn't a point of order, as you can see, because what happens in the committee is not known to the House. Therefore you can't very well complain on that point.

Interjection.

MR. SPEAKER: I think, with respect, that you must recognize, surely, that it isn't a point of order.

Interjection.

MR. SPEAKER: Only where my advice is sought. I cannot do anything about the rules as they exist. When a point of order is raised I have to first determine if it is a point of order.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, could I ask you then to take what I am about to say back to your chambers and consider it while the House is in committee? The fact is that you are adopting a very legalistic approach, not at all the constructive, expansionary approach of some of your past decisions.

You as Speaker are the ultimate protector of the rights of this Legislature. You are elected to that office to protect the British parliamentary system which this parliament operates under. And to adopt a narrow, legalistic approach so unbecoming and so unlike you, as you have done, instead of a constructive approach whereby you realize what is going on and what damage is being done to the traditional rights of this Legislature strikes me as strange indeed. I would only recommend, Mr. Speaker, that you go back and give it thought in the quiet of your study, gazing at the Tiffany lamps and those fine paintings...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Order!

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: ...and come to a decision as to what your true role should be in this dispute. Clearly, if you rely entirely upon the government House Leader and these facetious letters that we receive in response to detailed proposals for change, we're going to get nowhere and these committee estimates certainly won't be dealt with in a proper and expeditious manner. But if you adopt a more open and constructive approach, I feel that it might be possible for you to resolve the difficulties that this House finds itself in.

MR. SPEAKER: I would be very happy to act as a mediator between the contesting parties, except for one thing. I, as well as you, am bound by the rules, and the rules were adopted by this House at the last session as to the amount of time in estimates. The time was set at 135 hours and 45 sittings. Consequently I cannot make up rules. I can make suggestions. I would be glad to make any suggestions to any Members of the House in the quiet of my room.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will you look at the rules?

MR. SPEAKER: I'd be glad to look at the rules or look at anything, but whether the House will adopt it instantaneously is another matter. I think this sort of thing has to be looked at by a committee, and it must be looked at with some extensive care and deliberation — not just an overnight thing.

MR. SMITH: With respect, I suggest to you that it is your responsibility to look into the matter when, within the scope of the 135 hours we have allocated in our rules of procedure within this House and our own standing

orders, the government uses those rules to further put upon the Members of this House a procedure of selective closure which frustrates the Members of this House in their honest attempt to solicit answers from cabinet Ministers about their departments; then I think it is your responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER: I have already pointed out to the Hon. Members that all a list or schedule can do is be a courtesy to the House, or to the Committee of the Whole House, as to what is proposed to be done in future. It cannot be binding on the House. What happens each day is in the hands of the Committee of the Whole House and of the House Leader — what is proposed for debate in estimates. The only way out that I can see for this House is for a motion to be debated on notice.

I think I should hear from another party. The Hon. Member for Oak Bay.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Speaker, you did mention that you are available to give advice when there is

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some dispute within the rules — and I am only discussing within the rules that have been passed. Yesterday we had an example of Members trying to participate in the debate and touch upon matters which more specifically might be touched upon under other votes of the same Minister. This served to restrict even further the capacity we have, within our half-hour speech, to cover some very important subjects within the Minister's purview but which more specifically, if we ever got back to the separate votes, would be discussed under these specific votes.

I wonder if you could give the House guidance enough that at least the Chairman will not rule us out of order when we are simply trying to acknowledge the fact that this may be the only time, under the rules, that we will be allowed to debate Lands, Forests and Water Resources.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, this can break the impasse. It is my understanding that the Whips are meeting this afternoon. The government is prepared to receive, out of the Whips' meeting, any written request the opposition wishes to make as to what Minister they want, and for how long. That is all we ask: tell us what Minister you want and for how long, and that will be done. It is up to them, Mr. Speaker, through you. But I say this to the opposition....

Interjections.

HON. MR. BARRETT: How can you listen with your ears with your mouth open, Mr. Member? I'm trying to explain to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is up to the opposition to tell us exactly what Minister they want, and that Minister will be called within the time frame.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, there is a tradition of taking the Ministers in order and dealing with the Minister until his estimates have been voted upon, or any non-confidence motions have been dealt with. It was the government and the House Leader and the Premier who changed this traditional procedure in their inability to accept the debate and the questions of the opposition. They started to move from portfolio to portfolio to portfolio without any conclusion of a vote being called.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Who do you want?

MR. BENNETT: It was the Premier and the House Leader who changed the traditional procedure, not the opposition. The Premier is creating a smokescreen...

HON. MR. BARRETT: Who do you want now?

MR. BENNETT:...to cover up his own rules of closure that were introduced last year, refined this year — and they are being further refined now.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if we could contain this matter. I've got the idea, the sense of what the complaint is.

MR. G.B. GARDOM (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Speaker, the Premier made a suggestion this afternoon, but he failed to recognize what the major problem is. The major problem is the fact...

HON. MR. BARRETT: You can't get it together over there.

MR. GARDOM: ...that there is a shortage of hours. That's the gut problem. We find that government business has increased 40 per cent over last year, and this rule was set last year, Mr. Speaker. In order to properly attempt to overcome the impasse, would the House Leader today be prepared to accept a motion, without notice, to suspend the 135-hour rule? That is what the opposition wants, and nothing more than that. Without the suspension of that 135-hour rule, Mr. Speaker, we will not be returning to parliamentary democracy in the Province of British Columbia. It is that simple.

[Mr. Speaker rises.]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members....

Interjection.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I gather that there's not unanimous agreement on the point. I have listened to all the argument because, although I can't do anything about it, it has given the Whips an opportunity to hear the raised points of view. They are having a meeting now. I understood there was a meeting of the Whips. At any rate, they have all heard the arguments and perhaps they will be of some use.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't say I'd been invited; I said the Whips have heard the arguments.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

[Mr. Speaker resumes his seat.]

MR. CHABOT: Just a brief comment, Mr. Speaker, You suggest in your statement that the government has the initiative of calling the estimates

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they desire. I agree with you in that respect, and it's not very often I agree with you, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to say that it's long-standing, historical parliamentary courtesy for governments to inform the opposition of the next estimates to come on stream. It wasn't until such time as the Whip of the official opposition contacted the House Leader that we were informed at 11:30 this morning of what estimate would be debated today. It's a complete breakdown of common parliamentary courtesy in this House.

Interjection.

MR. CHABOT: That's beside the point of the kind of emasculation and crushing that we see by the government. We find the Premier has to say: "We'll allow the Members to call the Ministries they please within the 135 hours." And to that, Mr. Speaker, I say: throw out the 135 hours and let's restore democracy in British Columbia.

MR. SPEAKER: A brief comment, please. We must get on with the proceedings.

MR. GARDOM: It's extremely brief, Mr. Speaker. I was attempting to make this point when I was interrupted a moment ago. I would formally ask for unanimous leave that the rules be suspended and that a motion be accepted from this side of the House that the limitation of 135 hours come to an end.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. It's not unanimous leave. Shall leave be granted?

Leave not granted.

Interjection.

MR. SPEAKER: When you ask for leave, if there are any noes that ends the matter, as you know.

MR. GARDOM: I didn't hear any. The ayes were so loud over here that I couldn't hear any.

MR. SPEAKER: Unfortunately, in some cases, it only takes one no to do it. (Laughter.)

Orders of the day.

The House in Committee of Supply; Mr. Dent in the chair.

ESTIMATES: DEPARTMENT OF LANDS, FORESTS AND WATER RESOURCES

On vote 126: Minister's office, \$150,833.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): Mr. Chairman, on a point of procedure, yesterday you attempted to rule that it would not be possible to discuss all the components of the Minister's department under the Ministerial vote itself. At that time, we were attempting to give a general overview of the Minister of Municipal Affairs' (Hon. Mr. Lorimer's) department, the overview in terms of vote totals and departmental totals.

Mr. Chairman, I would like a ruling before we begin today, indicating that the traditional practice of permitting comment upon the overall vote of the Minister's department be accepted under the specific vote of the Minister's office itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the point of order, the Chair would rule....

The Hon. Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan) on the point of order.

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): There is a procedure which any competent MLA must have perceived or should know about....

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I am trying to help the opposition.

MRS. P.J. JORDAN (North Okanagan): Why don't you help ICBC?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: If you don't want to listen, all right. So long as the individual does not refer to a specific vote by number — referring to what happens in a particular area, the amount of money expended, that sort of thing — I can see no objection to that. But if you keep saying, "And in vote so and so, this happens, and in vote so and so that happens; this is that and so on," then it's clearly contrary to the rule.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. On the point of order, the Chair, commenting on the point that was raised by the Second Member for Victoria (Mr. D.A. Anderson), will exercise good judgment in determining whether the

comments are in order. But just for guidance, the comments should be related to the vote directly. If the matter is covered by another

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vote, then it should be brought up at that time.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, you have apparently overlooked the fact that we cannot deal with the totality of the Minister's department unless there is flexibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: You have indicated just now that it has to be related to specific votes. What you are suggesting is that we can deal with the parts but we cannot deal with the whole. We will never have an opportunity of dealing with the whole department as such, even though we can deal with specific components.

HON. A.B. MACDONALD (Attorney-General): It's up to you.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: No, it's not up to us at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Attorney-General is shouting: "It's up to you." It is not, Mr. Chairman, because there is no way under your ruling of yesterday that I was able to discuss the overall Department of Municipal Affairs in the 20 minutes that I spent on that particular department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I think I understand the Hon. Member's point. The Chair must follow the rules of the House. We are bound to follow the rules of the House; otherwise we will have an anarchy. The same is true for every other Member. I think it's just a matter of using good sense in terms of maintaining the proper rules of order.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, in addition to rules we have traditions, and these traditions, of course, modify your application of the rules. Tradition has been that under the Minister's vote we can discuss the overall departmental estimates, and I would like to know whether that tradition is being preserved, because if it's not preserved...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: ...it will be a substantial departure from all past practices, including every practice that I know of in any other Legislature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! I've taken the matter under advisement and, certainly, some latitude is allowed. It's a case of raising a point of order at the time if you are dissatisfied with the ruling of the Chair.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: I did yesterday and got nowhere.

MR. A.V. FRASER (Cariboo): We're dealing with the Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, and specifically the Minister. A lot of money is involved — \$140 million to be exact — that is, the total of the three departments. I think the other and more important part is the fact that he is the Minister of Forests, and the forest industry in British Columbia is responsible for generating over 50 per cent of our economy, so it is a very key portfolio.

I want to tell you that three and a half hours — as a matter of fact that has been whittled down today to three hours — is not very long to discuss not only \$140 million but also over 50 per cent of the economy of this province.

HON. J. RADFORD (Minister of Recreation and Conservation): Who's fault is that?

MR. FRASER: It's a shame, and that government over there should hang their heads in shame.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member to speak to the vote, please.

MR. FRASER: I'm just getting warmed up to get to the vote, Mr. Chairman.

Interjection.

MR. FRASER: It's straight closure and that's all! And everybody in British Columbia knows it now.

Interjection.

MR. FRASER: We'll now get into the capabilities, or otherwise, of this Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources.

He has had this office for approximately two years and eight months. I think we should examine today: has he been a success or has he been a failure?

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): A success.

MR. FRASER: Well, you just wait and we'll analyse that. I think we first of all should look at his job responsibilities as Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, examine the policies of the Lands, Forests and Water Resources department and look at the results of these policies. This Minister is also, of course, a director of B.C. Hydro, which is another very important responsibility this Minister holds.

He is really responsible for the economic health of

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the forest industry which, as I said earlier, accounts for over 50 per cent of the economy of British Columbia. He is responsible for the jobs that industry provides and the businesses that depend on that industry. He is also responsible for replacing the renewable resources of the land, and administering operations directed thereto. This job can be summed up as: stewardship of the resources from lands, forests and water; the stewardship of the industrial strength of the resource-based industries and the jobs industry provides; stewardship of the public revenue that enables government to provide services to the people.

The job is more than the stewardship of resources. Directly and indirectly he is responsible for the quality of life and the environment for living in British Columbia.

For more than 60 years the resource portfolio has been operated under policies determined by judicial studies. They were open; they were obtaining input from citizens, business leaders and professional resource experts. The policies recommended have been accepted by government and administered by dedicated civil servants with proven professional qualifications. As a result, British Columbia's stewardship of its resources has been, until now, regarded as the model for all of Canada, and admired as an example of effective public administration.

Since September, 1972, there has not been stewardship and the qualified professional civil servants have not been allowed to apply their expertise. There has been tinkering and meddling in the ideological swampland of creeping socialism. In the Minister's own words, he intends such an economic omelette that the next government will have difficulty unscrambling that omelette. Stewardship is forgotten. The vote of this Minister should not be passed.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues are going to discuss this Minister's failure as an administrator. As a matter of fact, I hesitate to call this Minister a failure because, like many unusual men of history, however misguided, he is successfully imposing his ideas, however bad, however sinister, on the Premier of this province, on his NDP and on society generally. Like other motivated experts, this Minister wrote his manifesto and published it at the 1971 NDP convention. If there ever was a document that disqualifies a man for stewardship of the public resources, it is this document.

Listen to his views about land, Mr. Chairman. "Land in its broadest sense should be viewed as a common asset held collectively by all the people of the province. Land is the least-taxed wealth in North America today." These two sentences express the NDP policy: first in the Land Act...which is that a citizen cannot own land; he must be a tenant of the state, denied right to own land in his own province.

While I'm on that I'd like the Minister to make a note that in the fall session of the Legislature he announced that the Lands department was going to create, I believe, 5,000 lots. I'd like to know how they're doing in creating these lots. I'd repeat the same question that I asked then: are they going to be leased or are they going to be put up for purchase? If they're going to be leased, are they going to be put up at auction? If they're going to be purchased, I assume they will be put up to auction. I haven't seen anywhere where it's been spelled out how these lots will be disposed of — in other words, by the lease route or the purchase route. A lot of people would like to know. I would also like to know if he thinks any one of these 5,000 lots will be available to British Columbians during 1975. In my opinion, I don't think they will be.

First we have the Land Act; second, the comments of this Minister about the taxation of land and his party's policy on the taxation of land. The NDP promised land tax reform, but this Minister says. "No, raise the tax and owners will be glad to give it back to the state." This is why this government will not take the burden of school tax or any other type of tax off the land.

The importance of this Minister in the important portfolio he has with this government.... I would like to point out, Mr. Chairman, how it affects other portfolios, specifically the Mining portfolio. In 1971 this Minister wrote: "We should establish an equity position by right in every mine in British Columbia." In this sentence he is not talking about purchasing a share. He's saying: "Take it by right. Take it by the stroke of a pen."

He goes on in his 1971 manifesto to advocate "high royalties and punitive taxes on mineral reserves held for future production." Mr. Chairman, he is the author of the infamous mining legislation that we know now as Bill 31. The nice little roly-poly fellow who is the highly inarticulate Minister of Mines (Hon. Mr. Nimsick) has no time to provide stewardship to B.C.'s second industry, mining.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. It is the custom to refer to Members by their highest title in the House.

MR. FRASER: Well, I did refer to him by his highest title, Mr. Chairman: the Minister of Mines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. This has been done with the purpose that the most complimentary words can be used to describe each Hon. Member.

MR. FRASER: The Minister of Mines is still trying to remember what Bob Williams told him to do. He hasn't time to administer the portfolio.

The manifesto that Mr. Williams wrote outlines the

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disaster to be put onto the forest industry. The plan involves driving capital out. "We in B.C. have followed a course that is capital-intensive," — in other words, investment — "and in the process we have lost control of our own destiny and, ironically, increased unemployment." Mr. Chairman, this is ideological balderdash.

He then goes on to suggest that by taking machinery out of the forest we would add hundreds of thousands of people to the labour force. Here is the innovative mind of social planning at work. It says: drive out capital, bring back the PVM, the bullhook; tell people to do foot slogging, bone-chilling hard labour, enjoy their work in the service of the state, and never mind if the workers in the capital-free state of British Columbia do not produce goods saleable in the world markets.

We wouldn't be competitive if we went back to this mode of production of the forest products, Mr. Chairman.

After disposing of capital, this Minister's 1971 manifesto outlines the true ambition of his power-hungry mind to meddle and tinker.

Interjection.

MR. FRASER: I sure am not. I've got copious notes, because this man controls the government and there is....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Hon. Member address the Chair, please?

MR. FRASER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

He talks about the northwest sector of the province as a unique opportunity for development under totally new guidelines. Yes, his first act was to plunge into the northwest and after two years and eight months — and you would know about this, Mr. Chairman — we are told we have the success story of the century.

Sure, Can-Cel made a big profit, but what pulp company did not receive a windfall from a sudden, unexpected rise in the world price of pulp?

But the experiment in the northwest sector has caused unemployment — more out-of-work contractors, more bankruptcies by small businesses, more idle capacity in chip mills and sawmills than in any part of this province. Can-Cel admittedly made a profit, but I'd like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, don't you think they made it at the expense of small firms like Rim Resources?

AN HON. MEMBER: Right on.

MR. FRASER: You will recall the fiasco Rim Resources were in, and I think are still in. Arrowhead Twin Valley contractors is another one I can recall that I think went bankrupt or almost bankrupt.

MR. D.T. KELLY (Omineca): Poor management.

MR. FRASER: These contractors' products they were manufacturing all ended up at Can-Cel. I wonder if Can-Cel paid the fair market price for the logs and chips from these sources, or did they force them to sell to them at below the market prices and consequently cause the failures they experienced last fall.

MR. C. LIDEN (Delta): Who is going to win the hockey game, Alex?

MR. FRASER: Who is going to win the hockey game? Vancouver will win handily tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. FRASER: This Minister has more hang-ups, more hates, more conflicts of interest than any public official in the history of this province. Since 1972 we have not had stewardship of the resources. We have had ideological tinkering and meddling by a Minister who is totally incapable of comprehending his responsibilities. Even when his professional staff tells him what should be done, he fiddles, delays and procrastinates. I will give you specific instances, Mr. Chairman.

In less than two years his incompetence has made a big contribution to bringing healthy and competitive industry to economic decline.

Since September, 1972, when this man took office, not one new British Columbia secondary industry has been established, except in Alberta — out of the reach of this Minister.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was a political move.

MR. FRASER: That is right. Machinery businesses manufacturing supplies for the forest industry are forced

to move to Alberta and back all their products into the B.C. market.

Since this Minister came to power not one expansion of primary industry has been undertaken, except what the Crown has done — adventures in which the initiating money is taken from the public treasury. He has caused a new industry, which should properly locate in this province, to go elsewhere. He should be known as the biggest exporter of jobs this province has even known.

This Minister, Mr. Chairman, who has virtual control of the provincial economy, and a record of administrative incompetence verging on disaster, is put before the Legislature for three hours — three and a half hours, or three hours and fifteen minutes. Every act, every dollar he spends should be

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investigated under the most intense scrutiny. This is not parliamentary democracy; it's a cover-up and an affront to the people of British Columbia.

I would like to discuss for a minute this Minister as an administrator and mention some of the people that are spotted throughout his department as watchdogs on the professional civil servants.

We have a Mr. Boudelier, who is a town planner, a former partner of the Minister. I believe he's an executive assistant in the Minister's office. We have a Mr. Hedley, who is an executive assistant in the Minister's office, an NDP worker in the Minister's own riding of Vancouver East. We have Mr. Pearson, Associate Deputy Minister of Lands, ex-town planner. We have Mrs. Mary Rossen, Mr. Williams' partner, who still runs his town planner office and is employed under the director of the Institute of Economic Policy Analysis to watchdog Mason Gaffney's activities. Mr. Pearson is also on the Environment and Land Use Committee to watchdog Alistair Crerar, the director.

Interjection.

MRS. JORDAN: Do you deny that you've got all those hacks around you?

MR. FRASER: Oh, there are more executive assistants here; don't interfere until I get them all out. Mr. Chairman, keep that Minister calmed down.

There's Mr. Rick Careless, former executive member of the Sierra Club, employed on the land use secretariat. I believe he's an American. Then we have Mason Gaffney, who is also an American, mystery man, confidant and disciple of Williams; he heads the Institute of Economic Policy Analysis, and, Mr. Chairman, he was recently appointed to the tax committee to bring in a whole new structure of property taxation in this province. I predict that it will be brought in and it will be site taxation. There are only two other places in the world that have site taxation, but I'll bet you that British Columbia will be the third.

As a result of these watchdogs, and the Minister's incompetence as an administrator, the Forest Service has been shattered and made incapable of exercising effective resource management. The Minister does not communicate with the professional department heads in the forestry. He has placed secretaries who are ideologically acceptable through all levels of the Forest Service to watchdog the department heads and report who they talk to among industry officials. The Minister has undercut the Forest Service responsibilities for managing the land bearing the forest crops by building a bureaucratic screen around his office.

Administrative assistants such as Mr. Hedley, who have no professional qualifications, have been given licence to proofread reports of civil servants and order amendments that express ideological objectives. The Forest Service, with its 65-year history of non-political attention to the science of forestry, has been shattered by insistence that it become a political arm of the Minister's power structure. This is not stewardship, Mr. Chairman, of the publicly owned lands; it is ideological tinkering.

Under this Minister's administration, the legitimate environment goals of his own professional forest managers have been obstructed and corrupted until not only is nothing accomplished, but the forest industry is being

slowly paralyzed by unnecessary cost burdens of over \$200 million per year, to the detriment of public revenues. Such is the level of administrative incompetence that for the first time in history the expenditures of the forestry department, including the hidden, undeclared debt for stumpage, exceed the revenue that will be taken in. After this startling fact, the \$200 million burden on industry caused by clumsy, improperly administered environment policy, Mr. Chairman, you and the people of British Columbia are about to experience the greatest economic disaster of this century. And it took this Minister only two and a half years to achieve this.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: How do you figure \$200 million?

MR. FRASER: I'd like to ask the Minister a few questions now on specifics. The first one is on the construction of logging roads in the interior. In 1973 and 1974, forest operators built thousands of miles of roads for access to public lands. These operators were given written contracts saying that the money would be repaid to them. They are now advised that payments will be delayed upwards of 10 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FRASER: Examples are reported of hundreds of thousands of dollars and, in some cases, more than \$1 million expended by operators to build public roads. These operators are required to build many miles of road in 1975 and 1976 but do not have the money to do so because this government has not paid its bills. Mr. Chairman, the banks won't advance on the receivables.

Will the Minister tell this House how many millions of dollars are tied up in the ledger accounts and the stumpage-offset accounts owing to operators on the official records of the Forest Service? Is it \$140 million or \$100 million?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No.

MR. FRASER: How much? Will he tell this House

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the...?

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): The Minister doesn't know.

MR. FRASER: Will the Minister tell this House that provision is being made to return this money to the operators so their working capital can be restored, thereby enabling them to construct roads required of them in their current timber sale contracts? How much unemployment will be caused by failure to return this working capital to the operators?

There are 12,000 IWA members out of work at the present time; there will probably be more due to the pulp market happenings. There are millions of acres of public land which are not reforested because they are taken over by non-productive weeds.

MR. P.C. ROLSTON (Dewdney): In the deep snow.

MR. FRASER: There are miles of fishery streams that can be cleared of obstruction. What specific programmes will the Minister initiate to put these out-of-work citizens back to work for the benefit of the public land? Surely a programme like this would be responsible stewardship.

In the light of the serious oversupply of chips causing sawmills to curtail production and employment, what is the rationale for the Forest Service to create chips? Where are they to be sold? When? At what price? What does it cost to make these chips? What happens three months from now when the pile catches fire — and, boy, there are huge ones — from spontaneous combustion?

I'd also like to know from this Minister when he's going to make a decision.... I said earlier I'd give specific

instances where he has held up expansion of existing logging in the area west of Nazko. He's had a report on his desk. Sure, it's involved with Indian land claims, but I wonder. It affects the base industry in the Town of Quesnel. That timber is just dying to go in there. This Minister has had a report delayed for one year, and still no answer. Is he waiting so he can divert this timber to Plateau Mills, the government sawmill at Vanderhoof? I suggest that is the motive he has.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Green light.

MR. PHILLIPS: More closure.

MR. FRASER: More closure coming, eh? Okay.

Can-Cel is known to be unable to sell its full production level and is currently moving pulp into storage in Europe and the USA to escape the mid-year closure that might happen. Will the Minister inform the House on the situation at Can-Cel? What percentage of pulp production is unsold? What shutdown of production does Can-Cel expect after the mid-year?

Just a quick closing remark on the chip problem that this Minister has told about in November in this House. At the time the chip prices were announced, payment by the pulp industries to sawmills were: the coast sawmills, upwards of \$55 per bone-dry unit; the interior, upwards of \$45 per unit for chips from logs and \$30 to \$35 for chips produced as a byproduct of lumber. The exception was Can-Cel, which named a level of under \$20 per unit.

When the Minister applied his \$35 per unit price, most sawmill operators received less because pulp mills soon reduced their payments to that level. Many mills doubled their output of saleable chips. Concurrent with that, the pulp mills that have whole-log wood rooms began increasing their production from logs because the out-of-pocket cost was less than the \$35 as ordered. The pulp market declined and pulp mill usage of chips skidded. Within a few months an enormous surplus chip supply, far beyond the capability of consumers to utilize and store, developed. Pulp mills began curtailing purchases and have now placed sawmills on quotas of 60 per cent of 1974 deliveries, which, in some cases, is only one-quarter of the current 1975 rate of delivery. This is a serious problem in the sawmills.

In view of all this, and in the light of serious oversupply of chips, particularly in the interior, what plan has the Minister to ease the burden on the sawmill industry?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The time is now up.

MR. FRASER: Thank you. I just want to close with these remarks, that there is a serious chip surplus. The Minister has been in the interior; I know he knows about it, and I'm sure he can answer it. And if he says it is export, I can't agree because there aren't any cars to haul them out.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS (Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to hear the words of the official opposition. I suppose we might just deal in series with some of the points made.

The Member for Cariboo complained about the lack of technical advice that this department receives. I suppose it is necessary to remind the Hon. Member that we have had a forest task force over a year and which involved outstanding people — Dr. Peter Pearse from the University of British Columbia, the chief forester of the province, and Mr. Bachman, forest vice-president of Canadian Cellulose — all with long backgrounds in the industry in British Columbia and in the academic world. We've also established a

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secretariat for the Environment and Land Use Committee that is probably unparalleled in this nation in terms of quality and work undertaken in the last couple of years.

So in terms of technical advice, there can be no comparison with the seat-of-the-pants operation we had for

20 years and which saw environmental mismanagement on an incredible scale in the heyday of Social Credit. There are no apologies in that territory. We brought in some of the best people in the world. We're proud of them. They are going to continue to do their work and they are an asset to the people of British Columbia now and in the future.

You can talk about ideological problems, Mr. Member — I'm not too sure what your pronunciation is, but ideological is mine. Your problem is that you have ideological hang-ups. If government ownership does better than private ownership — even absentee New York ownership — then your ideology all gets thrown into a cocked hat. That's the problem you've got.

Can-Cel has been a great success story and you really can't accept it. It's got to be something else; it can't be good management. It can't be the fact that we've got management at home in British Columbia instead of New York. That might not be a factor. It's always got to be some other thing...

MR. PHILLIPS: Where are the directors from?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: ...tinkering with the books, or something like that. These kinds of phony innuendoes on a constant basis, all because you know you voted against the acquiring of Canadian Cellulose, the best deal this province has ever made, and you still find it hard to live with it.

You talk about the lack of investment money. We're doing it in a different way and we're involving native people on a scale that's never been spent before in this province — something that may mean something to the people of Nazko who have been repressed and alone, left in the woods for too long, and not being a full part of our society on equal terms. I'm happy to say that I met with those people when I was in Williams Lake just a few days ago, and it's quite a while since the Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) met with the Nazko people, I find. So the whole business of working in that community and trying to lift it up and bring it along with the rest of our society in this province is a challenge we've got because of the lack of work and concern in 20 years of your administration.

New money? Of course there's new money. Out of Canadian Cellulose alone, \$51 million profit — not going to New York — to be invested in capital projects in British Columbia for the benefit of British Columbians, to spin out more money and more jobs for the people of British Columbia rather than be a plaything and to shift to banana republics and Latin American dictatorships, like so many of the multinationals on this planet would do otherwise.

MR. PHILLIPS: How much is clear profit?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: At last it's money at home for British Columbians which will provide them with work in British Columbia. Making sure that small operators get a better break — that's what we're doing. So we have operations expanding in the medium sector; that's what's happening, not the old multinational game that you guys were willing to live with throughout your years. Doman's is expanding in Cowichan Bay on Vancouver Island. We've got Pacific Inland and small operations in Smithers expanding. We've got Plateau Mills expanding now — doubling their programme more or less — in Vanderhoof. We've got Ainsworth, an historic family in the Cariboo, bringing their first major industry into Clinton, which was desperate for industry and never had it before. And we'll have more announcements next week in this general area.

So, you know, it's pretty hard to swallow. You can talk about us treating the industry hard. We recognize the difficult market period. We have, more than any province in Canada, recognized the lumber difficulties. The Hon. Member chose to forget that the lumber industry problem of the world primarily rests with the lack of house construction in the United States. No reference to that at all. They're building half the houses they ever did in the United States in recent years. No reference to that. Why, it has to be an ideological thing. It must be those guys over there — never looking beyond the chamber itself.

I'm glad the Member raised the question of Alberta. We had the real leader of the opposition from Alberta here a minute ago.

What does the industry association say in Alberta? They say that the difference in treatment of the industry amounts, in total, to about \$19 a thousand. That is, in effect, the Province of British Columbia helping this private

sector and the small public entities that we have on this kind of scale — \$19 a thousand. They say that they were paying \$6 stumpage when B.C. was paying around \$2. In fact, stumpage is now \$1.10, as you know, in the interior of British Columbia. "B.C. is paying nothing," says the head of the industrial association in Alberta. "We are paying our road costs," — say it's \$2 — "British Columbia gets theirs back."

"The difference between our chip prices in Alberta, and when Mr. Williams intervenes," says the president, "is around \$8 a thousand. That puts us about \$19 out on competition with the same timber in the same industry. Because of these factors the operators in British Columbia will be able to survive longer." That's what the head of the Alberta

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industrial association said just a couple of months ago.

The reason there has not been the unemployment in British Columbia on the scale that would normally be the case in this kind of lumber market is because this government was willing to intervene; because we brought in the Timber Products Stabilization Act and saw to it that better chip prices prevailed. That carried those independent small operators in the interior through a very tough winter.

You should compare that with Alberta now, Mr. Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser). Half of the large sawmills in Alberta are closed at the moment. One-half of all the large sawmills in Alberta are now closed. That's because of their Socred-conservative view of the world, because they say they shouldn't intervene, that the big pulp mills should have it their way right down the line. We say no. And we're willing to carry it a step further.

Sure, we're ready to have discriminatory policies in terms of stumpage charges — again to right the imbalance of the independent small sector of the industry, and see to it that they get a better shake than they've had in the past. There's no question that the independent sector of the industry would have been in terrible straits if we didn't have the kind of government we have that is prepared to intervene on their behalf and deal with the giants in the industry which they cannot control.

Now you can talk about "sinister" all you like, Mr. Member, but I just happened to spend last Friday evening in Burns Lake. I happened to attend, along with the Minister of Human Resources (Hon. Mr. Levi) and the Minister of northern affairs (Hon. Mr. Nunweiler), a graduation ceremony of some 80 people graduating under the umbrella of the College of New Caledonia from a logging school at Andrews Bay on Ootsa Lake. Their training was by loggers — people experienced in the field — not teachers. I happen to favour that kind of system in this kind of situation.

They spent months of training in logging and preparing for work in sawmills. There were some 80 people. I would guess about 80 per cent of those people were native people, non-status people, and the number of dropouts was almost nil — minimal.

That's part of a new programme involving the Burns Lake Native Development Corp. — a native corporation that we funded. Now they have their own development agency, community agency and equity in the new sawmill complex.

I tell you, it was a proud moment indeed for me to be there watching some 80 people accepting their diplomas at a major civic function in Burns Lake.

Now you can call it ideological if you like — and we're talking about ideas; that's the route for ideologies — but the idea that local people, Indian people, who didn't have a look-in before, people for whom the doors have always been closed, now have equity participation in the major industry in their town, in their region. They are proud of it. I'm proud of it. The local mayor, who doesn't share my political persuasion, is proud of it.

I have to compare that with the way you guys did things only a few years ago: compare that with what the last Minister of Lands and Forests did.

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: At Houston, exactly, where they relied totally on the multinational brains — the people who could come from afar with all the answers and not involve the community, simply drop some kind of housing answer, some kind of lack of know-how or indigenous experience that turned out to be a major catastrophe and a major failure of some \$50 million in dollars, and God knows how much in human dreams.

So I can't help but compare the town of Burns Lake and the town of Houston only a few miles away. And if that's sinister ideology, I'll buy it any time, Mr. Member.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS (West Vancouver–Howe Sound): Mr. Chairman, I would like to address a few remarks and a few questions to the Minister, dealing with some other subjects than have been touched upon by the Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser). However, I suppose to some extent we may approach the matter from the same position.

The Minister has spoken about the problems that face the forest industry in British Columbia, and has suggested, as others have, that the problems which the forest industry is currently experiencing can be traced to the significant drop in housing starts in the United States of America. It is true that that is what happened in the States. During the fall in lumber markets last year I was distressed to recognize how slowly the Government in British Columbia was able to respond to that situation. At a time when the industry was obviously hurting, the government was then not even prepared to act, let alone consider what action might be taken.

It seems to me that an industry which produces, in round figures, about 50 cents out of every dollar that is injected into our economy is entitled to some better care from the government and from the Ministry which has the responsibility in that field. I think, in spite of all the experts the Minister has been able to hire, that it is a proper criticism of the government that somehow or other it does not see into the future and concern itself with the dangers that lie ahead for the industry. It seems to me that the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, together with the Minister of Economic Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk), should have a programme underway

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at all times to assess and forecast, for an industry as important as the forest industry, the pitfalls or the advantages that may lie ahead so that the industry, with the assistance of government, and government can adjust their programmes to meet the situations as they occur and not as an afterthought.

Now we can't correct what happened last fall — the serious loss to the industry and the serious loss to the government — as a result of the actions they've had to take by the drop of stumpage rates and so on, a major drop in income from the government, one which the Minister of Finance (Hon. Mr. Barrett) must look at with a great deal of concern.

But what of the future, Mr. Chairman? The indications are that the housing starts in the United States are not going to take a sudden, unexpected rise. Yes, housing starts are down to about half. Let me ask the Minister when that situation will right itself. If it does not right itself next year, and there are some clear indications that that may just be the case, then could the Minister please indicate to the committee what situation will confront the forest industry at that time, and how it will affect government and government revenues at that time? If, as has been suggested by some, the international pulp market — which has contributed to the financial success of Can-Cel and, as the Minister has suggested, to some kind of a success at Ocean Falls — what will be the consequence of that to the total forest industry in British Columbia?

It's not good enough for the Minister to tell us what has been happening and how his government has responded to a situation, to respond to the Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) in the manner that he has, speaking in glowing terms of what is being done for the native people at Burns Lake. It's not good enough. Those very same people at Burns Lake will be affected by the consequences of continued poor lumber markets in the world. What is the Minister planning for just such a situation? To what extent will the revenues of the Province of British Columbia from all sources be called upon in order to prime the pump, to subsidize these ventures? What will the Minister do

when the market situation continuing bad makes it impossible for these medium-level operators to continue to function even at the level at which they are functioning today?

I think that we have to look into the future a bit, because we are talking about the Minister's estimates and his department for the next year. We are concerned about his performance for the next year. If the Minister is not looking ahead, and if his department is not looking ahead, then he is not discharging the full administrative responsibility which is his in the major portfolio of Lands, Forests and Water Resources.

Now I would like to turn to another matter which falls within the Minister's area of responsibility. I don't suppose there is a Minister of this government who has such wide-ranging responsibility. In his own department he has lands, he has forests and he has water resources. He has the land use secretariat. He is a major force in the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet, and from that position he is able to influence the policies, administrative and otherwise, of every department of government. I would like to ask him about the functioning of the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet. I'll put it in the context of two issues which I think are important to the people of the Province of British Columbia.

First of all, in the use of land for agricultural purposes, we have the B.C. Land Commission, which is playing a major role under the legislation passed by this government. But recently stories appeared in the press concerning the acquisition of significant acreages of agricultural land in the Columbia Valley, near Cultus Lake — in the Cultus Lake–Vedder area. The Minister knows whereof I speak.

I have a letter from a young woman who lives in that area and who expresses the gravest concern about what will happen to Columbia Valley. I fully appreciate that the land acquisition is being undertaken by the national government, apparently for an expansion of the army base facilities in the Chilliwack area. But it seems to me that if the Environment and Land Use Committee of the Government of British Columbia is to fully discharge a responsibility to the people of British Columbia, they should be on top of a situation such as this, if not in advance, because they have not been warned of the intended action by the national government, at least when it comes to their attention. I would have thought that the provincial government, speaking through this Minister, or through the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich), would have made immediate representations to the national government to dissuade them from acquiring for a purpose as useless as army base expansion agricultural land in British Columbia.

Heaven knows, Mr. Chairman, the debates in this House from Members on all sides have spoken with grave concern about the shortage of arable land available to us in British Columbia. To contemplate that farmland, land which is currently being used for the raising of crops and animals, for assisting in the supply of much-needed foodstuffs in British Columbia, to suggest that we can even contemplate the utilization of land of that kind for army base purposes is almost beyond comprehension. And yet, there doesn't appear to have been from this government, this Minister or any of the Ministers that strong protest to the national government which will have the consequences which will satisfy the people who live in that valley and others who express similar concern.

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Now it may be that the Minister has reacted to this particular problem. If he has, then he is to be congratulated. But it seems to me that the Environment and Land Use Committee of cabinet, which concerns itself so much with the utilization of land in British Columbia by British Columbians, should be every bit as strong in its protestations when there is an abuse of land by the national government.

Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, the Minister and the government should say to the federal government: "Take your hands off that land; if you want to expand your army base, go someplace where you are not going to be concerned with the arable quality of land which you are using." The Minister should be in a position to suggest where such areas might be found.

Again, and in connection with this special select committee of cabinet and indeed with the responsibilities that this Minister has directed through his department for pollution control, I want to raise a matter which I raised with the Minister in question period a week or so ago. That is the loss of tank cars of chlorine which are currently

resting in the bottom of the straits near Powell River.

The early indications were that if those tank cars of chlorine were to rupture now or some time in the future, the chemicals in those tank cars would be released and come to the surface and result in the dispersal of poisonous gas which would drift with the wind and the tide to God knows where, Mr. Chairman. There is some indication that the search for the recapture of those tank cars has been abandoned. The Minister said in question period when I raised this matter that it was a federal responsibility.

Again, there is this same problem. It may be a federal responsibility, Mr. Chairman, but it is not the federal government which is going to suffer from the poisonous gases if they escape; it is the people who happen to live in that particular area.

I'm glad the Minister is getting some advice from the MLA from that area. I would have thought that the Minister wouldn't have to get advice from the MLA in this particular area. I would have thought that the Minister and his vast department would have been on top of this particular problem and be approaching the national government saying: "If it is your responsibility, Mr. Minister of Transport, or the national government's, keep on working till you find those tank cars and get them up." Well, if the Minister is going to tell us that he did, then my hat's off to him. But he certainly did it in a very quiet way. And to what consequences? Is the search still going on? Are those tank cars being raised? How quickly will that be recognized? When will the people who live in that particular area have their minds put at rest with regard to what must be a continuing danger for so long as those tank cars remain where they are?

Mr. Chairman, I only have one other matter to raise with the Minister at this time; there are other Members of the committee who will wish to question him, I'm sure. I want to raise with him, however, a matter which is of growing concern to me. It arises out of the Minister's directorship in British Columbia Hydro. The Minister and this government have promised that there will be an inquiry into the matter of the Columbia River treaty projects. We have waited week after week after week for the government to give some announcement with regard to that inquiry and when it will commence.

AN HON. MEMBER: They're backing off.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: Oh, a Member is suggesting that the government's backing off. If that's to be the case, I think the government should come forward and tell us that that is their intention — that it's to be delayed.

Of even greater concern, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that there has been disseminated in this province a publication which I raised in this House, which suggests that the Minister lied to this House — hear me out, now — with the hope of misleading the House and the public. From my assessment of such a statement, it's defamatory and libellous. I wonder how a Minister who is a senior member of this cabinet and a director of B.C. Hydro, can allow a publication to be in existence and to go unchallenged when he has been libelled in both capacities.

Aside altogether from the effect this may have upon the Minister's own position, on a subject which is of the gravest concern to the people of the Province of British Columbia, the government has said that we are facing overrun costs in the Columbia River treaty projects of some \$800 million and that these overrun costs are thereby using significant amounts of the revenues available to government, which should be diverted to other purposes. Yet nothing happens. There is no inquiry; we have a Minister who sits idly by while he is being libelled.

On the same issue, I think that it is appropriate for this Minister at this time to advise the committee what the situation is with regard to the inquiry and to what extent he is prepared to sit idly by and allow this libel to remain outstanding against him.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, regarding the Columbia Valley south of Cultus Lake, I am always pleased to see great conversions. I am in this instance, since I recall the wild statements of the Member for West Vancouver with respect to the Land Commission Act, his participation in the wild meetings in Delta....

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: I made no wild statement....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Hon. Member may correct the record after the Hon. Minister has spoken.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: So it's a delight to see this new concern with respect to the preservation of agricultural land in British Columbia. The very people who voted against the statute are now the ones who have sensed that public opinion has passed them by and they're trying to catch up. The fact that the Member is concerned about the Columbia Valley is a new delight.

The Hon. Member is a lawyer. The question of national defence and the powers of the DND are considerable; I'm sure that he appreciates that. I think that the Hon. Member might well have written the federal Minister in this regard — I assume he has — and expressed his concern regarding the Columbia Valley.

The question of the Columbia Valley is one that I have not yet had any direct representation from the Member for the area (Mr. Chabot). In addition, I haven't heard from the municipalities involved. I really want that kind of background before I make any further comments at this stage.

The Pollution Control Board and the chlorine tanks. The studies that are being carried out, I understand, are the federal studies by both the Environment Canada department and Transport. Liaison is at a staff level between the two governments. It's my understanding that Seaspan say that they have located the tank cars. The federal Department of Transport is evaluating that information. As the Hon. Member probably is aware, we did request the federal Minister of the Environment, Madame Sauvé, to pursue the federal activities in this area and that request was jointly from the Member for Mackenzie (Mr. Lockstead) and myself.

Regarding British Columbia Hydro, an inquiry will take place, as I indicated in question period earlier. The participants and terms of reference are still to be determined by cabinet. I think that covers the main points, Mr. Chairman.

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): Just a couple of brief questions to the Minister. When the Minister of Housing's (Hon. Mr. Nicolson's) estimates were up very briefly here, I asked him a question regarding a housing development at Roscoe Bay, which is close to Ocean Falls. Now I'm wondering whether the Minister will tell me whether there is a proposed housing development for Roscoe Bay to look after the expected expansion of the Ocean Falls operation.

We know that the Ocean Falls operation is examining alternatives at this time. We know that there has been a study commissioned by the Minister called a Bella Coola regional study. Now will the Minister tell us the purpose for the Bella Coola study? Was it a front, really, to bring in additional log supplies for the aspirations and the projected growth at Ocean Falls?

I believe that it's not common knowledge, but it's my understanding that the government is looking at alternatives at Ocean Falls. The projected expenditures there at this time are in the neighbourhood of \$118 million for the establishment of a new pulp mill because of the present mill being obsolete. Also, it's my understanding that the government wants to establish a sawmill complex at Ocean Falls as well, with the housing for the workers to be at Roscoe Bay.

Now will the Minister tell me whether the Bella Coola study was a way and a means to secure a supply of timber for these projected operations at Ocean Falls? If so, which companies will suffer because of the direction of this raw material from existing allocated timber volumes? Will the establishment of the new pulp mill at Ocean Falls and its sawmill complex result in the abandonment of the old community at Ocean Falls?

Now I'd like to ask the Minister a few words regarding chip prices. It's quite obvious, and I'm sure the Minister is aware there is a glut of chips on the market. There's been a very serious cutback by pulp mills on supply of chips by small operators and intermediate sawmills as well.

The Minister must be aware, I'm sure, that the cutback has been as high as 65 per cent in certain regions of the province. In fact, one sawmill operator told me just a few days ago that his operation was burning \$25,000 worth of chips per month, because of the fact that pulp mills are now utilizing round wood, because of the cheapness of round wood. It's far cheaper than using the \$35 chips that were previously supplied by the small operators. This is apparent throughout the province.

The Minister brought in legislation which was supposed to help the chip price and the small sawmill operators to survive in the province. We find now that they've been seriously cut back and I'm wondering what the Minister proposes to do regarding the usage of round wood, which should be primarily directed towards the saw log economy, rather than to be pushed through a chipper to the detriment of the small sawmills in this province. This causes a problem because most mills don't have the proper facilities to dispose of their chips. They either have to burn the refuse — in many instances the burners are too small and it's necessary to create landfill with what is basically a useful product because of the glut of the market.

It is quite obvious that there is no export market in the United States because the pulp mills in that part of the world have cut back quite dramatically in

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their production. It is obvious as well that the Japanese are not interested in casual chip supply. The Japanese certainly would be interested in a long-term supply of chips, maybe on a 5- to 10-year basis, but not on a casual basis. I would like to ask some questions of the Minister regarding this chip situation. In light of the serious supply of chips, particularly in the interior, what plan has the Minister to ease the burden on the sawmill industry in what is now a hard-pressed pulp industry where cutbacks have been made even by Can-Cel? Will the Minister order the price of chips to be reduced on the expectation that a price lower than the cost of making whole logs will motivate the pulp mills to stop putting logs through the wood rooms? Will the Pollution Control Board be ordered to relax its control on sawmill burners to permit sawmills to burn chips in the current emergency?

We know what's happening with Kootenay Forest Products in their landfill. There was no difficulty for Kootenay Forest Products getting a permit from the Pollution Control Board, even though I know of other small sawmills that have experienced difficulty in creating landfills. It was no problem for Kootenay Forest Products.

Will the Minister, because of the glut of chips on the market, issue export permits for a longer period of time, such as 5 to 10 years, to allow the surplus which now appears to be a long-term problem to be sold in the export markets?

Is the Minister going to be frank with the people regarding his legislation on chip price? He suggested originally that it was to help the small operators. The Minister is allowing round wood to be utilized for chips to the detriment of the small operators in this province. I am wondering what the Minister has to say in that respect.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: With respect to Roscoe Bay, it is in the next inlet north of the inlet on which Ocean Falls is located. It is an area with considerably less rainfall than Ocean Falls — almost half of the rainfall of Ocean Falls, although there is not detailed data in that regard. At any rate, it is considerably better. It offers an opportunity of access for the people of Ocean Falls who have been confined to a relatively small area for most of this century. Just in terms of recreation alone, Roscoe Bay will give them access to the inlet system, to Bella Bella, and easier access to the main travel routes on the inner passage on the coast as well as all of the inlets north of there. It offers a future potential in terms of housing. Yes, that's certainly one of the potentials of Roscoe Bay. It offers a future communications and transportation length that Ocean Falls has been desperately in need of.

Again, they never had this through those decades and decades in the hands of a foreign owner. The proposal for building a road through the two lakes, Mosk Lake and Imp Lake, to Roscoe Bay was on the boards of Crown Zellerbach for about 20 years and was never done. People in this isolated area really should have had the opportunity to get around in that beautiful part of the central coast. That's one of the reasons we are building it. We are building a road between Ocean Falls and Roscoe Bay, and it will be completed this year.

MR. CHABOT: For a townsite?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No, we are leaving all our options open. Seriously, these people have been limited in terms of their choice and their access. We thought it was right in terms of giving them greater choice and greater freedom in terms of movement in that region to do this. Absolutely.

Roscoe Bay does have an urban potential; there's no question about that. There have been some analyses by consultants and our own staff in that regard. There are other opportunities in terms of transport in the area that are significant. All of this is important if Ocean Falls is to flourish and expand. We think it can. The purpose of the Bella Coola study was to do the homework that wasn't done in the past. It's the old story again. Because of the lack of homework you guys bought the idea of closing down Ocean Falls.

MR. CHABOT: It's not true.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Oh, oh, oh. The ads were ready. The Premier had shown you: "Town for Sale." Bye-bye, boys, we'll blow up the townsite. Come on, now. The decision was made and it was made in San Francisco and it was rubber-stamped in Victoria — the way things always were done in terms of think big companies making the decisions in their own base and getting a rubber stamp downstairs.

We see a significant potential in the central coast. We do not think that it has to be constantly cannibalized. We do believe that there can be more employment in the central coast and the Queen Charlottes, so we are determined that these areas will not simply be areas of export to the lower mainland and southern Vancouver Island. There should be greater diversity in job opportunities in Ocean Falls, in Bella Bella, in the Queen Charlottes and on the rest of the central coast.

The study was done to determine what the resource base was in the central coast and the westerly Chilcotin and in the Chilko. It was a study to look at the recreation base as well, to look at the fisheries problems, to determine what kind of constraints there should be in terms of industrial expansion on the central coast, as well as seeing what kind of base there could be for industrial expansion

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on the central coast.

As a result of that study, it is now clear that there is a significant base, even with constraints, for fisheries, for salmon, for the environment, for considerable recreational preservation in the southern Chilko. Even with all of that, there is a considerable potential for industrial expansion in the central coast.

We are actively looking at all the opportunities and alternatives. We have met with parties from abroad and discussed the potential with them in terms of seeing to it that the central coast if strengthened, that there is more employment, and that we don't face the kind of situation that you people were happy to live with only three years ago.

With respect to chip prices, the answer is no, we are not contemplating cutting chip prices. We don't think that would make any difference in terms of consumption at this stage. The wood rooms, however, have been closed at Prince George Pulp, I understand, in this last week, and at Intercontinental in Prince George. There are cutbacks taking place in Canadian Cellulose in terms of handling round wood as well.

You have to face the fact, however, that some of these pulp mills are in regions where there is decadent timber and the decadent timber has to come out. The natural kind of forest base is such that some of that decadent wood, naturally, has to come out. You can talk about using round wood but many of the mills you are talking about are selling the round wood and selling the chips. They are in the business of both selling small round wood and chips. So you can't say the round wood is just coming from the pulp mills. It is coming from the independent sawmillers as well. It isn't that neat a situation, unfortunately.

It seems clear that we've got a fair amount of work to do regarding this problem. We are looking at the options in terms of exports, in terms of medium-term possibilities. There is obviously a significant base with which to work in terms of future wood industrial expansion in British Columbia.

The fact that we had such an unrealistic chip price in the past meant that burning was a regular thing all of the time. The chips were simply grossly undervalued by all of the parties concerned. By establishing something closer to the real value of the chips, as we've done through that legislation, we are starting to get a better picture of the numbers and availability of material. That is going to provide us with the base again for a further surge in industrial expansion in the province.

MR. CHABOT: A couple of quick questions. The Minister didn't answer the question regarding saw logs being turned into chips. It is quite obvious that saw logs are being turned into chips. The first direction of these logs should be to the sawmill industry and not into chips to the detriment of the other small operators. It is being done by the integrated companies. I think the Minister has a responsibility to state that he is either going to tolerate this kind of situation or he is going to stop this kind of situation.

I asked the Minister a few questions regarding Ocean Falls Corp. It is quite obvious the Minister skated around the issue and wasn't willing to tell me whether the government would proceed with expansion and growth in Ocean Falls.

I will make the announcement now: there will be spent something in the neighbourhood of \$118 million in Ocean Falls to do away with the obsolete pulp mill there now and to construct a new pulp mill and a sawmill complex. The townsite will be located at Roscoe Bay to service the new complex to which the Minister's front, the Bella Coola regional study, will bring the raw material necessary to justify the expansion at Ocean Falls. So now we know. Now we know that there is going to be in the neighbourhood of \$118 million spent for a new pulp mill and sawmill complex in Ocean Falls.

I wanted to ask the Minister a few questions also regarding Mr. Jones, the president of British Columbia Cellulose Co. I am wondering whether he has any other titles or holds any other positions in government. Would the Minister tell me what these positions are? It is my understanding that he is presently negotiating for the financing of the expansion of Ocean Falls and he is suggesting that a consortium be established including Can-Cel and MacMillan Bloedel to underwrite and manage the venture of the complex which I have just announced for you, which you have been unwilling to announce.

Is Mr. Jones authorized by the government to deal on their behalf? Is he authorized also to commit Can-Cel to a consortium at Ocean Falls?

The Minister didn't answer the question I posed regarding the Bella Coola study. It's quite common knowledge that the log supply terminates at the end of 1975 with Crown Zellerbach. It's apparent that there is a shortage of prime hemlock logs for the operation at Ocean Falls. I'm wondering if the Minister would tell us, for his supply of material for the Ocean Falls complex, just where this timber supply is going to come from and what timber operation is going to be cut back.

I understand that the Forest Service is building roads to the new townsite. The Minister announced that just a few moments ago. He didn't say who, but I believe it's the Forest Service that's building a road. I'm wondering where one can find the expenditure for this road to Roscoe Bay. Will it be in the Department of Highways' vote, or is this a charge against the operation of the Forest Service? If it's a charge against the operation of the Forest Service, who authorized this expenditure?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Regarding the business of preventing round wood or saw material from being

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used in pulp mills, we don't presently have the legislative powers to handle that. If the Hon. Member for Columbia River is suggesting that the Timber Products Stabilization Act should be expanded in order to meet these ends, then

the government will certainly look at the proposal from the official opposition for intervention in the economy.

MR. CHABOT: Cut their throats.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Intervention in the economy — imagine! That's a shocking idea coming from those moss-backed Socred Tories over there. Intervening in the economy, directing laws — imagine! Imagine trying to put that kind of rational process into play. It's a shocking idea.

MR. CHABOT: Shades of Waffles!

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: On the question of Mr. Jones, Mr. Jones is the chairman and president of British Columbia Cellulose, and he is also a director of Ocean Falls, a director of Kootenay Forest Products and a director of Canadian Cellulose. So that is the range in terms of conglomerates he's involved in. As you probably know, Mr. Jones was formerly with MacMillan Bloedel, the Power River company here on the coast, and was the president of the Eddy Co. in Hull, Quebec.

The matter of timber supply, future timber supply, wood supply for Ocean Falls, is a matter that's still being negotiated between various parties and....

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Oh, that remains to be seen.

The question of details is still to be determined. Negotiations, discussions are taking place between various parties, and this former ugly duckling that the multinationals said wasn't worth keeping is shaping up to be something of a Cinderella. That's rather nice to see in terms of bold moves by government to date to preserve the townsite and industry.

But I'd just like to clarify one thing. The Member for Columbia River said that there was a pulp mill at Ocean Falls. Well, we should get it straight. You know, there just isn't a pulp mill at Ocean Falls. It basically has been dismantled for some 20 years or something like that. So it's sort of on a par in terms of the factual base that we have to deal with that the opposition has at its disposal. But it looks very encouraging indeed. Had we not been government, we wouldn't be able to be looking to outside participants, the possibility of joint ventures and the increased viability of the town and the life on the central coast. It's something that I'm proud of and something that you should be a little ashamed of in terms of your record.

MR. CHABOT: Who is going to suffer? What operators are going to be cut back from the timber supply to look after the new complex, the new conglomerate which you're going to establish at Ocean Falls?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You should realize that there's all kinds of unallocated timber in the Chilko. There's a huge timber base on the central coast. There's a considerable base in the Chilko. There's a potential. There's room for us all. There's room for diversity at last because of the new government.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): I was disturbed by the Minister's reference to Socred Tories a minute ago, and I hope that the Minister will withdraw the remark.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: I withdraw.

MR. WALLACE: I'd like to just ask a few simple questions of the Minister, not as any expert in the forest industry but as a taxpayer and a layman wondering about some of the matters that are publicized regarding his department.

We've heard comments this afternoon, and quite rightly so, about the tremendous importance of the forest industry to British Columbia.

We've had a great deal of discussion about possible solutions to the problem. We've heard all kinds of

predictions from economic experts in the States and elsewhere relating their comments to the presidential election and the printing of more American money to build more houses, and then suffering another surge of inflation as soon as they get the president re-elected, et cetera.

I wonder if the Minister would care to tell us, as British Columbian taxpayers, when he thinks the lumber market can return to a healthier state and all the advantages of higher stumpage rates, employment and all the other financial advantages to the government. When does this Minister predict, for the information of the people of the province, this lumber market is likely to improve? Of course, the equally important question is: what long-term planning does the Minister have to try and iron out the tremendous ups and downs in the lumber industry?

We've seen an example of intervention in the market regarding attempts to regulate the price of chips, and now we find there's a tremendous surplus of chips. On that subject — and I think I might have missed part of the questioning from one of the other Members — since there is a surplus of chips, and since the lumber market apparently is not yet beginning to

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improve, I noticed a clipping in the press which stated that the provincial government had given permission to a sawmill in Grand Forks, to export surplus wood chips. Pape and Talbot Ltd. I believe, has been granted until July, 1975, to export chips.

We've talked before in this House about the close restriction on the export of whole logs, and it seems to be that in temporary times of distress the export of either chips or logs is a slight salvation. I wonder if the Minister has any decision or policy statement that he cares to make as to whether or not we should look more seriously at the long-term export. It's my information that some of the foreign buyers are only interested in at least a five-year contract. Perhaps the Minister would care to comment as to whether we are prepared to look at that prospect or not, or whether we're still more concerned that that represents in some degree an export of jobs.

I was rereading the budget speech — no matter how many times one reads this budget speech, I never seem able to find the page I'm looking for — and on page 23 there's this \$15 million for a special employment programme for the lumber section of the forest industry. It says: "Details concerning the forest industry and student employment programmes will be given by the Ministers concerned." I wonder if the Minister is now ready to give the House and the people some outline of this \$15 million programme.

When the Minister was in opposition he frequently spoke on this question of reforestation. I notice that the budget is up — and I'll very carefully avoid referring to the vote by number after our little discussion on protocol this afternoon. I notice that the budget for reforestation is increased by a considerable amount of money but, as I read it, I wonder if the Minister can tell us how much is actually going to be accomplished in restocking the amount that's being harvested.

As I recall, it seemed to me a great deal of the money in that vote was to spend on administration. The figures seem to indicate that a fair amount of increased expenditure was for staff — I think about \$27 million out of \$31 million is for more staff. Presumably, if you plant more trees, you need more staff. But it seemed to me, if that is a correct reading, that if \$27 million out of \$31 million is for wages, then I'd like to know, in some general way, just how many more trees we are planting this year than last year, or how much greater over the annual average for the last three or four years. The Forest Service portion of the estimates is \$93 million, and general administration goes up by \$12 million. Perhaps the Minister would care to elaborate on that.

The whole question of the forest industry, in our view, seems to have such significance in terms of our whole economy. It is our biggest asset. It is a resource unequalled by any other resource in our province, and it has tremendous environmental impact in North America. With this government's approach to land use, it has shown an interest in longer-term planning and the whole impact of population change. The whole problem of Indian land claims also enters into a wide and broad look at the need for management of our land.

I wonder if the time has not arrived, particularly in light of studies and commissions that have been set up and

the fact that the standing committee on resources, I believe, is expected to look at tenures, for a royal commission on the forest industry. Should we be going in this — piecemeal is an unfair word — present manner where we have a variety of different commissions...

MR. G.B. GARDOM (Vancouver–Point Grey): Hear, hear!

MR. WALLACE: ...standing committees, task forces, and a somewhat disruptive way to approach what is an enormously important subject for the people of British Columbia, whatever government happens to be in power?

The feeling I get is that we are not really tackling this immense problem on a wide enough front and in a co-ordinated way. I notice, for example, just to take a specific situation, that Dr. Peter Pearce in his third study stated quite plainly that forest tenures were granted to large, integrated companies at the expense of the small operator. It was mentioned in the throne speech, as I recall, that the government would be setting up... I can't recall if it was a special committee on tenures or whether the standing committee of the Legislature on resources would, in fact, carry out the study on tenures. Anyway, the point is that we're headed for another committee study. We've already had a fair amount of information supplied by Dr. Peter Pearce.

I wonder, in light of the very extensive importance of this resource, whether it's not time for a royal commission on the forest industry. I can't recall the date of the previous one; it was quite some years ago by Judge....

MR. GARDOM: Sloan.

MR. WALLACE: Sloan. Thank you, Mr. Member.

Again, maybe the Minister will consider this unusual coming from a Tory who always wants to keep bureaucracy, studies and task forces to a minimum, but I'm saying that this is of such great importance to the economy and that employment of the province and the future of the province and this whole long-term look that we must take at land use, that it seems to me that perhaps we have reached the time for a royal commission. I'd like the Minister to tell us if he is considering that this might be a good approach at this time.

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One of the criticisms that we have levelled from this side of the House in other departments is the whole question of increasing the civil service and increasing the number of bureaucrats employed by this government. I have to report, after a study of the budget of the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources that, my goodness me, we have a reduction in staff. Where, of all places, do I find the reduction but in the pollution control branch — from 191 to 173. Again, I find this, unless these staff have been reallocated somewhere else.... Of course, perhaps I would just like to ask a few questions. I checked back in *Hansard*, and in the spring session of 1973 the Minister said: "Standards of pollution have and are being set and deadlines are being established."

I thought that society's greater sensitivity to the environmental factors would likely lead to more staff being required to implement the guidelines and the standards which the Minister had quoted in 1973, and yet we had the resignation of a biologist by the name of Mr. Newcombe. I won't go into the great details of that because I think there was some unfortunate exchange of insults in the press which tried to cloud the real issue. The fact is that Mr. Newcombe, who was a biologist in the branch, resigned, and I think we should mention some of the things he said. "People think that the pollution control branch is controlling pollution," he said. "That's nonsense. It only prosecutes under duress. We have to bring things to the branch's attention and push it to prosecute." He quoted the example of the Creston pulp mill on the Kootenay River at Skookumchuck where the branch spent \$3,500 on a study to see if the water was polluted, and he said: "You could take one look at the water and see that it was heavily polluted." He went on to say: "We have to document our complaints like the Watergate case before we can make a dent in the armour of the pollution control branch."

Anyway, that was Mr. Newcombe's statement. I find very interesting the response from the pollution control branch. The person who was authorized to speak on behalf of the branch publicly was a Mr. McCrossan who, unfortunately, I think, referred to the biologist as an "eco-freak." Of course, to try and diminish the arguments of

your opposition it's always standard procedure to impute some less than normal mentality to the spokesman.

I think it was a regrettable way for a member of this government under authority to respond, to use that kind of insult. Mr. McCrossan went on. I think it is worth repeating exactly what he is quoted as saying:

"If we were guided by the Chuck Newcombes of this world, if some of the way-out freaks, eco-freaks, or extremists had their way, and if government bowed to these people and issued clean-up orders to all industry in the province, then all industry would be closed down overnight. But you can't do that in a province that is so dependent on resources. That is what I would call 'poverty pollution,' and that is not the aim of the government."

All I am saying is that this party ran for office with a strong commitment to deal with pollution of the environment. From these two points of view I've quoted, I suppose the truth lies somewhere in the middle. Maybe the Minister could tell us whether in fact the unfortunate image that the pollution control branch permits pollution and only acts under duress is a fair comment. If it is not a fair comment, how is it that with an increasing population and increasing industries in this province, the pollution control branch can do its job effectively with a smaller number of staff? That just seems puzzling. There may be an answer. The Minister could perhaps go into that.

I wonder if the Minister could specifically describe penalties that have actually been applied to polluting mills or polluting industry and to what degree, if any, different standards are being applied to the Crown corporations that operate pulp mills or other industrial concerns which have polluting effects.

I would like to touch on something of local significance in the greater Victoria area. The Minister stepped into the affairs of the greater Victoria area when he took action in April of 1974 to freeze what was called the Reid site in the Inner Harbour area. Subsequently in May of 1974 he spent \$1.7 million actually buying the Reid property. There was a public hearing in June and in July, 1974, Roderick Clack, the former Victoria city planner, was asked to conduct a study and make recommendations about the use of that land in the greater Victoria area. Since then, there has been a surprising silence about that particular site. Then, of course, in recent weeks we've seen the government acquire other waterfront property on the other side of the Inner Harbour, plus the acquisition of the Princess Marguerite.

I would like the Minister to tell us by what logic, if any, he as Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources has finished up running the affairs of a boat or a ship or a ferry or whatever. It just seems to be a very unusual diverting of the normal responsibility of the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources to be made responsible for a ferry boat sailing between Victoria and Seattle. The Minister is smiling; he is obviously a happy sailor. But it is just a little puzzling to the people of the province.

It is not quite so puzzling to the people of the greater Victoria area because they feel and believe, and I do too, that this whole issue of the Inner Harbour is in such a mishmash and mess and disjointed in the overall planning with so many fingers in the pie that nobody really knows what is

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going on. It was the final comic touch when finally this same Minister finished up being responsible for the Marguerite.

When I talk about it being a mishmash, we've really got several levels of authority being involved. We presumably have the Environment and Land Use Committee making the decision to buy the Reid site and subsequently to buy the Marathon property. We've got the Capital Improvement District Commission, which is set up under the legislation for which another Minister of the government is responsible, namely the Provincial Secretary (Hon. Mr. Hall). We've got the City of Victoria very much involved. Now, finally, we have an advisory committee under the aegis or the chairmanship of the absent Member for Esquimalt (Mr. Gorst). So we have at least four different administrative, political, quasi-something-or-other bodies all involved in a very priceless part of Victoria and a priceless part of the province.

I'm not suggesting that the wisest development for the long term is easy. I agree that there should be a great

deal of discussion and planning, but the discussion and planning has gone at least a whole year since the property was taken over by the government.

It was interesting that in Mr. Clack's report in July of '74 he stated that there should be some super-agency — I don't think he called it a super-agency, but that's the word that was reported — to oversee the development of the Inner Harbour, and that that agency should perhaps utilize the expertise and the past experience of the city, the province and such people as Arthur Erickson who had done a study of the whole Inner Harbour prospects in 1973. In other words, what I'm taking a long time, I guess, to say is that we have had a tremendous amount of preliminary action to make certain things possible, but we appear to have had a whole year of inaction.

Part of the concern of people in the greater Victoria area, for example, is that for years, back as far as 1967, the city started asking about the relocation of the Black Ball ferry terminal. Yet in the press release dealing with the acquisition of the Marguerite the statement appeared to the effect that if the city wanted to relocate that ferry terminal, the government might be interested in helping. There's just this feeling that there are three or four levels of authority involved in this whole matter, and it's not at all clear that any one of them knows what the other three are doing.

I think I heard comment yesterday under Municipal Affairs that there was a real opportunity for closer cooperation between the city and the provincial government. I'm trying to be fair and reasonable, and I'm not expecting overnight results, but the people in the city and Mayor Pollen would, I think, be very happy to hear the Minister tell us today what the Minister has in mind and when we are going to get the show on the road.

Somebody made the statement that we need a convention centre more than we need the Marguerite ferry. I think we need them both. It shouldn't possibly be an either/or situation. Certainly if the Minister has some other good ideas up his sleeve whereby he might make the \$1.7 million Reid Centre land available for a convention centre, I'm sure the city will be all ears. Since it isn't Christmas yet, I doubt if that charitable a view will be taken by the Minister. But both convention centre and ferry facilities are vital to the continuing orderly development of the greater Victoria area and the capital city, and I'd like to hear the Minister's comment on that.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Well, Mr. Chairman, there were a fair range of points raised by the Member for Oak Bay. Dealing with them chronologically, the question of the lumber industry and when there might be an upswing: I think it's clear that we've already bottomed out. In fact, there's the beginning of an upswing now. In fact, most of the sawmills are benefiting from improved prices at the moment and have been for the last several weeks. So we seem to have bottomed out in the lumber sector and are improving. Certainly the mills that I'm familiar with in terms of cash flow had predicted negative cash flow and are currently, fortunately, experiencing positive cash flow — that is, the more efficient, modern mills. So it has bottomed out.

The futures market also is an indicator. I think that some of the metropolitan papers now publish futures market information from the Midwest in the United States, and they indicate a general improvement as well. The pulp sector seems to be in a plateau and I think the industry generally anticipates that it will move up from that plateau in the third or fourth quarter of this year.

The question of export possibilities: yes, we will seriously look at medium-term export possibilities from the province. It's becoming clear that the volume of material we have is basically greater than we realized at an earlier stage and before there was a better pricing system. Now that's not to say that we're looking at anything beyond that, though, because of the lead time needed in terms of pulp mill development. Medium-term export might well be a reasonable solution in terms of those problems, but with the longer-term goal being to see that all the material is used in the province and is related to jobs and capital investment in British Columbia.

In terms of the employment programme, the announcements initially will be coming through the Minister of Labour's (Hon. Mr. King's) office. We're holding meetings on that at the moment. The question of reforestation I might elaborate on later. The point regarding the possibility of a royal

commission seems to have generally been endorsed by, I believe, all of the opposition parties. Conservatives indicate that. I believe the official opposition has generally endorsed the idea. I don't know if the Liberals are somewhere in between, as usual, or not. But at any rate....

MR. WALLACE: Never mind — just answer the questions. (Laughter.)

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: What the government has stated in the budget speech is that we want the standing committee of the House on environment and resources to look at the question of terms of reference for an inquiry and the question of the type of inquiry is still be determined, but there appear to be merits in terms of taking directions such as the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) has suggested.

Regarding the Pollution Control Board and the staff: the numbers in that section have changed but they simply have been shifted to another section, so that the people are there and we haven't increased the numbers at all. Some 17 or so people have been shifted into another section of the water resources service which is primarily environmental studies, so people with more biological backgrounds, limnology and fields like that, are a part of the environmental study section. The pollution control branch itself is primarily a policing agency rather than an analytical agency. We have separated the policing and regulatory function from the analyses and research functions. That is basically what has happened.

I tend to agree that the statements that were quoted from the information officer of the section were a little strong. They were strong and I certainly can't fully endorse them. But, you know, we have inherited a lot of people in this administration and I am sure that the individual's Conservative views might be endorsed by some other Tories anyway, if not by myself.

The question on the activities of the PCB might be worth noting. The number of permits that have been issued in, say the year 1974, for example, with the smaller staff, was some 582: versus 398 in 1973; 166 in 1972; 99 in 1971. So it's clear, in terms of handling permits and so on, that the pollution control branch is doing a great deal more, and with less staff than they had previously. We have enlarged the Pollution Control Board, and we do have wider representation — citizen representation and university representation that we didn't have on this scale before.

MR. WALLACE: How many convictions?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: The convictions have gone up, too, but I don't have the numbers. I think one laundry from Sicamous was put before the courts during the Socred years. That is, one single laundry from Sicamous, B.C. was taken to the courts with respect to...

MR. WALLACE: Shame!

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: ...violations of the Pollution Control Act. Since then I think we have been operating on a scale of maybe about 20. I guess we have the numbers here. It's certainly changed. Let's see: prosecutions in 1970 were nil; prosecutions in 1971, nil; prosecutions in 1972, nil — all under the Social Credit administration. In 1973 prosecutions were 16; 1974 prosecutions were 14. So the whole process has changed and the direction has changed.

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Well, you know, we've certainly faced some of the major ones. Rayonier at Port Alice was taking care of that Neroutsos Inlet on a great scale, and it's the result of determination by this government, the pollution control branch and the board that action was taken. As a result, IT&T Rayonier will be spending some \$40 million in terms of pollution control on northern Vancouver Island. I assure you that it wouldn't have been the case....

MR. PHILLIPS: How about Can-Cel?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: In addition, Canadian Cellulose has been advised that....

Interjections.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You just can't win. Canadian Cellulose is just too much of a success story; it has to be wrong somewhere. They have been advised that they are going to have to meet stringent deadlines in terms of their activities in the Prince Rupert area. The final deadline is 1979 for the whole complex.

Interjections.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Oh, no. That's not so.

In addition, you are talking about different bodies of water, the open Chatham Sound versus Neroutsos Inlet on Vancouver Island.

The question of Victoria and the Inner Harbour: the previous government wasn't willing to intervene and take action to prevent Holiday Inns and major high-rises from obliterating the kind of fine, urban landscape that Victoria has. This government was willing to intervene and deal with a council that didn't have the sensitivity and appreciation of this fine, urban landscape that surrounds them. I think

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that's to the benefit of all Victorians. I think most Victorians would agree that this intervention in the Inner Harbour has seen to it that the worst would be avoided, the worst in terms of major urban high-rise blight which, I think, most people in this community are not interested in.

The action was taken through the Environment and Land Use Committee. It was the only legislation available to deal with the problem at the time. The greenbelt fund in turn was used and we were able to ensure that waterfront development will be basically for the public, will be of a lower scale and be a genuine urban amenity in the Victoria capital region.

The lands branch is now the major owner of land in the inner basin. The Lands department has long managed Songhees Indian reserve land in Victoria West and is actively involved in the management process there now and has carried out discussions with the City of Victoria.

The Lands department now is responsible for the Reid centre site — the old Fort Victoria site — and in turn is now responsible for the Canadian Pacific Steamship land on this side of the Inner Harbour. So rational process has been underway over the last year and a half, and the single management of those lands through an agency of government makes a great deal of sense.

The boat was almost thrown in for the price, in terms of the price paid for the CPR land. The boat we see as an integral part of the harbour itself. We see it tied to this land base and making this land base work in a particular way. It may very well be that the ship, the Marguerite, would have a special role in the wintertime in the Inner Harbour as well. The Member for Esquimalt (Mr. Gorst) and his advisory committee, which includes a city alderman who's on the regional board, are carrying out excellent work.

MR. FRASER: Admiral Gorst.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: I'm sure that some of the Victoria region Members might have attended the press conference this morning and seen the great new colours for the ship, which are in the tradition of Victoria, as well as showing the kind of bold push that this government is willing to pursue as well — the mixture of boldness and tradition that Victoria should be considering at this stage of the game. For a Conservative to call this inaction — the acquiring and the preventing of the blight of Reid centre, the acquiring, at long last, of the Canadian Pacific Railway land for the benefit of the public, and to see to it that the Marguerite, in an almost impossibly short time is refurbished and put back into service, revitalizing this city and its summer tourist economy which is critical to its economic base — to say that that's inaction, and for a Tory to call that inaction.... My God, he'd have to move to the left of me if he wanted something more. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: Could I just ask one brief question? I thought the Minister's rhetoric was admirable, but he did not answer the question: when can we anticipate the next exciting stage in the series of thrilling events, engineered and carried out and...?

HON. MS. YOUNG: It won't be exciting and thrilling if he tells you.

MR. WALLACE: Well, the Minister suggested that there would be further development on the Reid site but he gave no commitment as to the kind of development or who's going to do it or when. It's a year since the land was acquired.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: We have been strengthening a small staff section in the Lands department in terms of development capability. We have added Mr. John Webster, who was formerly with Marathon Realty. He's responsible for the Marguerite, the CPR lands and the related Inner Harbour lands, and preparing the programme for it. He has considerable experience in this field.

The next step, however, is legislation. Legislation is needed.

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No, no. That's for the day-care centre.

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: The lifespan of the ship? Well, you know, the head of the chamber of commerce committee, hardly a flaming radical NDPer, when prodded by the media on television kept refusing to give negative answers. He just said that the Marguerite is an excellent ship. It's an excellent buy. "I have to praise the government for intervening."

The kind of activity that we took in Ocean Falls is benefiting Ocean Falls and the people of the central coast. The kind of activity we're taking in Victoria is benefiting the people of the capital region. Government intervention in order to improve the economy of British Columbia, to maintain services to the private sector that the old CPR would not continue — a company that did not care about the people of Victoria — that's the kind of thing that we had in the past and it's all changed under this new administration.

MR. GARDOM: Leadership speech.

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MR. H.D. DENT (Skeena): I was reading the report for B.C. Cellulose, a very interesting report: \$45 million profit; operating costs of less than \$100,000; some interest costs of little over \$1 million. But \$45 million profit for B.C. Cellulose is very, very good.

But we have a problem in my constituency that I would like to relate to, possibly, the B.C. Cellulose. We have a lumber mill called Skeena Forest Products. It was owned by Price-Skeena. Price Bros. from Quebec is a very large company based in Quebec City. In fact, on one occasion when I was in Quebec City on a legislative committee I ran into the general manager of Skeena Forest Products who just happened to be down there. It was a most unfortunate experience. I mean it was a very good happenstance at that time. This brought home to me the fact that this was a Quebec-based company. I was a little annoyed with this. But then, recently, Price Bros. was gobbled up by an even bigger company, a bigger fish: Abitibi. In fact, I believe that there's even some dispute about this under the Combines Investigation Act.

Abitibi, this huge corporation which gobbled up Price Bros., which in turn had gobbled up Skeena Forest Products in Terrace, was now in control of the situation. They have closed down our mill and the men have been out of work since before Christmas. These men who work there and even a couple of the management people have come to me pleading and asking for some kind of action, something that can be done so that this mill, Skeena Forest

Products, can be reopened.

I'm asking the Minister today if he wouldn't consider having the stock of this mill purchased by B.C. Cellulose. With the \$45 million record that that mill has, why, I'm sure they could see Skeena Forest Products through any kind of storm or problem that it may be encountering.

Canadian Cellulose owns the mill across the street known as Pohle Lumber. Pohle Lumber has been operating all winter and recently added another shift onto the planer mill. The men are employed, they're working, the pay cheques have been coming in. These men from Skeena Forest Products have been coming to me, begging that we take over Skeena Forest Products mill. Even the management people, even the merchants in the town have been asking me. The businessmen in the town have been pleading that we do something. What they mean by doing something is: couldn't we do the same as we did with Pohle Lumber, with Can-Cel? So Skeena Forest Products is still owned by Abitibi, still closed down.

Again, I ask the Minister if he wouldn't consider, on behalf of the people of Terrace, on behalf of the employees of this mill, on behalf of the management of this mill, on behalf of the business community, having this mill purchased by B.C. Cellulose Corp.

MR. GARDOM: This afternoon I was delighted to hear the remarks of the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) requesting a royal commission into the forestry industry. It's nice to see that we have at least one convert to that suggestion, which is a speech that I don't intend to give today; it's one that has been raised for about the past four years.

The reasons for it are just as valid today as the first time it was enunciated — perhaps even more so. Because of the new technology, new products, new markets, new methods of harvesting, processing, refurbishing, utilizing and selling wood products, I think there are very, very different priorities, both public and private. We have far more environmental considerations today than were prevalent during the Sloan royal commission. There are very different economic considerations, great changes in lifestyle and I think a very differing and changing and, indeed, shifting social, economic and political climate. I think an independent royal commission is badly needed and would be of great service to the industry and a great service to this province because it is the lifeblood of B.C.

There are a couple of contradictions today on the part of the Minister. He was talking about factual basis in referring to some statements that were made by the Hon. Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot) or the lack thereof. In response to the Hon. Member when he was discussing wood supply for Ocean Falls, the Minister said there was lots for everyone and indicated that he had power to diversify.

Well, I'd like to ask the Hon. Minister some rather personal questions about his factual basis and some personal questions as to whether or not there has been any personal diversification of fact. I think it's extremely unfair to the Minister, to this House and to the whole governmental process that we have not received a full, free and completely frank statement from the Minister dealing with material that has been filed in this Legislature and which came to Hon. Members in anonymous fashion. I'm referring to the four-page article bearing the title "Ten Years Later: the Results of the Columbia River Treaty. Hugh L. Keenleyside."

[Mr. Dent in the chair.]

Now, in any legal proceeding in this province, Mr. Chairman, witnesses are asked to swear that the evidence they will give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and they're sworn on the Bible. They take that oath and they give their evidence according to the confines of that oath. They're very, very severely penalized if they happen to transgress those boundaries. I would suggest that similarly by inference and by parliamentary precedent, cabinet Ministers are under a similar onus, a similar if not, indeed, a higher ethic and a higher

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standard. That's not unfair and this has been tried throughout history. I'd say it has become historically accepted and historically practised as parliamentary precedent.

In this statement, it refers on the third page to allegations of the Hon. R.A. Williams.

"The Hon. R.A. Williams stated in the Legislature: (1) that there was a secret committee made up of senior Hydro officials within Hydro, and (2) that it reallocated costs regarding the Columbia River treaty. According to the press, he also said that the secret committee (3) deliberately juggled funds over a two-year period to hide the true cost of the Columbia River project."

Carrying on with the statement, it says this:

"All three statements are false. There was no secret committee. The committee had no authority to reallocate costs. The committee had no authority to juggle funds."

I would ask the Hon. Minister: is it true or is it false that there was a secret committee made up of senior Hydro officials within Hydro? Secondly, is it true or false that it reallocated costs regarding the Columbia River treaty? Thirdly, is it true or false that that committee deliberately juggled funds over a two-year period to hide the true costs of the Columbia River project?

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if he is today as firm and as fixed and as resolute and as positive as he was when he allegedly made these statements in the House? Is he prepared to affirm these statements today? Is he prepared to deny them? Is he prepared to contradict them? Is he prepared to qualify his remarks in any manner whatsoever?

On the last page of the article to which I was referring it says this at the very bottom of the page:

"Whether or not the Hon. Mr. Williams will now confess that he knew that his charges were false, and that he made them in the hope of misleading the House and the public, is something that will have to be left to him and his conscience."

So I would ask the Hon. Minister: were his charges false? If so, did he know that? If so, did he make them in the hope of misleading this Legislature and misleading the public? There is a cloud over this place, Mr. Chairman, and there is certainly a great cloud over the credibility of the Hon. Minister.

He initiated these statements, according to what this brochure states. He has the responsibility to answer. He has the responsibility to give the full account, I'd say — tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, or resign. I don't think it is fair to the public or to this House or to the governmental process that charges as serious as these charges continue to exist without answers.

There was a recent editorial in a recent *Vancouver Province*. I believe *Province* editor Bob McConnell wrote it. Part of the article states this:

"We are confronted with political leaders who can't even be trusted to get their fiction straight, let alone their facts. That is a tragedy, because the ultimate victims are not the politicians but the political process and the concept of government itself."

This is our problem here. It is the concept of....

HON. D. BARRETT (Premier): Who wrote that?

MR. GARDOM: Bob McConnell.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Oh, he's unbiased.

MR. GARDOM: Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Premier, that there is no bias when one gets the truth. That is the main problem here. I think there is a great responsibility, a terrific responsibility, Mr. Premier, for your senior cabinet Minister to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth — which he has not done.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Are you going to send that message to McConnell?

MR. GARDOM: Which he has not done.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Are you going to send that message back to McConnell?

MR. GARDOM: Which he has not done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Order! Is the Hon. Member suggesting that the Hon. Member has not told the truth to this House?

MR. GARDOM: I'm reciting exactly what has been stated and what was said. I am asking the Hon. Minister to affirm these statements, deny these statements, explain these statements, qualify these statements or do something, or otherwise resign. He cannot continue, Mr. Chairman, to permit the whole political process to be demeaned by his inaction; and that's happening.

HON. MR. BARRETT: You're attacking the Minister politically.

MR. GARDOM: He has an opportunity to give an account, and I would like to have that account from him this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair recognizes the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. W.R. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition):

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I will defer to the First Member for Vancouver–Point Grey if there is an opportunity that the Minister will answer the questions.

Interjections.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, while the Minister is pondering his answers to the last series of questions, I have a few brief questions I would like to ask.

I wonder if the Minister would clarify statements reported in August, 1974, about possible sale of Can-Cel shares to finance new development at Ocean Falls. As you may recall, this was first brought up during the Minister of Finance's estimates. I felt, quite properly, that the purchase of shares was under the control of the Minister of Finance, but he advised that that should come up under the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources' estimates about whether the Minister did advise the public through the media that there was a possibility of selling Can-Cel shares. I would like the Minister to advise the House if he has ever given instructions to anyone or any firm to acquire shares in Can-Cel to take the government position to over 90 per cent. I would like the Minister to advise the House whether the purchases of the shares were made by B.C. Cellulose or whether any other department of government bought shares in Can-Cel.

I'd like the Minister to advise the House why the government would buy the shares, or why B.C. Cellulose would buy the shares, when one of the newspaper accounts of the reason for buying was that they were for an employee stock purchase plan, when, indeed, he's taken great pains at many times to say that Can-Cel is free from government favour or interference. We all know that an employee stock purchase plan is usually provided by the company and the directors of the company. Here we had a case of a third party — a large shareholder, a majority shareholder, to be sure — purchasing the shares and announcing the employee purchase plan to the surprise of the company directors who said that although they had discussed such a plan, they had thought that they were going to be the ones to administer it.

I wonder if the Minister could also advise the House if there have been meetings by the Minister with the Deputy Minister of Finance and Mr. Irwin with either or both the Ontario Securities Commission and the Toronto Stock Exchange. Has the Minister given instructions to either B.C. Cellulose or any other department to stop buying Can-Cel shares? Could he advise the House on what date he gave those instructions?

MS. K. SANFORD (Comox): Mr. Chairman, I have a few brief questions to the Minister as well.

The people on the north end of the island, particularly, are keenly interested in having more land made available for small, rural 2- to 3-acre pieces of land on which they can build a home.

Interjection.

MS. SANFORD: Isn't that interesting! The Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot) is mentioning the Tsitika-Schoen this afternoon. He has mentioned that several times over the past few weeks. He has had an opportunity all afternoon to get up and speak on the Tsitika-Schoen, and hasn't yet expressed an opinion on it. I would like to ask the Minister, in view of the fact that there is such demand — certainly in the north end of the island and, I assume, in many parts of the province — what action the Department of Lands is taking with regard to making available 2- to 3-acre parcels of land for housing development.

I would also like to refer briefly to the Tsitika-Schoen study that has taken place. Mr. Chairman, over the years we have not taken enough interest nor spent enough time looking at the land use in this province. I compliment the Minister, who, two years ago, looked at the last remaining untouched major watershed on the eastern coast of Vancouver Island and said: "Yes, let's set this aside for two years. Let's look at the resources that are there and make a decision on the future of that river valley."

There are 310,000 acres which includes the Tsitika River and an area which the Parks department for 20 years has been recommending should become a provincial park — that whole area was set aside for study for Howard Paish. When Howard Paish, with help of various departments, had finished the study they made recommendations to the Minister consisting of four different options.

I personally was in the riding and have made my viewpoints known as to the future of the Tsitika-Schoen. From my own personal viewpoint I would like to mention in the House today that the people of the area are most appreciative of the opportunity they had to have some input into deciding what the future land use of the province should be, particularly in that area. Time and time again, since those public hearings, people have come up to me and said: "I read what you had to say and what your opinions are about the future of that area. I don't agree with you, but I compliment you and your government for giving us an opportunity to participate in this way and make our views known." I congratulate the Minister for that.

The other thing I would like to refer to is the work that is now taking place at Port Alice. The Minister has already referred to it this afternoon. Again, the \$40 million which is being spent there by Rayonier is going to allow the fish to go up to Victoria Lake and

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to allow the Neroutsos Inlet to regain some life.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Chairman, the Minister has been accused of lying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Is the Hon...?

MR. McGEER: Not by me, Mr. Chairman. I didn't make that accusation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Before the Hon. Member proceeds, I would point out that no Hon. Member can do indirectly what they cannot do directly. It's not permitted to read something into the thing which suggests that an Hon. member is a liar. Rather they must....

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman....

MR. CHAIRMAN: They must accept the responsibility as Members of this House for their statements.

MR. McGEER: I have before me, Mr. Chairman — whether you choose to run interference for the Minister

or not — a document which it's quite appropriate to read into *Hansard* in this House. I'm not going to duplicate the reading because it's already been placed on the record. I do say this: that the Minister, from the very beginning, has acted in a manner which, to put it charitably, has been sly.

He presented to the House a report taken from Crown corporation files by someone who was not an employee of the corporation or a representative of the Crown. It was someone who was a consultant to the Minister, who then placed on the title page of a document tabled in this House "confidential." It was typed, presumably, on his own typewriter; not typed on the typewriter of the Crown corporation. The Minister left with this House, as a result of tabling that document, the implication that something improper had been going on in the Crown corporation under the direction of a now retired civil servant. That civil servant or his friends are so confident of their position that they have circulated to the public in print the accusations of lying that have been placed on the record of this House.

The Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) asked the Speaker of the chamber whether this document might be in contempt of the House. It was ruled that it was not. But, Mr. Chairman, you can bet that if the people who circulated this report were in the wrong, the government would have landed on them like a ton of bricks.

We challenged the Minister to clear himself. He was the one who suggested an inquiry; not before this House, Mr. Chairman, but before a meeting of his own party. I want to ask the members of his party and his caucus and his colleagues on the Treasury benches: was this a serious statement or was it another attempt to evade the issue? At this point, Mr. Chairman, I don't believe the government has any intention of holding an inquiry into B.C. Hydro. I don't think the Minister has any intention of answering these charges. I think, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister hopes to remain silent until the clock runs out on his estimates, because it appears, Mr. Chairman, as if a brand new system has been devised to silence the opposition...

MR. FRASER: Closure!

MR. McGEER: ...the system of dangling a Minister's estimates in front of the House long enough to make a pro forma presentation, but not long enough for the Minister to get into trouble for the answers he may be unwilling to give.

MR. LIDEN: You should know all about that. You're never in the House.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, the business of this House cannot go forward...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member....

MR. McGEER: ...until the Member answers these charges. We cannot go on to another Minister this evening, or at any time in the future of this Legislature, unless and until a Minister who comes to answer before the public of British Columbia in this House...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would ask the....

MR. McGEER: ...is prepared to account for improper actions if he has committed those improper actions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask the Hon. Member to relate his remarks more directly to vote 126.

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, we're on the salary of a Minister — another Minister, Mr. Chairman, — who's been accused of lying. It's in print — not as with the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) by sworn affidavit, but nevertheless in a public document....

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You're a real academic.

It's in print. Wow! A real academic.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, that seems to be about the best answer the Minister has been able to give. Now we want to know, Mr. Chairman: will he deny the allegations in this printed document? Will he admit that he made false charges and improperly impugned officials of a Crown corporation? If he makes that admission...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member....

MR. McGEER: ...he's outlived his usefulness to that Crown corporation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would ask the Hon. Member if he is making an imputation against the Hon. Minister at this time.

MR. McGEER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm asking questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. It appears to the Chair as though the Hon. Member is making an imputation of wrongdoing against the Minister. The Hon. Member knows that the proper procedure, if he is so doing, is to put a motion on the order paper.

MR. McGEER: No, Mr. Chairman. I said "if."

The Minister can stand up — and we hope he can — categorically deny everything that's in this document. Is it improper for him to do that?

MRS. D. WEBSTER (Vancouver South): Shame!

MR. McGEER: Is it improper for him to stand up and deny charges that he was lying? Is there something wrong with that, Mr. Chairman?

Or is it wrong for a Minister to continue serving as a director of a Crown corporation and a Minister of the Crown when it's obvious to everyone that he's afraid to try and answer the charges because he can't? Which is correct, Mr. Chairman? We are prepared to sit through this afternoon, through the dinner hour and through the evening...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would ask the Hon. Member....

MR. McGEER: ...and through the week until we hear the answers to that question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask the Hon. Member by his remarks if he is suggesting that he agrees with the imputation and the allegations that are made in this report.

MR. McGEER: I am asking which is correct. I am asking for the Minister to get some answers. Mr. Chairman, I will yield the floor...

MR. G.H. ANDERSON (Kamloops): Will you be here to hear it?

MR. McGEER: ...but if the Minister isn't prepared to get up and answer, I am prepared to get up and ask the question again and again and again and again.

MR. LIDEN: Are you sure you can stay?

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister didn't hear the question. I think, since it's an important question and he doesn't choose to answer it, it must be that he didn't hear it. Or perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I didn't phrase the question well. I will try again.

MR. LIDEN: You missed it earlier today. You should try being in the House.

MR. McGEER: The Minister placed before the House a report...

MR. FRASER: Where were you for two weeks? (Laughter.)

MR. McGEER: ...which alleged that a secret committee, in the Minister's words, had been improperly juggling costs on the Columbia River treaty.

We believed that. The Hon. Members of this House were gulled. When we looked at the document a little more closely, we noticed — and so did some of the people who are more astute than the opposition. I am talking about the people of the *Fourth Estate*. They started comparing the typewriter characters and noticed that it was a completely different typewriter that put "Confidential" on that document. It wasn't confidential at all, unless the person who gave it to the Minister and typed the word "Confidential" on the front meant it to be confidential to the Minister. That could have been. It could have been that it was sent to the Minister with the intent that the Minister keep it confidential.

MR. G.H. ANDERSON: You don't believe that, do you?

MR. McGEER: We haven't heard from the Minister one way or another. We don't know what to believe. But those who know more than the Minister and who were responsible for what went on in Hydro accused the Minister of being a liar. Perhaps the Minister didn't hear...

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MR. BENNETT: Read it.

MR. McGEER: ...what the Second Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. Gardom) had to say.

"The Hon. R.A. Williams stated in the Legislature (1) that there was a secret committee made up of senior Hydro officials within hydro, and that (2), it reallocated costs regarding the Columbia River treaty, and, according to the press, he also said that the secret committee (3) deliberately juggled funds over a two-year period to hide the true costs of the Columbia River project. All three statements are false.

"Whether or not the Hon. Mr. Williams will now confess that he knew that his charges were false and that he made them in the hope of misleading the House and the public is something that will have to be left to him and his conscience."

There's no secret about where it came from, nothing confidential on the front of this, Mr. Chairman. But there are some people here who would like to jog the conscience of the Minister just a little bit and ask him to clear...

MR. G.H. ANDERSON: Name names.

MR. McGEER: ...his name. I won't say his good name. How can a Minister who gives false and misleading statements to the House be useful as a director of a Crown corporation?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Is this the statement of the Hon. Member or is he quoting?

MR. McGEER: No. This is from a former high official of the Crown corporation. If the officials of the Crown corporation believe this of one of the directors, how can that director be effective?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Who appointed whom?

MR. McGEER: Are we only going to appoint officials to Hydro who don't give a damn about this sort of thing? Is that what the Minister means with his interjection?

Interjection.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, I don't think we need to rush by this point. It is a fundamental point of personal character; it is a fundamental point of political integrity; it is a fundamental point concerning the

effectiveness of how a Legislature operates. In some jurisdictions, Mr. Chairman, people caught out lying are expected to resign from the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member whether he is....

MR. McGEER: That's a British tradition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the Hon. Member again, and I would ask it as a direct question to you: are you impugning a dishonourable motive to the Minister, that is, of lying? Are you suggesting that he is lying?

MR. McGEER: I'm just pleading with him, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I'm asking the Hon. Member — yes or no — are you suggesting that he is lying?

MR. McGEER: No, I'm not, Mr. Chairman. I'm only asking the question.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's no wonder the NDP fired you.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Not those nice Liberals!

MR. McGEER: Absolutely not! It's different for the Members from Wall Street. But the Minister has had opportunities this afternoon to shoot down this document, to make us look cheap for even asking the question. Certainly, if the Minister had given the answer before this afternoon, we wouldn't have felt obliged to raise the matter at all.

MR. FRASER: That's socialism — no answer.

MR. McGEER: If he categorically denies this involvement and repudiates the allegations here, I would be the first one to applaud him. I don't think you ever apologize for asking questions but I will thank him for the answers.

MR. FRASER: Don't be optimistic; you won't get any.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has had an opportunity not only to search his conscience but to consider the alternatives for action. Perhaps he could even tell us: was it a phony promise that a commission of inquiry would be held or did he really mean it? If he meant it, when is it going to start?

Interjection.

MR. McGEER: It won't be starting after the next election, Mr. Member. They won't be there to call one.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. D.G. COCKE (Minister of Health): Yeah, yeah.

MR. McGEER: You won't be either, Mr. Member.

HON. MR. COCKE: Oh, yeah.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, that is for the future. For the present, it is a question of whether the Minister can effectively carry on with the responsibilities which he holds from now until the end of his term without answering these charges.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: There is a range of questions that haven't been covered, Mr. Chairman. One was with respect to reforestation. The information is that there were some 53.6 million trees planted last year and there will be some 85 million trees planted this year as part of our reforestation programme. That sets a record.

AN HON. MEMBER: That hasn't been heard of.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: The question of B.C. Hydro and the statements from Mr. Keenleyside — the old man and his memories, part of his memoirs there. I have no reason to comment further at this stage. We've said that there will be an inquiry. There will be an inquiry. The public will at long last have the facts on the Columbia River treaty as they should have had long ago which they never got from the former administration, ever, ever, ever. There will be an inquiry and that's that. I don't think any further comment on that is necessary.

Regarding Cellulose and some general questions. Have there been directives to acquire up to and over 90 per cent? The answer is no. Acquisition, as I understand it, has all been through the Department of Finance.

The employee plan has been discussed on many occasions with the staff and with the board of directors of Canadian Cellulose, and I guess it will continue.

Acquisition currently. I am unaware of any acquisition currently.

The opposition is so down on these success stories that I can't help but quote from a letter to the editor tonight with respect to Ocean Falls from a worker at Oceans Falls whom I have not met. The writer says:

"Recently Bill Bennett said he would shut down Ocean Falls if he was in power. Mr. Bennett didn't think much about the economy of this area, this province, this country.

"Last year Ocean Falls Corp. paid over \$5 million in wages, of which more than \$1.5 million went back into government coffers through income tax. This is much better than having 400 people on welfare.

"And for every job created in Ocean Falls Corp. at least five others are sustained elsewhere, through our suppliers, et cetera. Since all of our product is sold overseas, there can't be any harm being done to our national balance of payments either.

"What would happen to the economics of the region without Ocean Falls Corp.? Would Northland Navigation still operate? Where would the fishermen stop for supplies?

"We still have many problems in Ocean Falls, in the mill as well as the town. But the morale of the community is much better than last year, the work force is more stable, and while progress is slow, it is evident.

"There are even rumours that we will show profit for the past year. Who can argue with that?"

says the letter writer to the *Vancouver Sun* tonight. I expect that really sums up the difference between this side of the House and that side of the House in terms of preparing to step in and take action rather than letting areas be forgotten and dwindle on the vine.

Interjections.

MR. ROLSTON: First of all, a question to the Minister about the new home-lot programme that the Minister announced. Last November you announced the home-lot programme, and maybe you could tell us.... This was to be 5,000 lots on the market, you said this year. That's a programme that I think many people expect to see an answer on, and I laud it. As an MLA I'd sure like to know more about it.

I wrote you and would like to get some kind of response on helping growth areas with water. The Norrish Creek for 70 years was seen as a source of water for the Fraser Valley. Do you see some kind of help, apart from the expertise...?

Mr. Chairman, can I have a little order, please?

Can there be some kind of help — at least detailed engineering help from your department of water on looking to a new source of water for the central Fraser Valley from the Norrish Creek? The Norrish Creek, or Cascade Creek, is east of the little crossroad at Dewdney. We're talking about water for Mission, especially for Abbotsford. Langley is dependent on wells. Whether it goes into the GVRD or not, Langley still is in a pretty tricky position regarding wells. Chilliwack has a private source of water through a private utility which has been very adequate up until now, but they too are looking to a large major source of water. I would make a real appeal to you to look to some kind of help — in fact, paying the full, detailed, working drawings and engineering costs for

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the Norrish Creek project, a project which I think will bring on water. We're talking about ultimately 300,000 people in the central Fraser Valley. This Norrish Creek project would bring water from Dixon Lake at an elevation of 2,000 feet through a system of catchments in the Norrish Creek itself to the people of Mission.

I'd like to ask the Minister an administrative question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Members please observe the standing order requiring that no one interrupt the person who has the floor?

MR. ROLSTON: Thank you. For MLAs who live in the flood plain as I do, and the Members for Langley (Mr. McClelland) and Chilliwack (Mr. Schroeder) and Richmond (Mr. Steves) and Delta (Mr. Liden), we continually must ask the question of the restraints that your department and Municipal Affairs have put on any kind of activity in the flood plain. There have been restraints. Maybe to just bring us up to date on the flood-control requirements, has there been any change? You've been asked to have a look into this and I'd appreciate any flexibility, especially when it comes to servicing an area where people actually won't be living but where you will be putting in machinery and industrial sites.

MR. GARDOM: You can ask him in caucus.

MR. ROLSTON: Finally, I want to congratulate you on the fact that you say you will be planting 100 million trees. I'm told 17 million of these will be styroblock, about 5 million mudpack, and a few will be the bullet. Certainly I like to see a few more details from you on the effectiveness of this.

What happens, for instance, in the case of some companies who have got into real difficulties financially and yet have commitments and are expected to carry out a reforestation programme? Does your department pick up this during a recession? I'm thinking especially up in the interior, and certainly on the coast. Is there any change in the business of charging for trees? You said last year it was simply a cycle or a circle. Has there been any change in your department administratively in charging for the trees?

I would still make a pitch to you that we see a mix in reforestation. I've looked at a variety of projects last Thursday on southern Vancouver Island.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. ROLSTON: I would appeal to you to continue the programme of a variety of....

Interjections.

[Mr. Chairman rises.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the Hon. Member be seated?

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Members be seated while I am standing, please?

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is ready to begin as soon as the House....

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is ready to begin as soon as the Hon. Members are prepared to follow the rules of the House.

[Mr. Chairman resumes his seat.]

AN HON. MEMBER: What a Chairman!

MR. CHABOT: (Mike not on.) ...wanted to answer. I could have told the Minister that a long time ago I used to have irrigation rights through my property. I wonder where the water is gone, because the water doesn't flow through my property any more. But I'm not going to bring that one up.

I was wondering whether the Minister could tell me when we could expect the tabling of the Gottesman National contract, that contract which Ocean Falls Corp. entered into in which the people of British Columbia lost \$800,000 last year — \$800,000. They got bilked in that contract; there's no doubt about that. The Minister said at that time that he wouldn't table the contract because he didn't want to jeopardize his competitive position. I understand there's a new contract. How about tabling that contract?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: All the old contracts.

MR. CHABOT: All the old contracts.

AN HON. MEMBER: Open government! Ho, ho!

MR. CHABOT: This is the most secretive Minister we have in government. He's always hiding down in his office behind his army of aides. He's hiding. He has even got Mason Gaffney to hide behind out at the university when he's not around his office — his remade, costly study. I don't know how much it cost.

I wonder if the Minister would tell me whether the Bella Coola regional study will be made public and, if so, when?

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Also, could you tell me — you didn't answer me — whether Mr. Jones, president of B.C. Cellulose, was negotiating with MacMillan Bloedel? When he approached MacMillan Bloedel, was he doing it on his own initiative or on behalf of the Minister for the setting up of his consortium for the operation of the new plants and facilities at Ocean Falls? Has MacMillan Bloedel accepted the idea of a consortium for the utilization of the timber in that region?

AN HON. MEMBER: Has anyone?

MR. CHABOT: Or has anyone? Right.

One other question. The Minister indicated that there is a road under construction by the Forest Service to Roscoe Bay. The Minister hasn't clearly indicated if it's for a new community; nor has the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson) when I questioned him in his estimates. He said there was no contemplation of a new community at Roscoe Bay. I'm inclined to think there is.

I want to know really whether the road is going to be paid for by the Forest Service, by the Department of Highways or whether it is ultimately going to be charged to the Department of Housing. There is going to be a housing complex; there has been an examination of the needs of a housing complex there. The Ocean Falls Corp. on

March 3, 1975, wrote a letter to Mr. W.C.R. Jones, president, British Columbia Cellulose Co., 806 Board of Trade Tower, Vancouver. It says:

"Dear Ray:

"Re: Ocean Falls alternatives" — which I mentioned a little previously.

"The attached study indicates the estimated labour requirements for possible alternatives for Ocean Falls. It also shows the existing housing available, plus additional housing required for the various alternatives. To provide the necessary additional accommodation, the only place with sufficient area is Roscoe Bay. The number of residents other than employees is only a minimum figure and would probably be much higher if space were available. Crown Zellerbach housed a payroll of 1,400 men at Ocean Falls during its peak operations; 700 were single men living at bunkhouses. Over 200 old married accommodations were demolished by Crown Zellerbach in the late 1960s.

"Yours truly,
Ocean Falls Corp.,
E.F. Vezak,
General Manager.
"c.c. R.A. Williams
N. Pearson."

I want the Minister to deny that they're looking at the possibilities of establishing a housing complex at Roscoe Bay.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Why do you want me to deny it?

MR. CHABOT: Well, because of the fact that Minister there, the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson), told me just a few nights ago that there was no intention of his department getting involved in any housing development at Roscoe Bay. I suggest that that's not the truth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHABOT: I suggest that your department and the Department of Housing...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member....

MR. CHABOT: ...are in the process....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the Hon. Member for Columbia River if he's suggesting that the Hon. Minister of Housing was not telling the truth to the House.

MR. CHABOT: Well, I said, Mr. Chairman, the Minister misled me when he answered that they're not considering a development of housing in Roscoe Bay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. This is imputing an improper motive to the Minister. I would ask the Hon. Member to withdraw it.

MR. CHABOT: Well, okay, if you feel that it offends the Minister. I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister is ignorant of the facts, then. He doesn't understand what is taking place in his department and taking place in the Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources.

MR. FRASER: Right on!

MR. CHABOT: There is going to be a housing development at Roscoe Bay, and there have been communications between the B.C. Cellulose Company and Ocean Falls Corp. Don't they consult with the Minister of Housing? Certainly they do, and I know that. The Minister of Housing certainly wasn't telling us all of the facts the other night when he suggested there wasn't going to be a housing development at Roscoe Bay.

Now will the Minister tell me: will the charges for this highway ultimately be charged back to the Department of Housing? Also, can the Minister tell me when the \$118 million complex will be

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constructed in Ocean Falls, or in the vicinity of Ocean Falls? Is it true, as it is my understanding, that the government is delaying the proceeding of this project until such time as labour negotiations in the forest industry, in the pulp industry, have been resolved? Is that true?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: On the question of Ocean Falls, Mr. Chairman, the road is being constructed — and I think I probably said that when the Member was out of the House, earlier on, but I'm not sure — by the Forest Service. I investigated it late last summer. It's proceeding very well. Excellent work is being done by the Forest Service engineering staff again.

MR. CHABOT: Who's paying for it?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: It's being paid for by the people of British Columbia, through the Forest Service.

MR. CHABOT: Ultimately housing?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No. Through the Forest Service. There is funding for road construction within the Forest Service vote.

MR. CHABOT: For housing?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No.

MR. CHABOT: For housing projects?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No. For roads through forests, and that's exactly what this road is. (Laughter.) And it makes a great deal of sense. Would you prefer that we build a road for IT&T or Rayonier? Is that the stand of the official opposition — that we should build free roads for IT&T, Rayonier and MacMillan Bloedel, as was the pattern in the past? Is that where you're at? Is that what's confusing you?

The business of Roscoe Bay: yes, there is the potential for housing at Roscoe Bay. It's only being analyzed; it's being analyzed at the corporate level, now, in terms of just the general site potential. That's the stage we're at, within the Ocean Falls Corp., within B.C. Cellulose and with outside consultants as well. So that seems to me a reasonable idea. If it appears feasible to proceed beyond these preliminary investigations, then discussions will begin with the Minister of Housing to date. It has entirely been within the corporate structure that this matter has been investigated.

MR. FRASER: Send him a copy of your letter.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You just can't win.

Interjections.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Well, I'm not aware of anything different, other than this situation in terms of analysis by the consultants and the staff of the two corporations that, fortunately, we the people of British Columbia own. So, I find it intriguing that this group that were willing to give Ocean Falls the axe....

MR. CHABOT: Will M&B be a partner?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: We're willing to contemplate a mixture of partners. You know, if M&B are willing to leave Brazil we'll certainly consider M&B at Ocean Falls. And we'll consider other British Columbia corporations that have expressed some interest in some aspects of the operations and with whom discussions have been ongoing.

We will consider foreign entities as well, in terms of some joint venture possibilities — possibilities from Europe, for example, in terms of working with the public corporation. Those are exciting possibilities that will diversify the job base in the central coast, and the economy of the province. We think that's desirable.

If it has been in your bailiwick we'd have nothing. We'd have absolutely nothing. You're talking about an \$118 million pulp mill. You know, we'd have lost everything if you guys had won the last election. We would have lost everything in the Ocean Falls area because you would have bought the kind of narrow perspective that one particular multinational corporation had regarding the potential of the central coast.

I indicated that there was available cut in the Hecate, there's available cut in the Dean, there's available cut in the Kimsquit, there's available cut in the Chilcoot, there's available cut in Omineca Lakes, there's available cut in Rivers, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So, you know....

MR. FRASER: Poor little sawmill guys.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You can't win. I'm advised that the hockey score is 1-0, for those who are more interested in that question — for Vancouver.

Interjections.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: On the question of Mr. Jones, I think I've covered the kind of discussions he's having with corporations from abroad and within British Columbia in a general nature. The question of the Gottesman contract: there's no question that the

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contract we presently have is very beneficial in the current market, I'm happy to say.

Interjection.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: No. It's very beneficial in the current market, I am happy to say. And it's meant that we could assure employment in the central coast and we've benefited. No, I hold to the earlier position with respect to the freedom of Crown corporations to actively pursue legitimate activities without harassment.

MR. FRASER: Secrecy!

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You guys can't make up your minds over what's secret, and neither can former officials. But that's a matter of semantics, I guess, for some of the other people outside of this House and some of the people in this House.

On the question of the rural lot programme, within the estimates there is \$2 million for such developments — just as there was last year.

However, last year, I don't believe we're fully extended. The intent is to look at other kinds of flexibility in developing that programme beyond the one that is presently within the estimates, and that's a matter of staff work currently. But there's been a tremendous amount of regional work by the lands branch, which is being decentralized like many of the resource agencies of the province on the basis of the Environment and Land Use Committee regions. They in turn are working with other agencies and local officials regarding the rural lot programme.

We're anxious to see the lot programme pursued and there are difficulties, particularly with the regional districts, who seem to take too narrow a view of this question...

MR. FRASER: You don't tell them anything. That's why they're mad.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: ...in terms of rural settlement. The question of water aid and activities of the water resources branch. I would say that we try and provide as much engineering consulting advice and service to the

smaller communities of the province and unorganized settlements that need water service as we can within the means we have and the staff we have. That has been beneficial in small communities in the north and elsewhere.

With respect to Norrish Creek, that matter is needed beyond that. The question of additional water aid, though, is a matter that the Department of Municipal Affairs might very well pursue and that's a matter for the Minister of Municipal Affairs to advise the House regarding.

I think that covers most of the questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister some questions earlier and he gave some selective answers. But some of the questions were left unanswered.

One of them dealt with the fact of whether he would clarify the statements reported last August of 1974 about possible sale of Can-Cel shares and what steps the Minister took, if that was a misstatement of his intentions, to correct the minds of the public so they wouldn't affect what they did, whether they disposed of their shares, or whether they wouldn't buy any more shares because they were under the impression the government was selling. I wonder if the Minister could advise us what steps he took to clean up this impression, which apparently wasn't true.

Then I'd like to ask some other questions of the Minister which he didn't answer. One was: have there been meetings by the Minister with the Deputy Minister of Finance, with Mr., Irwin or both of the Ontario Securities Commission and the Toronto Stock Exchange regarding Can-Cel shares?

I asked, when did the Minister give instructions to start buying? When did the Minister give instructions to stop buying? What are the dates in regard to Can-Cel shares regarding the purchasing that took place after January of this year?

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Well, Mr. Chairman, government always has the option of either buying or selling. It's simply an option that government has.

MR. BENNETT: The Minister of Finance told me you would tell me.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Government has the option of buying and selling, it's as simple as that. The government has the right under legislation to move in the marketplace and it didn't have that before. You voted against that statute amendment and the government voted for it. That was that. So the information, I think, is fairly clear. Government always has the option of selling or buying and that's an option that we will have so long as the statute remains as it is.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, the point was this — that statements by this Minister could affect the public, the citizens of British Columbia, in their determination whether to buy or sell the shares.

Now this company trades actively and continually on the public exchange. This Minister, through the weight of his office — this Minister through his association and direction of B.C. Cellulose and the fact that B.C. Cellulose is the majority shareholder in Can-Cel — statements by this Minister as to allocation

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of timber and statements by this Minister reflecting whether he's going to buy or sell are going to affect the public attitude, the attitude of the citizens of this province whether they buy or sell the shares in this company. It's as simple as that.

Now the Minister must realize that because of his position, and because of the impression he would leave, the statements he makes should be guarded. If a statement is made that will affect the buying mood of the public...this isn't like a normal public company. This is a government Minister, a Minister of the Crown, a Minister with the power to affect the profits of the company by making a statement over the future intentions, or the possible future intentions of his government.

Now the Minister of Finance assured us when we were questioning him under his estimates that this Minister would advise the House what steps he took to clear up any misunderstanding in the public mind over the statements reported to him in September of 1974 by an article in the *Vancouver Province*, because those statements were picked up by leading financial journals and were reprinted in articles, and affected the purchases, or the reason for purchase, or the reason for sale by people, not only in British Columbia but also other Canadian citizens, with regard to Canadian Cellulose.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about the inquiry?

MR. BENNETT: What we have been concerned about is whether the Minister realizes the fragility of the market and the weight his statements have, and the fact that because of his statements and because he is a Minister of the Crown he affects the value of the shares of this company when he states publicly that the government may be selling....

AN HON. MEMBER: That's internal financing.

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, why don't you bring out your report that you are supposed to be doing about that internal trading in Can-Cel?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's right — sweep it under the table.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Interjections.

MR. PHILLIPS: You watch your back! That No. 1 leader is right behind you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the Hon. Member for South Peace River observe the rules of the House and allow the Hon. Member to proceed?

MR. BENNETT: I ask the Minister, in realizing his position, if he would comment upon this and advise the House what steps he took to clear up any public misunderstanding, because apparently some people felt misled by the Minister's statements. The government must realize that more than anything there is an ethical standard of government and a standard of conduct by Ministers, and that they are not just the opposition any more but they are supposed to be responsible Ministers of the Crown. The public, especially the public that may not have been in B.C. to witness their performance...and some citizens in Ontario believed what the Minister said. They actually believed it.

So I would like the Minister to advise in regard to those two questions and also to the other question as to whether he has held meetings with the Deputy Minister of Finance and with either or both the Ontario Securities Commission and the Toronto Stock Exchange regarding the purchase or sale of Can-Cel shares in order for the government or B.C. Cellulose to acquire 90 per cent or more so that they could take this company to Crown corporation status.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that the Leader of the Opposition can't make up his mind. One minute he says the Minister shouldn't make a statement, the next minute he says he should make a statement. I wish he would sort it out and decide what he wants.

MR. BENNETT: It's a very simple question.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS: You are concerned about statements one minute and then you want them the next, so I am having difficulty following your reasoning, but that's par for the course. I am especially having difficulty following your reasoning on the sale of these assets, the sale of Ocean Falls. You said you would get rid of it. You said you would close it down. That's where the opposition stands on that question. Are you proud of that one? And in

turn you say you would get rid of Canadian Cellulose — what do you think that would do to the market in terms of you guys getting rid of Canadian Cellulose? We stand for jobs in British Columbia, and I just don't understand your questioning. I don't understand your policy. I think the people of British Columbia are going to feel the same way. They are just not going to vote for those kinds of ideas when it comes to an election next time around.

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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Interjections.

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver–Capilano): Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, the performance of this Minister this afternoon has been unsatisfactory. The questions have not been answered....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! That is not a point of order.

MR. GIBSON: I ask for a commitment from the House Leader (Hon. Mrs. Dailly) before this committee rises, before the officials leave, that the Minister and the officials...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

MR. GIBSON: ...come back and we continue this....

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

The motion is that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Chairman, I am ready to reply to the point of order.

I would like to point out to the Member — as he is quite aware, I am sure, that the Whips met this afternoon with an opportunity to say which Minister they wanted — that they came to no conclusion. So we just carry on.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The motion is that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I ask the Hon. Member to withdraw, period. Order! There is nothing to discuss. There is only one thing to do and that is to withdraw the phrase "the lying Minister."

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Closure! Closure!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member be seated?

MR. BENNETT: You passed the rules, yet you can't handle it with your majority.

MRS. JORDAN: He's lost control of the House, lost control of his Ministers....

[Mr. Chairman rises.]

Interjections.

[Mr. Chairman resumes his seat.]

Motion approved on the following division:

YEAS — 33

Hall	Macdonald	Barrett
Dailly	Strachan	Nimsick
Stupich	Hartley	Calder
Brown	Sanford	D'Arcy
Cummings	Levi	Lorimer
Williams, R.A.	Cocke	King
Young	Radford	Lauk
Nicolson	Nunweiler	Gabelmann
Lockstead	Gorst	Rolston
Anderson, G.H.	Barnes	Steves
Kelly	Webster	Liden

NAYS — 14

Jordan	Smith	Bennett
Phillips	Chabot	Fraser
Curtis	Morrison	McGeer
Anderson, D.A.	Williams, L.A.	Gardom
Gibson	Wallace	

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the committee reports progress and asks leave to sit again, and further reports that a division took place in committee and asks leave that this be recorded in the *Journals* of the House.

Leave granted.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Chairman, I move the House at its rising do stand adjourned until 8:30 this evening. The order of business this evening will be to proceed to the Minister of Highways.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Speaker, I move the House do now adjourn.

Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

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Interjections.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

Interjections.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER: I declare a recess until 8:30 this evening.

The House took recess at 6:10 p.m.

The House resumed at 8:30 p.m.

Orders of the day.

The House in Committee of Supply; Mr. Dent in the chair.

ESTIMATES: DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

On vote 93: Minister's office, \$138,690.

MR. A.V. FRASER (Cariboo): The Department of Highways total vote is \$275 million — not nearly enough. It should be \$550 million.

I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, with the priority the Highways department has with this government. As a matter of fact, related to the total budget, it gets about 8 cents of every dollar that the province spends. As far as I am concerned, it is on a very low priority as compared even to the Department of Human Resources, which gets almost twice as much money as the Highways department. Consequently, I think we are going to see continued deterioration in the highways and byways of the Province of British Columbia.

The total mileage that the department has to look after is 17,754 miles in one department bulletin. I see in another they say there are 22,000 miles, but I think I'll take the 1973-74 report for the total mileage, and it says 27,754 miles. Of that mileage, 9,000 miles are paved, which means that one-third of the roads in the province are paved.

This budget that we are discussing here tonight, the total budget, is \$275 million, I said, and that's an increase of \$80 million over the 1974 budget. As near as I can analyse this, it's not even going to look after inflation — the increased costs of wages, fuel, equipment and so on — so all we can expect is less maintenance and less construction, which is certainly very unfortunate.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that this government certainly has its priorities all mixed up, and I think in the case of gasoline tax and so on, that it should be related in some way to highways because the highways are the ones that earn it. But I think ICBC — Moscow Mutual — has got in there and robbed the money that normally should have gone to the Highways department. As a matter of fact....

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Certainly it is.

HON. A.B. MACDONALD (Attorney-General): Ho Chi Minh.

MR. PHILLIPS: Moscow Mutual.

MR. FRASER: Well, our roads are going to be like his roads — Ho Chi Minh's — I'll tell you.

I would also, Mr. Chairman, like to ask the Minister to comment on the fact that the reduced speed limits that were put in in British Columbia last fall — 55, 50 and 45 miles an hour, in different areas — were put in at the request of Icky-Bicky, Moscow Mutual. Or was it put in for safety reasons? I have reason to believe it is a combination of both, and I don't know which has the most priority. Did you put it in to reduce the claims against ICBC or for safety reasons?

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): You're opposed to it. That's what it is.

MR. FRASER: I'm not asking that deposed Minister of Highways any questions. He can look after Transport and Communications and be quiet while we are debating Highways, because he got kicked out of that job. He didn't last very long.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Tell us about the porcupine pie.

MR. FRASER: Yes, well, I'm coming to that. (Laughter.)

I would say also on the speed limits, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, that I think you are confusing the motorists in some places. I refer to, say, the Deas Island tunnel area. I think there are three speed limits there in a mile and a half. My experience the other day was that there were four highway patrol cars in that zone and they were taking full advantage.... What I am saying is: can't we have a little more continuity? Why bring a motorist down into three speed zones in an area like the Deas Island tunnel in that short distance? I think you are just setting up a trap, or is it set up on purpose to increase revenue for the provincial Treasury?

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you just get a ticket, Alex?

MR. FRASER: I didn't say that. I didn't say I

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did...

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you?

MR. FRASER: ...but one or two more and I'll be walking.

HON. L.T. NIMSICK (Minister of Mines and Petroleum Resources): Say yes or no.

MR. FRASER: But I do think the motorist should be given a better break in the speed limits. Even out on the main freeway you have 55, then you have 50, and I don't think it will be a hazard or against safety if the freeway, and I am referring to the Trans-Canada out of Vancouver to the end where it is now — the Agassiz turnoff. It wouldn't hurt to have it posted at 55 — it's a safe road.

There are areas there that are 50 miles per hour.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Minister uses a helicopter.

MR. FRASER: I know the Minister used the helicopter. With the nine government airplanes, he has his choice of those as well, but stay on the road and find out what is going on.

I have travelled on the roads a lot during the last two or three weeks. We call it spring breakup, and I am concerned about the highways all breaking up. The Trans-Canada has broken up. As a matter of fact, the Trans-Canada Highway, No. 1, is broken up so badly from Spences Bridge to Cache Creek right now that there was one, maybe two, fatal accidents. I don't think that should happen. We had a fatal accident there the other night that was caused by a pothole on the Trans-Canada. One truck slammed the brakes on and another one came in behind and couldn't stop. This caused the death of the driver of the second machine. I think that's straight carelessness on the main No. 1 road.

Interjection.

MR. FRASER: I don't want any remarks coming from that Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Hartley) because he's the MLA for that area and he should have seen that everything was looked after, but he's sitting down

here in his fur-lined office and he's never been in his riding.

MR. PHILLIPS: He's the Minister of vacant offices.

MR. FRASER: I think it is serious, not only on No. 1 but also on Highway 97 which I would like to talk about a little bit — the area from the boundary in the States, up through the Okanagan, through the Cariboo and up into the Prince George area. There has been a programme going on in sections.

That road, by the way, is full of potholes for 60 to 70 miles at a stretch. This recurs every year, and the way to fix it is to rebuild the road. But we don't get enough money out of this government to rebuild the road, so it is a continual patch job — just patch on patch. It repeats itself every year.

I want to deal with the Highway 97 shouldering programme. There was a fair amount which took place last year on Highway 97 in different areas. I am not so sure about this shouldering programme. At first I thought it was excellent and a distinct safety measure, and I think it is. But I just found out recently that when you shoulder a road, widen the shoulder, and complete it, I believe there is an oil sprayed on it. You don't pave it and it is not your intention to pave it, so you spray with oil. According to the information I received last weekend, because of the spring weather the water is being held up on this new shoulder job and running back into the paved road that exists and causing failures to the blacktop that is already there. I would like to hear a comment from the Minister about this.

If this is happening I think we had better change around pretty fast or we will have no pavement left if this shoulder is causing the problem. I would also like him to find out if it is the long-term objective of the department to pave these shoulders, or if the department is just going to leave them with a sprayed oil gravel surface.

I think the Hope-Princeton Highway is a real disgrace. Some work has been done, but a lot more is needed. It's like so many of our roads — completely inadequate for the traffic it has to carry.

Then we have congestion in every decent-sized community — Kelowna, Penticton, Vernon, Kamloops and then up through the central interior. When you get within 10 miles of these communities you get into congested traffic.

Another thing is we have the zoning start in the Department of Highways, and the highways are so inadequate that he must turn down subdivisions. The reason given was that it will put a strain on the highways. Well, I never heard of such an idiotic excuse in my life. Why can't we widen the roads going into these communities, and give them four lanes? They have the rights-of-way available; they don't have to be acquired. Then you would be able to accommodate the local traffic that obviously builds up on all sides of these communities. You could look after the local traffic as well as the through traffic.

I don't think the answer is to be continually saying no to development. Where are people going to live? Do we not want them here? Do we want them to leave the province? Maybe the Minister has some plan to invoke birth control or something. But the population is coming into all these communities and

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the Highways department says they cannot build anywhere near the highway. If they can build, all right, but they won't give them access to get out and go to the various areas to which they have to go.

Mr. Minister, I would like to know how long they are going to be saying no and what they are finally going to do about the congestion of traffic in all the communities where you have a two-lane road. I think that Highway 97 is a good example from the border right through to its northern terminus. There are problems in going in and out of every community and nothing is being done to relieve these problems.

I don't want to hear the Minister blame the municipalities. I know that a lot of municipalities haven't looked after their internal traffic, but neither has the Department of Highways. I think you have to show the lead and show

these people what they have to do. You have the biggest responsibility and the biggest job.

Something else I would like to comment on and hear from the Minister on is the paving of subdivisions. I think now throughout the province the laying of subdivisions is required. I really have no dispute about that. I think on the long-term view. The subdivider must pave. Of course, he can incorporate that into his lot price and pass it on to the eventual buyer of the lot. But, Mr. Chairman, I think it is ridiculous to ask him to pave a subdivision where you have 50 miles of gravel and potholes to get to that subdivision. I would like to hear the comments on that when it concerns forcing of paving, say, on a subdivision of 20 lots out in the jack pine when they have a gravel road 50 miles in length. I can tell you that the citizens don't understand that policy. I think it is well for the Minister to explain it.

Another thing that is currently going on is the work being done in the Fraser Canyon — I say near Ferrebee Tunnel, I'm not sure what you call it. I would like to hear a report about that work. It went on last year, Fairby tunnel in the Fraser Canyon, on Trans-Canada Highway No. 11. Then there was a halt in this work. Now they have arranged a schedule starting in late April to go through to May or June and recommence the work.

I went through the Fraser Canyon the other day. All those people in the Canyon from Hope to Spences Bridge are irate about these closures. They can't understand why work wasn't started earlier in 1975. Further, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to hear from the Minister that it couldn't be done because of snow, because the snow has been gone for quite a while. I go up and down there continuously. I think that work could have been started a month ago and we would have cut a month off coming in to the busy tourist season.

When I was in the Fraser Canyon the other day, they were looking all over for their MLA. They hadn't seen him, the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Hartley), since they ran him out of there last year on this very issue. They are all his constituents and they had a big indignation meeting there last year about the closures last year. As I say, they are all looking for him again now with the new closures, but they haven't seen him. They asked me to pass this message on for the people of Yale-Lillooet.

Interjection.

MR. FRASER: Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Member. This government's favourite word is "closure." They've got closure in the Legislature, closure on the highways. That is their leading word. That is a really popular word with this government — closure.

HON. D. BARRETT (Premier): How come you're still talking?

MR. FRASER: I wish you would bring that Member to order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): Talk while you can here. Talk while you can.

MR. FRASER: Another thing that I would like to hear from the Minister on a policy level is whether we intend to keep the same miles of gazetted roads that we've had for years? Do we intend to expand on that? What is the policy?

The interior of the province has a lot of logging roads, some deserted and some not. When the logging ceases, or even when it is on, the Highway department refuses to take any miles of roads over. People are moving in. They are not buying from the government — in some cases they might be — but they are acquiring homes along these roads. The real estate people and I don't know who else are telling these people when they acquire this property: "Oh, yes, it is all looked after by the Department of Highways and it is a public road." They don't find anything out about it until it starts to snow and there isn't a snow plough coming along and they want to know why. They are given the stock answer, and they have been for 10 years at least, that it isn't a public road and there is no intention of taking it over.

Mr. Minister, I would like to know just how long this status quo on the takeover of roads is going to last. I think you have got to take a new look and realize that this province is growing, whether the socialists like it or not,

and it requires people to get back in these isolated areas.

Some of the people like that style of living and then there is trouble for the Highways department and for everybody else when these people get caught in these situations. So I would like to know what the intention of the department is. Is their long-range

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intention on this just to sit and say no forever, or what do they plan on doing?

I'm almost finished, Mr. Chairman, but I'd like a comment on the vote of new equipment in this vote. It's gone from \$8 million to \$11 million. Really, it's nice to see it going up, but \$11 million doesn't buy very many bulldozers, graders, trucks and so on and so forth. It means again that the poor old Department of Highways will continue to have an inadequate quantity of equipment.

Last but probably not the least: safety. I noticed last year that on the main highways — and I'm referring to the main highways; some secondary roads are kept up — there seems to be a real lack of painted centre lines. We went into this last winter with completely inadequate centre lines.

AN HON. MEMBER: They're all on the left-hand side of the road now.

MR. FRASER: They say they're all on the left-hand side of the road now, but there aren't any at all. I think that this is deplorable from a safety measure. Going into winter conditions, it's bad enough if there is a centre line. In the interior we have it snowing every day. I'd like to know why this has to happen. Why can't they get the centre lines and the side lines — whatever these people call it — freshly painted starting in the summertime and have them all in order by the time the inclement weather starts in the fall? I don't think that in this day and age that excuse is good enough for a really small item like that, but a very essential, important item as regard to safety. Thank you.

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Chairman, it's nice to see the Minister making notes. He'll probably answer some questions this evening. It's a little bit dizzying to Members of the opposition to have these Ministers tossed out one after another and withdrawn very quickly if there's the slightest sign of trouble.

Interjection.

MR. McGEER: I can't remember the last time we passed a vote in this House. I don't know whether we'll get through the Minister of Highways or not, but we do know this: if he gets into any trouble, there'll be some NDP backbenchers up to speak and the clock will run out before there's any kind of difficulty arising. It's a new style of government, a new style of running the Legislature.

HON. D.G. COCKE (Minister of Health): Where were you at opening time?

MR. McGEER: I was asking all kinds of questions about that Minister being accused of lying — not by me, Mr. Chairman. I was in here asking the questions when other ministers, not of the Crown, were running interference. I'd have been here right through the dinner hour asking those questions if the House Leader, acting to defend the government, hadn't pulled the vote. The Premier announced, Mr. Chairman, that all we had to do was to ask for the Minister we wanted. There was no question which Minister we wanted tonight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. McGEER: Right over there.

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: Don't turn around, Mr. Premier.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Would the Hon. Member confine his remarks to vote 93?

AN HON. MEMBER: Get it together.

MR. McGEER: He can't run the House; his Deputy can't run the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Member please confine his remarks to vote 93?

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of hospital insurance says I was watching a hockey game. As I recall, when I was here in the House asking questions about the integrity of the Minister, he was announcing the hockey scores.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member confine his remarks to vote 93, please?

MR. McGEER: He was watching hockey and keeping notice of how our team was doing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Would the Hon. Member confine himself to vote 93?

MR. McGEER: I was interested in the integrity of government.

Interjections.

[Mr. Chairman rises.]

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member be seated, please?

I would ask the Hon. Member to try to speak to vote 93. Thank you.

[Mr. Chairman resumes his seat.]

MR. McGEER: I'm doing my best to stick with that Minister. You know how easily I'm distracted by heckling from the government benches.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask the Hon. Members on the government side not to interrupt the Hon. Member, please.

MR. McGEER: Thank you very much.

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: On that basis I'd like to ask the Minister of Highways a question or two.

I want to thank the Minister. We had about 1.6 miles of unpaved highway in Point Grey that had been there for some time. They actually paved it. I think the Minister did this to try and deprive me of my annual speech. But I want to go on now to bigger things, since Point Grey doesn't have that bit of dirt road, and ask the Minister what his policy is with regard to highways in the province and the income from the gasoline tax.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right on.

MR. McGEER: British Columbia has the most difficult terrain of any province in the nation. Never in the past have gasoline taxes paid by users of motor vehicles been sufficient to serve the highway needs of the province.

But now at a time when the government states as its policy the development of alternative transportation systems to the automobile, in the crassest move that a government has ever made to buy votes it is diverting the gasoline tax into the subsidization of insurance. Not only is that counter to the stated government policies, making the Premier, the Minister of Transport (Hon. Mr. Strachan) and the Minister of Highways hypocrites, Mr. Chairman, but it's flying in the face of priority needs in British Columbia.

We don't have any need in this province to subsidize the automobile, no matter how many votes it may buy. One thing that should be self-sustaining is insurance. I can't think of a less important thing to subsidize out of the provincial Treasury than insurance rates on automobiles. Yet this is what the gasoline tax, in part, is being used for. This is what the Premier announced; this is what the Minister of Transport announced. Yet highways in the province, as many Members will stand up tonight to testify — I'm sure on the government benches as well as the opposition — will be the overwhelming need to improve the communication system in the province, which in the outlying regions is based on the automobile. Even in the urban areas there is a priority need for construction of automobile access.

I want to refer particularly to one major priority need, which is the third crossing of Burrard Inlet, something which provincial governments have turned their backs on for some 15 years and which city and municipal governments are incapable of dealing with because they lack the tax resources.

The Lion's Gate Bridge is an inadequate crossing of Burrard Inlet. At the present time it's going to have to go through a complete phase of reconstruction, which won't improve the bridge but will merely keep it for a few years from falling down. If something were to happen to that bridge, it would completely cripple the urban transportation system. There's no question that the No. 1 priority in the urban area is a construction of a third crossing of Burrard Inlet.

The policy of the NDP government to place ferries running across Burrard Inlet is a voyage into the past. Really, Mr. Chairman, it's just an expensive joke. It's not going to attract significant numbers of passengers....

HON. MR. BARRETT: That's what they said about the Royal Hudson.

MR. McGEER: Well, it's a nostalgic form of transportation; it's not a serious way to move people from one area to another. We're spending a lot of money on those ferries. They'll not be full; there isn't a proper termination on either end. It's going to be much slower for the commuter than the present forms of transportation and those two bridges will still be running at capacity.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Read what you said about Can-Cel.

MR. McGEER: Do you want me to talk about Can-Cel?

HON. MR. BARRETT: You've been talking so much that you might as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member to ignore the comments of the Premier and to proceed with his speech.

MR. McGEER: I'd love to talk about Can-Cel. I'd loved to have talked this afternoon about the preferential treatment that Can-Cel has been given on the matter of stumpage in northwest British Columbia.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. McGEER: It's disgraceful favouritism for that Crown corporation, and it illustrates perfectly the evils of government management.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Member return to the vote, please?

AN HON. MEMBER: You tell him off, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McGEER: We get a good example of government management, Mr. Chairman, right here in this House. No one demonstrates it better than the Premier and the Deputy Premier. They can't manage a House. They can't manage a legislative programme.

AN HON. MEMBER: Quit wasting time.

MR. McGEER: They can't manage the finances of the province, and they demonstrate that every single day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. McGEER: They can't even obey instructions from the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would ask the Hon. Member to return to the vote, and I would ask the Hon. Premier not to distract the Hon. Member from his speech.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I apologize for adding logic to his speech.

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm flattered to have the Premier indulge in an exercise in logic, because that's a new venture for him and, I must say, a welcome one. We've not had too many of those in the past from any of the Ministers, much less the Premier.

I hope that I'm able to get across a little logic about the transportation needs in the urban area. I want to suggest what I believe is the most logical place to build that crossing. This is a site that was overlooked in the original effort to push a third crossing through next to Stanley Park. I think it was opposition to desecration of the park that caused that plan to fall through more than it was a conviction that a third crossing of Burrard Inlet wasn't required.

The appropriate place to put that third crossing, in my view, is mid-harbour. There's an area between where the terminals stand on the North Vancouver side, near Grand Boulevard, and NHB property on the south side just east of where the grain elevators now stand. It was a proposal put before the Government of British Columbia, the federal government and the Greater Vancouver Regional District some years ago, but rejected. The attractions of this third crossing are that you would take precisely the same span that would have been built near Stanley Park and place it mid-harbour. The approaches on either side would come out over the shallow section of the harbour and provide additional piers, and perhaps reduce the number of boats that now lie at anchor because of lack of berthing places in our inadequate harbour facilities.

On the south side — that is, the Vancouver city side — instead of the traffic that is to go through the City of Vancouver being dumped in one of the most crowded areas, namely Thurlow and Pender, it would connect up with the Knight Street Bridge, because the connection on the south side would be near Clark Drive and Knight.

The plan would be much cheaper than any of the other proposals because there would virtually be no expense in buying land or in preparing the approaches. The City of Vancouver would not receive the major traffic from the North Shore, or the major traffic that was headed to the North Shore. It would stay well east of the downtown core. The feeder streets are already completed, waiting. The area on the south side is an area of urban blight that would benefit from any kind of traffic going through the area. So it makes financial sense; it makes traffic sense; it makes sense from the point of view of harbour development; and it makes sense for the priority urban development that must take place.

Crossing False Creek between Main and the Burrard Bridge, there is something like 16 lanes of traffic. Half that crosses the North Shore. Looking into the future, the expansion in the metropolitan area logically should take place there, it's going to take place in the farmlands that the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) and the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) are trying to protect. If this now wasted land is to be developed to take care of our expansion, it requires another crossing. If that crossing is built in the sites that have

now been proposed, it will mean a desecration of Stanley Park. The only way that you can avoid this is to go mid-harbour, and it has all of these additional advantages.

So I would like to ask the Minister what his policy is with regard to providing a third crossing of Burrard Inlet, as well as what his policy is for obtaining the full benefits of the gasoline tax for other highway development around the province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Member for Oak Bay.

MR. CHABOT: Thank you very much, Mr.

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Chairman. (Laughter.)

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): Get your hearing aid, Jim.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Member for Oak Bay.

AN HON. MEMBER: He wasn't standing up, but he is now.

MR. WALLACE: Yes, I'm standing up — no problem. (Laughter.)

Mr. Chairman, I'm going to run into the old trap tonight of being accused of being soft on the NDP...

MR. CHABOT: You always are.

MR. WALLACE: ...because I want to start off with a compliment. I'm referring to the report which we just received today of the B.C. Department of Highways.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS (West Vancouver–Howe Sound): It's just a reprint of last year's.

MR. WALLACE: There are some very useful statistics that really point out the highway problem, and particularly I am referring to fatalities on the highway.

Normally I am fed up with statistics in all the reports that we read from different departments, but I do find this one very penetrating and it is really impressive to point out where the problem lies. If I have any criticism, it would be, for example, of the money and time and effort we are spending on vehicle testing stations when what we should really be doing is putting impaired drivers off the highway. The figures speak unmistakably clearly that we are putting a lot of our money and effort in the wrong direction.

For example, we find that of the fatal traffic accidents, 60 per cent took place in clear weather when road conditions were normal, and that less than 2 per cent of fatal accidents were attributed to mechanical failure.

I have a letter from a gentleman up island, an elderly gentleman, expressing his strong views about what he considers a discriminatory approach by government in going through all the fuss and bother and expense and time and trouble of making people go through the testing station in Nanaimo, when all that has happened in the Nanaimo area is that there has been an increase in the frequency of traffic accidents. All the Members, I think, received a copy of this letter from the gentleman in Errington, B.C. He said that the latest accident figures show an increase of 25 per cent for the Nanaimo testing area since the opening of the Nanaimo testing station. He makes the point:

"When you deduct the defects built in by the manufacturers, such as engine mounts in Chevrolets and Pontiacs which occasionally permitted the engine to move forward and jam the throttle linkage, and self-destructing lower control arms on some Fords, the number of accidents caused by negligence and poor maintenance being paltry."

Now these figures in this report, Mr. Chairman, I think cannot be overlooked, and I hope this government is

going to change its direction in a serious attempt to reduce fatalities on our highways.

On page 58 of the report it says:

"The human factor was undoubtedly the major factor in the majority of the accidents. In 44 per cent of 518 fatal accidents, police officers indicated that alcohol had been consumed by one or more of the parties, and that of the 228 fatal accidents where liquor was involved, 32 per cent" — 32 per cent, one-third — "had a blood alcohol exceeding .08."

This means that in 14 per cent of the total fatal accidents, at least one of the participants was impaired.

Now we had a report the other day by two people — Mr. Waddell, and I can't remember the name of the other individual — who came up with figures somewhat similar. I would just pose the question as to whether we are prepared to take sterner action towards at least mitigating the real cause of most of the accident fatalities.

I just read in the press the other day, and I can't just locate the clipping at the moment, about New Brunswick, where I understand second offences for impaired driving will automatically involve a mandatory jail sentence. I also read not too long ago about the situation in Finland where they have drastically reduced traffic accidents because everybody goes to the work camp on the first offence, and there is a line-up of people waiting to go and serve their time building highways. I understand a cabinet Minister finished up working on a runway in Helsinki.

These are some of the measures which I think would be justified by this government or any other government in trying to deal realistically with the most pertinent cause of traffic fatalities.

The question of the vehicle testing stations, I think, is not nearly as important as the positive nature of the effect of impaired drivers, but I wonder if the Minister could give us more statistics as to the percentage of vehicles which go to the testing station and are found to have any kind of really substantial mechanical defect. This report mentions that the mechanical defects which were found related to the steering in a few cases and the brakes in one or two other cases.

I think that what we need to know now to justify

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the kind of time, trouble and expense of vehicle testing is to find out what percentage of the total number of vehicles have any substantial defect. If one has a tail light which isn't working or a turn signal which isn't working, I hesitate to suggest that these would be major factors in contributing to an accident. Certainly the statistics suggest otherwise. But could the Minister tell us what percentage of vehicles are turned down for any thing other than minimal reasons? Perhaps we should equate that with the total cost of operating vehicle testing stations. And we should equate that sum of money, in turn, with the cost of providing defensive driving courses and the kind of programme that is already underway of making persons who are convicted of impaired driving attend the kind of courses of instruction which, I think, were started first of all in Phoenix and which are certainly being implemented in other parts of this province.

I would like to ask one or two specific questions. I was quite surprised by a report I saw in the press last month where a coroner's jury in Clearwater ruled that the provincial Department of Highways was responsible for the death of Jake Feenstra, a Calgary truck driver. The jury ruled that the death was accidental but stated that the Highways department had failed to erect adequate sign and warning lights to indicate the approximate 90-degree turn onto a one-lane bridge. The jury also said that the Highways department failed to take corrective action to move a vulnerably placed truss on the bridge. This is a report in the *Daily Colonist* of March 2. This is not the kind of report that inspires confidence in the Department of Highways, and I wonder if the Minister can state what action has been taken in the light of that coroner's jury's opinion.

I remember asking the Minister a year or so ago about a certain turn on the Hope-Princeton Highways where numerous vehicles had either gone over or people had been killed. I know that the Minister took fairly prompt action on that occasion. Could he tell us what has been done in relation to the site where the Calgary truck driver was

killed?

The other issue which is important but which as yet hasn't involved the loss of life is the Blanshard extension, which everyone knows has been asked about in this House for the last several years. I gather from the information that has been revealed to date regarding the proposed tunnel that the final proposal does not allow access by drivers coming south on the Trans-Canada Highway to the shopping centre at Town and Country. From the information I have been able to uncover there will not be access to the shopping centre and motorists will have to drive down to the junction of Douglas and Finlayson before turning around and will have to start back upwards to get back to Town and Country. Of course, this puts more pressure on Finlayson and Hillside, which are already fairly busy streets.

Now I know that any government can't be blamed for the sins of the past, and I don't want the Minister to get up and start a whole display of rhetoric as to what's been done wrong in the past four or five years. The fact is that previous to this government taking office.... We do have a serious traffic problem in that general area, which is getting worse every day with the increased traffic to Pat Bay Highway and up-island. The impression one gets from the information available is that this present proposal by the government leaves a great deal to be desired. I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether it is because of the cost that a better programme cannot be designed, or is it that the people in this area are pressuring the Minister to get on with the job, even if it's not the best job that could be done? What is it? Is it geography?

I think that the people in the greater Victoria area have suffered long enough with that very complicated maze of highways at the Town and Country site. We would like to know if the present proposal is as I've suggested, or whether in this stage of the proceedings the Minister is still willing to reconsider obvious improvements which could be made, particularly allowing access from the Trans-Canada Highway to the shopping centre.

Mr. Chairman, I was travelling in Terrace not too long ago, I was really fascinated by the large sign which the Department of Highways had erected. I'm sure you, Mr. Chairman, would be interested in signs in the Terrace region. It is a large sign which reads: "British Columbia Highways, Project 778, Terrace Sough Branch Bridge, \$4.5 million of your tax money being returned — Graham Lea, Minister of Highways."

I used to remember listening to this NDP when they were in opposition, complaining about the government using taxpayers' money to advertise their own merits and virtues. I wonder if the Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke) is thinking about putting up a notice outside all the hospitals in the province. When you go in to have your broken leg fixed, he will tell you that this is \$250 worth of your tax money being returned to fix your broken leg.

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): Don't give them the idea.

MR. WALLACE: The Member says: "Don't give them the idea." Maybe I shouldn't. But seriously, this is just a little bit too much, I think....

HON. MR. COCKE: I hope we can explain it on the radio.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Word!

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AN HON. MEMBER: Paul Anka of Victoria.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Chairman, I just feel that this is a blatant use of taxpayers' money. We all know that every dollar this government spends came from us in the first place, whether it is highways, or hospitals, or human resources, or mines, or developments of any other kind in which the government is involved. I think this is something about which this party castigated and criticized a certain former Minister of Highways (Mr. Gaglardi). I just hesitate to mention the name; it brings back such harsh memories.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: No. But, the former Minister of Highways in the former government carried out the same practice. This NDP, when it was down the road here, used to really criticize and point out, I felt quite legitimately, that this is not the way in which taxpayers' dollars should be used. Here we find that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Here we have the people's government over on the other side of the floor doing exactly what they were so harsh in criticizing the Social Credit administration for doing. I think that it would be very nice to let the people know what bridges are costing or what hospitals are costing but this little bit at the bottom: "Your tax money being returned," I think is just a bit much. I would wonder if the Minister would consider removing these signs or taking off the self-congratulatory adulation that is involved in telling everybody in the province what a wonderful government you are in building these highways.

The last point I wanted to raise is in relation to another riding, the riding of Comox. The reason I raise it is that I understand the matter was to be taken up with the Member for Comox (Ms. Sanford) by the mayor. I am relating to the rejection of a housing proposal which was rejected, apparently in the region of 3rd Street, because this was intended to be the site of the second crossing of the Courtenay River. I gather that the mayor was somewhat dumbfounded to find that this was where the Minister was proposing to put the crossing when previous discussions had revealed that the crossing was to be at 17th Street. He felt that nothing would be solved by having the crossing at 3rd Street. He said that he intended to take the matter up with the Comox MLA, Karen Sanford, as soon as possible because of the very serious need for housing and rental accommodation. He was quite concerned that a housing proposal had been turned down because of intentions of the Minister of Highways which were quite different from those that had been revealed at a previous meeting.

I think maybe the Minister would like to answer some of these questions.

HON. G.R. LEA (Minister of Highways): I am very pleased to see estimates going along as they should be going along, questions being asked instead of long political speeches by the opposition.

Interjection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Minister speak to the vote?

HON. MR. LEA: I feel, Mr. Member, that it's just....

MR. CHABOT: I hope you'll give some answers, too.

HON. MR. LEA: Oh, you are going to get all your answers.

I would like to start off with the Hon. Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) suggesting that we're not spending enough money in the Highways department this year. It's absolutely amazing. Obviously, as the Minister, I would like to see a lot more money being spent. But you have to live within a budget, both total and broken down....

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, you're the only department head over there that has to, then.

HON. MR. LEA: If you'll check, you'll find I do.

But it seems to me that it's the same every time. Every time we get to a new department they say: "You're not spending enough money." But you're spending too much money when they talk about the global budget and the total budget. I don't understand that reasoning.

I should say that the Highways budget is up 41 per cent this year, probably one of the highest percentage increases in one year.

MR. FRASER: All in staff.

HON. MR. LEA: No, it's not all in staff. You can take a look at the....

MR. PHILLIPS: Go back to the London School of Economics. You'll learn.

HON. MR. LEA: Is that where I met you? (Laughter.) I knew I had some bad students, but were you there?

The Hon. Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) talks about....

MR. PHILLIPS: You met me on the way out.

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HON. MR. LEA: Were you passing through?

They were talking about spring break-up. The Hon. Member knows that that happens every spring; every spring the Department of Highways has to go out and repair the spring break-up. It's part of living in British Columbia. I would suggest that if you want to live somewhere where there isn't a spring break-up, you'd have to go maybe to Florida. If you live in this kind of terrain — these kinds of soil conditions — with these kinds of weather conditions, you're going to have frost boils and spring break-up every year. It's part of living in British Columbia. It's expensive but it's something we have to do every year. I think every Member in this House knows that, especially the rural Members.

The Member mentioned the shoulder programme — paving the shoulders. I think you said you agreed with that — that it's a good programme — and asked if it were going to be ongoing. It will be if the budget allows. It's our plan to do that kind of shoulder programme.

What was your question on...? You wanted to know about the spray.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: That could happen in some places, I suppose. I don't think it's a general complaint. We find that when you pave the shoulders, as you know, it gives vehicles a chance to pull off the road with more safety; it gives the pedestrians a better chance of safety and also bicycles. Also, from a strictly selfish point of view, if you do pave it, then you don't get a rutting happening when cars do have to pull off, which eventually you have to repair.

Every year, of course, one function of the Highways department, subdivision approval, comes up. Only 20 per cent are turned down — only 20 per cent.

MR. FRASER: They must be all in Cariboo.

HON. MR. LEA: No, they're not all in Cariboo. There's always a good reason why a subdivision proposal is turned down. As the person in charge has said, he's yet to have a complaint when he's said yes. Always the reason is valid, I think. If it isn't, it does get a chance of review. We do have a chance to review those subdivisions — we sometimes do change our minds — such as the one that was mentioned by the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace). We've withdrawn our objection and the letter has gone out to Comox saying that we have.

Also the Hon. Member for Cariboo mentioned that he wondered whether the Highways department was going into birth control — or whether I was going into birth control. The answer is no, but I'll tell you that if we did I'd like to make it retroactive and we'd have a few less Socreds in the House. (Laughter.)

Paving of subdivisions. Whenever a subdivision is allowed, we ask that the road be brought to standard — provincial standards — and that it be paved. Oftentimes you get the argument from the developer or the people who are going to move into the subdivision that they could save some money if you didn't demand that it be paved and brought up to standard. But we do demand it for one simple reason: we feel that the user should pay. If we don't insist that it be done then, two years later we find that they changed their mind and, lo and behold, they do want standards and they do want pavement. Then the general public, the taxpayers, have to pay, when it should be a direct charge to the users. So we find that it's better to have it charged directly to that subdivision so that the user pays.

The Fraser Canyon and the closure times. You know, I don't understand sometimes.... You say: "Here is a safety factor. We're trying to clean it up so it will be safe for people." They say: "Right on, but don't close it." We

say: "We have to close it." They say: "We don't care; don't close it."

We have to close it so that we can do the work we have to do so it will be a safe highway for people to travel on. I don't think that there can be any argument. We've gone and talked to the people who have businesses there; we've talked to all the local people trying to work out a schedule that will fit best.

MR. FRASER: Why didn't you work in February and March when the traffic was down? Why do you start at the end of April and work into July?

HON. MR. LEA: Because of the weather.

MR. FRASER: Weather, baloney!

HON. MR. LEA: No, it isn't. Once the snow leaves, it's still not dry and, in the opinion of the engineers, it would be unsafe to send men to work in there under those conditions. I'm not going to do it. I'd rather see some inconvenience in terms of closure than send men in to work where there's some possibility of being either hurt or killed.

Miles of road. I've said before that the priority now is that we maintain the highways that we already have as best we can before we go off building new roads. That doesn't mean that we're not going to build new roads to some degree, but the priority is in maintaining as well as possible those roads that we already have.

Interjections

HON. MR. LEA: That's right, we're taking care of that. He's happy.

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Equipment — \$11 million in the budget this year, \$8 million last year, \$5 million the year before and in 1972-73, the last figure of the Social Credit administration, \$2.8 million.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are you buying?

HON. MR. LEA: What are we buying? What do you think we're going to buy?

MR. FRASER: Corn-binders.

HON. MR. LEA: Corn-binders?

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Oh, yes. Don't you see all that new equipment in your riding? You know, we are buying new equipment. One of the reasons we've had to accelerate the programme is the fact that the Minister of Labour (Hon. Mr. King) has brought new rules into the Workers' Compensation Board for safety. So we have to buy new equipment to meet those new safety rules, and I think that it's a good programme.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Centre lines. I'd first of all like to ask the Member how many he sees. (Laughter.)

You know, on the centre lines we have 50 per cent more machinery doing those centre lines now than before. I'd like to have more, but I'm not going to apologize for it for the simple reason that the lines are not what they should be in the spring because we're doing better winter maintenance than was done before. When you start putting salt and sand on those roads, you lose the centre line, but there is a safety factor there for people who are driving in the winter months.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: The First Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. McGeer) spent most of his time, time that he feels is valuable in questioning Ministers, talking about something that didn't have anything to do with the vote, talking about House rules. Really, I think that if the Members on the other side had used all their time to talk about estimates instead of complaining about the amount of time they had, they probably would have had plenty of time.

MR. WALLACE: Don't waste any more time. Get on with the answers.

HON. MR. LEA: You want to ask, but you don't want the answers.

I'm glad to see that the final little stretch of gravel in Point Grey has been paved. People in the rural ridings will be glad to hear that. Mind you, I'm glad to see that.

But he did talk about a serious point, the gas tax — or designated funds going to highway projects. It's been tried in other places. It's in effect in the State of California. When a lot of gas was being sold — a lot of miles were being driven, so the gas was being sold — they had money coming out their ears. They were building roads they didn't need and just building roads everywhere you could imagine in the state. Now that the gas consumption is down they don't even have the money in the State of California this year to maintain the highways they already have. They're down 25 per cent. I don't believe we should have designated funds....

[Ms. Brown in the chair.]

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: We're not.

The third crossing. The Lions Gate Bridge. The Member says that there's a chance of it falling down, and if that's reported by the press, they say no. I think that was darned irresponsible. There isn't a chance it's going to fall down. If that got out there, it could cause panic. I think it's irresponsible, and I hope that either the press doesn't print it at all or prints both sides.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Also, in closing on the Hon. Member for Vancouver–Point Grey, I don't ever want to have an operation there, because he did some pretty quick research into building highways and building bridges and came up with all the answers. I just hope he puts in a little more time than that when he's doing research into his own field. He knew it was cheaper to build one way or the other.

Oh, I still have the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace).

Testing stations, by the way, Hon. Member, are not under my vote. They are under Transport and Communications. I think it's a worthy thing to test vehicles to say whether they're safe mechanically, but I do agree with you that that isn't where the main emphasis should be. Lowering the speed limits has helped but, again, not the main areas. It's the human factor, as you pointed out, and probably mostly driving while impaired, or drunk. But when we talk about the drunken drivers, I think that probably people who are driving and drinking change all the time. It's probably ordinary people who may only do it once a year. There isn't one little segment of

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society that is causing the trouble when it comes to drunken driving or impaired driving. It's probably most people in this province. But I agree.

I've talked to the Attorney-General (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) and we've put some of the matters, in terms of patrol and in terms of trying to nail down drunken driving, to the police commission, and we're asking them to come

back with some recommendations, too, so we can see which way to go.

The RCMP, in my opinion, have done a good job, but they're understaffed. We can't expect them to be everywhere all the time. So I think we really have to seriously look at getting more people out on that highway.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Well, I can understand why you would say that.

In terms of the court finding the Highways department guilty, I find this as deplorable as you. You asked what we are doing about it. It was an old bridge. Apparently the vehicle slipped before going onto the bridge, and it happened. There is a new bridge there now. It's in effect and being used at that point. I'm still not satisfied; I'd like to get further reports on that.

The Blanshard Street extension. You said that you hoped we'd keep an open mind. Well, we are. My staff has been working with the city staff and they've come up with two more proposals. One of the plans meets the approval of both staffs and has my approval. Now the city staff is taking it to the Saanich politicians. Hopefully, we'll be able to get a decision out of that.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Now, the construction signs saying that so many of your tax dollars are being returned to you and naming the amount. I think it's good because people should know exactly how much it costs to build those projects. I think there's one difference. On the old signs under Social Credit, did it mention the amount of money?

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

HON. MR. LEA: That was bad, because the main idea is to let people know how much it costs to build those projects. I think they have a right to know.

MR. WALLACE: Don't mention Gaglardi, though.

AN HON. MEMBER: We keep the people informed. The opposition won't.

MR. WALLACE: The name has changed too. It used to be Gaglardi.

HON. MR. LEA: What is it now?

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Hear that? Just spell the name right.

I think it's a good idea to let people know just how much those projects are costing.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: The Comox housing project I've already touched on.

MR. W.R. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Just a few brief questions about the quality of the roads. The Minister gave us the impression that he was spending the budget on maintenance. It is my impression from driving around the province that we had more and more potholes. I couldn't believe that the Minister was saying that they first had an upgrading of the existing roads and then if there's any money, they may decide to build some new roads.

I understand the Premier this afternoon wasn't happy when the Second Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. Gardom), I guess, quoted an article from the *Province* by Bob McMurray. But I have a quotation here from a

paper called the *Democrat* that talks about...

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

MR. BENNETT: ...the potholes in the road.

Interjections.

MR. BENNETT: It's a letter, and it says: "To the editor of the *Democrat*." It says: "As an old-time CCFer I'm worried about the party's chances in an election." He says:

"I hear lots of people blame the condition of the roads on the NDP when the Highways department is loaded with Social Credit members hired by the former government and working to rule in the hopes of defeating the NDP.

"When a driver hits a pothole on the highway — there are millions of them — 9 times out of 10 they blame the NDP, not the Highways department who is sloughing on the job. The public is easily fooled and it only takes a piece of rough road to swing an election."

I really think I should ask the Minister: does he agree with this party member, who writes in their official paper, that your department is in fact

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working to rule, sloughing off on the job, and the responsibility for the millions of potholes, as reported in this paper, the *Democrat*, is really the fault of the thousands of workers in the Highways department?

Is the Minister prepared to go along with this attack on the civil servants or will he take accountability for his department in not repairing the roads and keeping them up to standard? Here is a D. Miller of Barriere writing right in the newspaper, the *Democrat*, who says there are millions of potholes, the roads have never been in worse shape, but it's the fault of the workers in the Highways department.

I think the Minister of Highways should come to the defence of his staff, even to the effect of having to disillusion one of his party members. This isn't an old issue of the *Democrat*; it's April 19, 1975.

I'd like to ask the Minister some questions about my own constituency and the constituencies of the Okanagan, and the concern for safety because of the deteriorating condition of Highway 97, both from the road surface itself and from deterioration with the millions of potholes, which I am sure are all in my constituency. We do have some communities, which I identified to the Minister last year in 1973, which are still concerned about traffic running through the centre.

One of those constituencies, Winfield, was promised some years ago...it's in North Okanagan, not in mine, but it was promised a bypass. I understand that the survey work has been discontinued since this Minister took over the portfolio, and no studies are proceeding at the present time.

We also have an existing problem in Westbank and we have a problem in the Summerland area where Highway 97 runs through the middle of built-up communities. The citizens have continually petitioned the department and the Minister for some assurance that localized bypasses will be provided.

In the case of Westbank a traffic light was asked for as well as a traffic-light study. I understand that the study has not taken place. But what they really want in these areas are localized bypasses.

The people of the Okanagan are also looking for some commitment or some statement that the problem will be further looked into so that eventually the bulk of the through-traffic will bypass the Okanagan. I think the Minister has been up there and he appreciates the fact that a narrow valley, such as we have, cannot possibly take the increasing volumes of traffic and that the ultimate answer would be an alternate route or bypassing the whole of the valley — a non-access route, as the Minister has discussed. In the meantime we need some assurance that the people

can travel in safety, particularly during the peak summer months when, as we approach the cities either through the bridge in Kelowna or other areas, they hit the traffic lights and we sometimes have traffic backed up for two or three miles at specific times of day. It's dangerous, it's causing hazards, and lives will be lost. I know the Minister is concerned about it, but can he give some assurance that his department is preparing to deal with this and is surveying these very serious situations?

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Member, in terms of your riding and the concerns you have expressed, the bypasses you have asked for, I am sure that in the future the kind of bypasses you describe as going along the side are going to be needed. No doubt. And in some cases they are needed now. But don't think that it's going to solve your problem. It isn't, because mainly your problem in those communities throughout the Okanagan is during the summer months when there are the peak periods of tourist traffic.

Now surveys within the department have shown that when you build a bypass, as such, you only pull out about 12 to 15 per cent of the traffic — some of the big transports that are not going into your community, or people going, maybe in your case, from Kamloops to Trail. But in the summer when you are having your real problem, the majority of that traffic is tourist traffic and they are not going to go by. If they are going up there, they want to take their time, look at your community and look at the next community, and they are going to go into the community. So you are not really going to solve the problem. One of the other problems is the local traffic using the main highway as a street. I talked to the mayor of Kelowna, whom I find to be a very reasonable and intelligent guy, and a lot of his aldermen and staff, and they realize that that's probably part of the problem too.

MR. BENNETT: All of them are.

HON. MR. LEA: Not all of them.

What really has to happen in all the communities which are affected in this way throughout the province is they have to have a grid system to carry their own traffic away from those main arteries which are the highways. Until that's done you are just not going to solve the problem.

I realize it's a problem in terms of money for those communities. We help them as much as possible in planning from our department. We work with them as much as possible and wherever possible to try and help them with the planning of their own grid system. We do help with quite an amount of money. We spend money in communities all the time, and, really, it shouldn't be the responsibility of the Department of Highways but we understand that, especially in some of the smaller communities where there is no tax base, and we try to help them as much as possible.

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But bypasses are not going to solve your problems. The grid system, to a certain extent, will and until we can get grid systems in those communities so that local traffic is not using the highway as a street, we are going to have a problem. I realize that there is a problem in that area. Penticton has one of the worst problems in the province in the summer months. We are trying to build a bypass there. We have had a lot of problem trying to get the right-of-way.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Right. But we are trying to solve that problem. We are having our problems trying to get the right-of-way and that sort of thing.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: It's a pleasure, Madam Chairwoman, to take part in this debate of this important Ministry. You can tell how important it is when you see the array of support troops that the Minister brings with him. When the Premier had his estimates he had only one man. When the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) had his estimates, he had only two people supporting him. The Minister of Economic Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk) had three. The Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson) had three. This afternoon the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) had five. Now the Minister of the Department of Highways has six people backing him up.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Well, we don't let them go home.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: That's right. I don't know whether that is the importance of the department or the weakness of the Minister.

I wanted to take part in this debate because I happen to represent the riding in which the Minister spends most of his money. I've got a few questions to ask about that little problem.

HON. MR. BARRETT: Well, then, don't louse it up.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: This afternoon the Minister delivered the statistical data report for 1974-5. I want to deal with two projects which are going on on the Trans-Canada Highway.

Project 1715, Mr. Minister, or whomever is making notes, involves 3.1 miles from Horseshoe Bay to Cypress Creek. The project was completed in 1974, and was opened to four-lane traffic. There were some further projects to complete the paving, which was done in early 1975. Would the Minister advise the committee whether the work done in that 3.1-mile section was done on a contract? If it was, was it a fixed-price contract? If it was a fixed-price contract, how much was it? If it wasn't a fixed-price contract, how much was spent on the 3.1 miles from Horseshoe Bay to Cypress Creek?

Then we go from there to project 2127, which is the 5.3-mile section from Cypress Creek to Taylor Way. It is 90 per cent complete and expected to be finished in 1975. The same questions: Was the work done on a contract? If it was, was it a fixed-price contract? If so, how much? If not, how much has been paid to the contractor or contractors working on that 5.3 miles section?

Madam Chairman, these are not idle questions, because while the 3.1-mile section from Horseshoe Bay to Cypress Creek was done fairly expeditiously, I must say that the work on the section from Cypress Creek to Taylor Way has got to be one of the major highway scandals of the lower mainland. This is a programme, totalling altogether 8.4 miles, which was announced by the former government and commenced in 1969. I remember when the signs went up just before the election. This government inherited it. I am not criticizing this Minister or the members of his department in any respect, but I cannot understand why, in the spring of 1975, that task is not completed.

You have on the section between Taylor Way and Cypress Creek some of the most dangerous traffic situations any place in the province. There are people who drive that road twice a day and it is known as the "automobile slalom route." You never know where the road is going to go because they keep changing it from day to day and week to week. The marking on it is so poor that it is impossible to know which traffic lane you should be in. I just want to know who the contractor is who is responsible for that job, why it is not finished and how much money has been paid strictly on that 5.3 mile section from Cypress Creek to Taylor Way.

It's just too much to ask. This happens to be on the Trans-Canada Highway. This is the section of the highway that takes our visitors to and from the ferry terminal at Horseshoe Bay. I'm sure that as they come off the ferries from Vancouver Island, or they've gone off at Tsawwassen and gone up the island and crossed back to the mainland at Horseshoe Bay, as they drive back into the City of Vancouver they must wonder what kind of a fairyland they have gotten themselves into. The section as far as Cypress Creek is not too bad, but from then on it's taking your own life in your hands.

Mention was made about the condition of the Lions Gate Bridge. I agree with the Minister. I don't think that the Hon. First Member for Vancouver Point—Grey (Mr. McGeer) meant to suggest in any way that the Lions Gate Bridge was falling down. I know that the Minister and his officials have made extensive tests on the bridge surface and on the cables. The Minister reported a year ago that the results of those

tests indicated that they were quite satisfactory. The tests were made to make certain that there was no damage over

the years since that bridge was built, and that goes back to 1936, Madam Chairman. That is a long time, so tests were made. I think the travelling public should congratulate the Minister and his staff on taking the caution to make certain that there were no problems, or to catch them in advance. At any rate, the bridge is not going to fall down.

But there is going to be some work done. The Minister announced it a year ago and it hasn't started yet, although the signs have appeared. I notice there aren't any dollar signs on those signs. Maybe the Minister would like to correct that error. There is a sign saying that the work is going to be done on the first phase. Maybe if you just write in the cost, it might make some of the people who use that bridge think a little bit about the nature of that crossing.

I spoke this afternoon with the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Hon. Mr. Lorimer) who is concerned with the transit bureau and the provision of public transit in the metropolitan area. He doesn't seem to be quite sure as to what the Department of Highways was doing on that bridge, and I think he would be interested to be informed as well.

At any rate, maybe the Minister would like to inform the committee as to when the work will begin on the first phase, which is the trestle section of the bridge at the north end, when it is expected to be completed, and how much it will cost. Is the figure in excess of \$9 million? I think it only cost, Madam Chairman, \$2 million to buy the whole bridge when they bought it, but it is going to cost \$9 million just to rectify that one section and to improve the safety qualities of the bridge.

The next area I would like to raise with the Minister is the Cypress Bowl Road, which is also referred to in his information. The Cypress Bowl access, section 1, 5.4 miles, is 27 per cent complete with only some drainage control remaining. I'd like to know what that section cost. The second section of that access road is 69 per cent complete. The Minister's advice indicates that the project was extended to include installation of water, sewer and electrical facilities, as well as development of parking lots and a service yard for the parks branch. I'd like to know what the second section of Cypress Bowl access will cost when it is complete.

I would like to know for what purpose the project included the installation of water, sewer and electric facilities. Is it only to supply the development which is to take place at Cypress Bowl, or will the water, sewer and electrical facilities be available to permit access roads to be built off of this Cypress Bowl road, thereby to facilitate additional subdivisions of the mountainside which can be approached through this Cypress Bowl access road?

The significance of this possibility is one of grave concern to the people of my constituency. If that mountainside is to be developed through subdivision without the greatest of caution, then the damage to that mountainside and the indirect damage to the properties lying below, particularly below the highway, could be most significant.

The department went to great expense in the construction of the Upper Levels Highway, particularly to ensure that they could pass large volumes of water under the existing highway. That seems to foretell of subdivisions above. I think it is important for us to recognize whether or not the department is now doing work to facilitate that kind of expansion.

I notice the department is involved in the Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal. I wonder if the Minister would indicate why it is that his department is involved. I thought that was under the Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan), but perhaps the work is still being done by the Department of Highways.

I would like to know, with respect to the marine structures that are being relocated and reconstructed, if this is to accommodate larger ferries than are presently plying between Nanaimo and Horseshoe Bay, or if it is merely to facilitate additional ferry vessels which will ply between Horseshoe Bay and Langdale.

[Mr. Dent in the chair.]

Now lastly, Mr. Chairman, and also arising out of the work which is being done by this department on the Lions Gate Bridge, I'm sure that when the Minister advises the committee as to the amount of money that his

department is prepared to spend on the improvements to that bridge, everyone in the committee will be startled. When one considers that the traffic which flows across that bridge which will benefit from this vast expenditure goes either to North Vancouver or west across the Capilano River and into West Vancouver or out the Upper Levels Highway, it can also be pointed out that the traffic coming off the bridge which is westbound must still, as it comes off the turnaround off the cloverleaf, meld in with two lanes of traffic westbound from North Vancouver, and then funnel into a two-lane bridge across the Capilano River. Once it gets through that bottleneck it expands again out into, I think, five lanes.

It seems to me that if there's to be value achieved from the work being done on Lions Gate, the department should look at the replacement of the westbound traffic bridge across the Capilano River. The eastbound traffic along Marine Drive passes across a three-lane bridge eastbound, but the westbound traffic still uses the old bridge as it was modified following the floods in 1949. That old

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bridge should be removed and replaced with one which is a twin to the eastbound traffic artery. Only if you replace that bottleneck will you fully realize the advantage of the work that's being done on the Lions Gate. It will speed the flow from North Vancouver westbound to the Upper Levels Highway and free the flow off the Lions Gate Bridge.

It's a startling thing. It is now about four days a week at the evening rush hour that the traffic is backed up from that two-lane bridge around the cloverleaf and back up onto the bridge approach itself. This situation can only worsen and would be vastly improved if at least a three-lane westbound structure across the Capilano were provided.

I make that plea to the Minister that it is a proper companion to the improvement work that you're doing on the Lions Gate. To upgrade the Lions Gate facility without taking out this bottleneck at the Capilano, I think, is a mistake.

I have other questions for the Minister dealing with the other parts of the riding, but I'll maybe get some answers to these.

HON. MR. LEA: One area that I forgot to deal with in answering the Hon. Member for Kelowna (Mr. Bennett) was his reference to an article in the *Democrat*, the NDP paper....

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: I would like to say that I don't agree with the person who wrote that article in the paper. But I think it does show that there's a little bit of freedom there; people can write in and say anything they want. I think that's good.

But I don't agree with them. I don't agree that any government should go on a witch-hunt for people who may belong to a different political faith than the one that happens to be presently in government.

MR. WALLACE: It's been done.

HON. MR. LEA: It's been done but we haven't done it; nor do I think that any government should. Anybody working within government, I think, has the right to belong to any political party he wants to and speak to any political party he wants to as long as it doesn't interfere with his work.

MR. WALLACE: Right on! Congratulations!

HON. MR. LEA: I'd like to take a lot of what the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) said as advice in some areas. What I would like my staff to do in some of the areas also in to go through *Hansard* and give you detailed reports on some of the things you've asked.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: I tried that last year and I didn't get any answers.

HON. MR. LEA: You didn't get answers? Well, you should. I'll guarantee it. I'll personally make sure you do on some....

The Lions Gate Bridge — you asked the cost. The first contract has been let. It's \$6.8 million for the first contract. The other contracts, of course, haven't been; we don't really know what they're going to come in at. We're fabricating the steel now; we should begin the work of putting it in place by the end of June.

The Horseshoe Bay terminal. We're doing the work but we are doing it for the ferries, for the Department of Transport. They pay and we do the work, only because we have the facilities, the manpower and the expertise to do it. It is for larger ferries that it's being designed. The initial work won't be designed for the jumbo ferries but it will have the capability of being progressed so it will facilitate jumbo ferries.

The Cypress Bowl Road. We're aware of some of the problems you pointed out in terms of developing it and what precautions have to be taken. As I said, I'll make sure that you do get your information on these. If any of you want to discuss it further, I'd be glad to have the staff meet with you and myself to discuss it further if there are any points after you get the clarification from the department.

We are talking with North Vancouver on another bridge crossing on the Capilano River. We have begun talks with them.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: Is that Welsh Creek?

HON. MR. LEA: Is it? It's the one.... The chief highway engineer says it is.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: He says three days won't help. We'll explain why he said that; we can talk that over. I think, other than the specific contracts you've asked for, the prices and that sort of thing.... We'll get that to you and we can talk it over later.

MR. CHABOT: Mr. Chairman, just a few brief questions to the Minister. When I look at his vote and the kind of additional allocation for highway construction in the province and look back at other previous estimates from that government over there, I have come to the conclusion that highway construction activity has been on a leave of absence in British Columbia for the last two and a half years because you have an allocation increased by 25 per cent in your capital construction allowance in your estimates. When you take into consideration the cost of material, equipment and labour, it is quite obvious

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you are not going to be building as many highways this year as you built in the previous year.

Your vote does take into consideration ferries, roads and bridges. I am wondering just how much of this allocation of \$140 million is for ferries. How much is for roads and bridges? What is the increase for roads and bridges?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Hon. Member is asking questions which, I think, should be more properly brought up under vote 96.

MR. CHABOT: I am talking about capital construction; I am talking about road construction in British Columbia. I am referring to specific sums which have been allocated, sums which we will never be allowed to debate in this House because of the closure rules imposed by that government over there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I think if the Hon. Member would like to wait for a moment, we could pass votes 93 and 94 and then....

MR. CHABOT: The answer is no. I am discussing under the Minister's salary certain specific things which I

can't discuss under other specific votes. You know that. If you don't know what the chairmanship of this Legislature is, you shouldn't be in that position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Member confine his remarks to vote 93?

MR. CHABOT: Certainly. Stop interrupting me, too, when I'm right on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Hon. Member, when the Chair is making a point of order, the idea is not to lecture the Chair. You can challenge the point of order.

MR. CHABOT: Oh, yes — 38 to 17, isn't it? Ha!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member proceed, please?

MR. CHABOT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I was going to say when I looked across the floor, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister was a lightweight, but I recognize him as being a heavy in the cabinet. What I am referring to is the fact that he has all the talent and the top officials of his department, six of them, sitting behind him. The only one lacking, really, is one of the planning officer, Mac Elston. If you had him, you would have all the brains in the Department of Highways sitting behind you.

Now, talking about planning, Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the minister could tell me just what the attitude of the Department of Highways will be, or what it has been, regarding the application for access to the old Molson hop farm in Kamloops, the one, you'll remember, I talked about under the estimates of the Minister of Economic Development.

HON. MR. LEA: I remember.

MR. CHABOT: It was the one I referred to in which I had said that Kaymor Investments had been turned down when they applied for an access to this property because of the fact that it was unsafe because of the heavy concentration of traffic on that part of the Trans-Canada Highway. They were turned down cold. Now that there has been a new application for access onto this highway by a different organization, an organization that made several millionaires in Kamloops through the sale of part of the old Molson hop farm, I'm wondering what attitude the Department of Highways will have in respect to the application for access. Will it still be deemed to be unsafe now that the application is being made by a corporation of the government, the B.C. Development Corp.? Will they gain access? They have an option on this property. I understand the deadline is May 15. I want to know on what attitude and on what basis you will tolerate access to the B.C. Development Corp. after having turned it down to Kaymor Investments of Kamloops.

Talking about access, we have another government boondoggle in my community. We have one of the most expensive tourist information centres in this country.

HON. MR. LEA: He brings that up every vote.

MR. CHABOT: A quarter of a million dollars has been spent for 3,000 square feet for a tourist information booth alongside of the Trans-Canada Highway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I understand that this is under the estimates of the Minister of Travel Industry (Hon. Mr. Hall).

MR. CHABOT: No, it is not, Mr. Chairman. With all humility, it is not.

HON. MR. LEA: That's not much.

MR. CHABOT: I'm being as humble as I possibly can be.

MR. WALLACE: I know how tough that can be. (Laughter.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. If the Hon.

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Member proceeds, perhaps the Minister of Highways can indicate whether this is under his administrative responsibility.

MR. CHABOT: Well, yes, the Minister can say whether I am wrong.

This is the most costly per square foot information booth in the whole world, probably — \$80 a square foot. It is located right alongside the Trans-Canada Highway, on a hill about one mile east of Golden — double lines, heavy traffic, side roads, access roads.

Now will the Minister tell me where the access will be for this Golden tourist information booth, or, as the Minister of Travel Industry might like to call it, the B.C. reception centre? Will the access be off the Trans-Canada Highway? Oh, certainly not. Not on a hill, with all the side roads and the double lines.

I know the kind of treatment that the Department of Highways has given to other people in that region regarding access. I know that there's a motel operator just across the street from that tourist information booth who had an access not off the Trans-Canada Highway but off the parking lot of a service station who had this access off the Trans-Canada Highway. Lo and behold, what did the Department of Highways do to that motel? They put the Berlin Wall up across his access; cement pillars and cement barriers across his access. The Minister of Economic Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk) thinks it's funny. An access that has been in existence for many years all of sudden receives the Berlin Wall treatment. It's closed off arbitrarily by the Department of Highways. I'm wondering how the Department of Highways will treat the B.C. reception centre in respect to its access off the Trans-Canada Highway no more than 50 feet away from this other access that was barricaded by the Department of Highways.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to speak about some of the highways in my riding. Being a rural Member, it's always important to bring up these subjects on highways.

HON. MR. LEA: Any reason for it?

MR. CHABOT: Yes, because the constituents are concerned with the deplorable type of service that they have been getting from your department in the last two and a half years. They're concerned about Highway 95, immediately south of Golden, the 16 miles that was reconstructed by the former government. We didn't put up a big sign saying that it cost \$5 million either.

HON. MR. LEA: Why? Didn't it cost anything?

MR. CHABOT: But the highway is breaking up. It's like a roller-coaster. I wonder whether the government, in its allocation of dollars, has any plans for improving this highway immediately south of Golden. Is there any contingent programme for that little west side road between that community of Invermere and Dutch Creek or Fairmont Hot Springs? I'll probably repeat that, because I might not have the chance again to ask the Minister this session. Is there an allocation for the west side road between Invermere and Dutch Creek? Last year there was an allocation of \$50,000, and I thanked the Minister profusely when he indicated there was this allocation of \$50,000. I would love to thank him again if he would indicate to me that there's an allocation of about \$50,000 this year for the continuation of the upgrading of the west side road.

Is there any programme for the reconstruction of the Kicking Horse Canyon? I know that Zacharias Paving, I believe it is, has a paving project in there, but there has been a tremendous amount of surveying of that road. There has been a tremendous amount of surveying and I know it's a very costly programme. There was some concern with the stability of the terrain in the Kicking Horse Canyon. Is the government considering any major project of reconstruction there?

I want to thank the Minister on behalf of the people of Golden for the patching up of the potholes on the Kicking Horse Bridge in the community. There were nine potholes there and now they are in the process of patching them up.

MR. R.H. McCLELLAND (Langley): Now there's only eight.

MR. CHABOT: The people are very thankful for that great project which you've undertaken in my constituency.

Going south of my constituency, I received some correspondence from an individual who is a constituent of the constituency of Kootenay. He brings up some matters which I've raised in the House before. He brings up other matters which I haven't raised and he talks about improvement on the Blarchmont Hill Road, Highway 95A in Kimberley. He indicates lower in his letter that: "The government has promised to complete items 1 and 2. Item 1 deals with the building in the community and item 2...for the last two years, but nothing has been done to date."

Interjection.

MR. CHABOT: Yes, you don't look after very much up there, Mr. Member for Kootenay (Hon. Mr. Nimsick).

AN HON. MEMBER: He's trying to pave the road with good intentions.

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MR. CHABOT: Improvements on Highway 95 between Kimberley and Cranbrook. Is there any consideration being given to improving the road between Kimberley and Cranbrook?

Also, he raises the question of the Wycliffe Bridge. Will the bridge be replaced on Highway 95A? The Wasa Bridge on Highway 93-95; that's a subject that I raised on numerous occasions in this Legislature — in vain to date. I'm wondering whether there's any consideration to eliminating those two level crossings between Wasa and Skookumchuck — two level railway crossings and that single-lane bridge. I understand the survey is complete across from the Skookumchuck ferry through to Wasa. It certainly costs money, I realize, but I think the time has come that we eliminate level crossings where possible in British Columbia. Here we are dealing with two level crossings and we are dealing with a single-lane bridge.

I was wondering if the Minister could tell me just where those matters I have raised presently stand.

MRS. P.J. JORDAN (North Okanagan): I must again comment that it's now nearly 10:30 p.m. We've barely started the Minister of Highways' estimates. I recognize that he's a Minister of doing very little and probably his estimates don't warrant too much time, but the fact that he has done so little and he has so little financial wherewithal with which he is to carry out his duties is all the more reason that we should have more time to debate his salary. I don't want to take a lot of time because other Members want to speak in this short half hour. There are a number of provincial things I would like to discuss but, again, these closure rules are going to prohibit this.

I would like to mention just a few of the many concerns with the highway situation in North Okanagan. I wasn't here when my colleague from South Okanagan (Mr. Bennett) spoke so I don't know what he said on Highway 97, but I would ask the Minister when he is going to get off the pot and get something done and stop standing around and saying that it's the local politicians and it's a local decision. Mr. Minister, you've got to make a decision and stop running scared. Get down to business and make a decision.

MR. WALLACE: Get off the pothole.

MRS. JORDAN: You have three alternatives: you can go through with the high-speed lane as it is now, or you can go and use your imagination and go up the east side of Kalamalka, Woods and Ellison Lakes, or you can go on the west side of Okanagan Lake. I just say to you, for goodness' sake, get busy and go somewhere...

HON. MR. LEA: I thought you liked me.

MRS. JORDAN: ...because we've got a tremendous conflict of usage of that road.

MR. G.H. ANDERSON (Kamloops): You know where you can go.

MRS. JORDAN: The mortality rate is very high and I don't particularly blame the road; I blame more the drivers. But I suggest the fact of life is that we are not going to re-educate drivers in British Columbia overnight, and therefore we have to make some accommodation in terms of highways. You can talk about ecology all you wish and we'll support you, but please don't keep using it as an excuse for doing nothing.

I would like you, first of all, Mr. Minister, to consult the small areas that are going to be affected by this highway, and I speak specifically for the constituency that I have the honour to represent, Oyama and Winfield and Okanagan centre. Stop letting the big kids exclude them from the meetings and get them in the meetings. You yourself and your departmental officials should go to a meeting in those areas, outline to the people what the alternatives are, and I'll support you in this. We all recognize that we can't make everyone happy, but at least let's give the people in those areas a kick at the cat because they are the families who are going to have their lives disrupted more than anyone else in the extension of that highway between Kelowna and Vernon.

It's easy for us to sit in Vernon and say, "We want this," and it's easy to sit in Kelowna and say, "We want that," but basically it's the little guys in the little centres in between who are going to be most directly affected by that decision because the highway, if it proceeds as it appears it may do, which is right in its present situation, is going to cut the heart out of their community and I, for one, object to this.

Mr. Minister, without going into details, I do recognize that 85 per cent of our problem on that highway is internal traffic and I also recognize how difficult it is to help the local people understand this. But you aren't going to get anywhere sitting in your office in a cushy chair. The only way is to get together and help the people to understand what the problem is and what some of the solutions are. Surely when the Minister is only on this floor for two and a half hours, he could at least extend to the Members of the opposition the courtesy of listening. We know you don't have any money. We know you don't have the confidence of the Minister of Finance...

HON. MR. LEA: I'm listening.

MRS. JORDAN: ...and you certainly don't have the confidence of the people of this province. We are trying to help you, and certainly we want to help the

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people of British Columbia who have to travel around and who have to go over your...

HON. MR. LEA: I thought you liked me, I'll tell you that.

MRS. JORDAN: ...potholed highways that are reminiscent of the old coalition days when the boys used to get out with the cordwood to repair the highways.

HON. MR. LEA: You've turned on me.

MRS. JORDAN: So on Highway 97, Mr. Minister, let's get busy and let's face the issue. I give you my commitment before this massive, overwhelming government and the poor, hard-working Members of the opposition that I'll support you in every way I can in presenting to the people of this valley the problem we are confronted with and trying to come to a consensus of opinion so we can get on with the job. We want to stop killing our people in that area. We want the tourists to enjoy their visit; we want our commercial traffic to meet its commitments; we want the freight traffic to move freely in order that we can get our fresh produce to market, we want to have a safe place for leisure traffic.

I also would again call upon you to reverse your arbitrary, pigheaded decision about the Woods Lake area...

MR. G.H. ANDERSON (Kamloops): Now you're in trouble. (Laughter.)

MRS. JORDAN: ...and the commitment of the former administration, and in the redevelopment of those highways see that the area between Long Woods Lake from Oyama to Woodsdale is, in fact, developed as a greenbelt area with proper picnic areas, proper fishing areas, trees, and that it is generally attractive rather than the hotspot that it is at the moment. We started this and it won't happen overnight, but for you to flatly put your foot down and say "no" makes a mockery out of your so-called press releases on ecology.

Mr. Minister, on Highway 6 between Lumby and Vernon, I still disagree with you. I believe you are wrong. You are going to chop up agricultural land; you are going to go through people's houses; and again you are refuting all that you claim to say about ecological concern.

Highway 6 should be built and it should be built this year. It should go from Lumby to the east-north side of Vernon along what they call "the old grey ditch area." Take it out of the flatlands and put it up on the side hill. The land is there. You are not going to disrupt fine agricultural production land. You will go largely through the Coldstream Ranch and they would be willing to have you there, and you would have the highway up on the side hill where it belongs. You wouldn't disrupt the people of Lavington, Coldstream and the Lumby area.

The mayor of Lumby wants this and he knows what he's talking about. You can then link up the bypass from Highway 97 in the BX area, and you'll dislodge people as little as possible. I would ask you again to reconsider. You're being hoodwinked, Mr. Minister, and you're embarking on a programme — if it's being completed the way I understand it is — that is not in the best interests of the people of the City of Vernon and it is not in the best interests of the people of Coldstream and Lavington and Lumby. It certainly is not in the best interests of road development and ecological preservation in this province.

Highway 6 from Lumby to Cherryville over Edgewood is a shambles. It has never been startling in its free-flowing traffic ability. But, Mr. Minister, since you took over, your lack of maintenance and concern of this area makes it almost a hazard to life and limb. I urge you to make money available for relocation of some of that highway, certainly widening, straightening and getting some of those areas that will deteriorate year after year because there's not a sound base. The traffic is increasing tremendously and it will increase a great deal more. Certainly if the road is improved it will help take the pressure off some of the other areas. It's an excellent tourist circle route around Revelstoke and down through the Okanagan, or through the Okanagan to Edgewood and over into the Kootenays.

Mr. Minister, I could go on and on and on. Our roads have deteriorated in a manner and at a speed never before experienced in our way since your administration. I'm sorry to say this, but you simply do not seem to understand that in an area like ours, where we have heavy frost, quick thaws, rapid changes in temperature, and we have agricultural traffic, logging traffic and tourist traffic, we have major road problems. You have abandoned our progressive programmes for widening and culverting and ditching and fencing and paving, and you haven't even kept up maintenance programmes.

I speak of the Sugar Lake road from the Lumby end and the Mabel Lake road from the Lumby end. Senior staff is going through *Hansard*; it would be much better if they spent their time designing maintenance programmes for these roads. Trinity Valley, Creighton Valley, just to mention a few.

I would ask you, Mr. Minister, about Cars Landing Road from the centre into Coral Beach. This is a broken commitment. It should be paved; it has to be paved. I would hope that you'd give us a commitment that you'll do it this year.

I'd like to speak for a moment about culverts in low-lying areas, particularly in the North Okanagan, but I suspect this applies in the Chilliwack area and

many other areas that tend to be flooded. Your department, I regret to say, is not taking into consideration the

problems of heavy spring runoff, and the culvert estimates are too small. Last year in the Winfield area we had a number of flooding problems which flooded out people's homes simply because bridges have been replaced with culverts and the culverts were not capable of handling the heavy flow that comes in heavy runoff and a late runoff year.

I would urge you, Mr. Minister, in areas like that, to go back to bridges. They are more effective and, frankly, they are much more aesthetically pleasing. We are very concerned in our area about our environment. We are a semi-rural and tourist area, and we are trying very hard, with our money, to develop a personality and character. In the Winfield area and in some of these low-lying areas, bridging would be compatible all the way around as well as preventing some of the flooding.

I'd like to speak also, Mr. Minister, about warrants for crosswalks in the province as a whole and also as related to the constituency I represent. I recognize all the engineering studies that have been done; I recognize all the logic behind the warrant system and why we need warrants, and why we can't lower traffic speed in areas where children are crossing to schools and there's a heavy pedestrian traffic. But I tell you, Mr. Minister, it is wrong. We are putting figures before people. We see example after example in British Columbia where children and older people have been killed because a heavily used area hasn't quite come up to the warrant.

Mr. Minister, you talk about lowering the speed limit on major highways and all the lives you're going to save. I suggest to you that if we lower the speed limit in some of these smaller communities, in spite of your obligation to get traffic from A to B — you're not concerned on the major highways — then lower the speed limit in small communities.

In our area there is the community of Winfield. It is 30 miles per hour in summertime, and that is too fast. Oyama is 30 miles an hour in summertime; that is too fast. Then you can go around the province, and there are areas like Hopkins where you go through at 50 or 40 miles per hour at a time when children are crossing the road, and there are no overhead crosswalks, and it is too fast.

I suggest you have to change your policy. In small communities like Winfield and Oyama, you are going to have to, Mr. Minister, put in overhead crosswalks. You can't say that \$50,000 or \$75,000 is too much because the conflict of use of that traffic in conjunction with the people usage is just not safe and it simply cannot hang on figures any more. I'm specifically asking for a crosswalk in Winfield. I ask you for a stop light at Winfield on Highway 97 at Beaver Lake Road. Your staff is well aware of the problem we have here. I'm asking for an overhead crosswalk in Oyama.

I would urge you to review the policy of the department in relation to warnings for heavily crossed pedestrian areas.

At this point I would also like to mention Mission Hill on Highway 97, going into Vernon, where we have patients crossing to the hospital, we have children crossing to school, and we have employees crossing from parking areas to the hospital.

Interjection.

MRS. JORDAN: Well, Mr. Member, I realize you are a city slicker and you don't have these problems. If you had people who had to drive 40 miles to buy their groceries...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Member address the Chair, please?

MRS. JORDAN: ...that you are responsible for....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MRS. JORDAN: And taking more than 10 minutes of the time....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Would the Hon. Member address the Chair?

MRS. JORDAN: We are sick of hearing about North Vancouver and indecision about the bridge. Our people know what they want. All this....

MR. WALLACE: Quit fighting, you two.

[Mr. Chairman rises.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member be seated for a moment?

Interjection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. It is necessary for the Chair to insist that the Chair be obeyed. I did ask the Hon. Member to address the Chair, and she ignored the Chair.

Would the Hon. Member proceed with her speech, please?

[Mr. Chairman resumes his seat.]

MRS. JORDAN: Besides, you are better looking than the Member for North Vancouver, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Minister, I would like to tell you about a

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number of details. You said that your staff would go through *Hansard*, but you recognized that the Chair in its wisdom will not allow us to discuss the various details. We have bridges in our area that need to be replaced, and I've just touched lightly on a number of the road problems.

I would also like to bring to your attention that you are government and you have been a strong Minister in defence of a policy of job opportunities. It may interest you to know that the job opportunities in the Highways department in the North Okanagan are exactly four. It is absolutely a disgrace and a shame that you should stand up here and preen yourself on your job opportunities programme, and we have four students, one of which is almost a graduate engineer, to be employed by the Highways department in the whole of the North Okanagan district, a population area of over 30,000. Four jobs. A great job-creating department. A great job-creating Minister. It is a great job-creating fiasco.

I would urge you to talk less in this Legislature and more before Treasury so that we can have a responsible maintenance of our roads in British Columbia — responsible development of roads that are desperately needed, not for mules and not for theorists, but for people to drive on, for produce, vegetables and fruit to go to market, for tourists, whom we welcome in British Columbia, to travel on, and for commerce to travel on.

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, I would like first of all to thank the Member for North Okanagan for her very complimentary remarks about my staff and myself.

And now moving on to Columbia River....

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: I'll be back. (Laughter.)

Ferries. The Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot) asked how much out of the \$140 million would be spent on ferries this year. It is \$5.20 million — the Francois ferry and the ferry landings, the Grenville ferry and the Shelter Bay ferry.

On Highway 95, south of Golden, there will be \$50,000 spent to widen the shoulders. You can thank me again this year.

MR. CHABOT: Westside Road?

HON. MR. LEA: Westside Road — no money this time. I have transferred it over there.

But we are going to do the Kicking Horse Canyon — \$1.2 million.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: Okay, we'll take that back. (Laughter.) Okay, we'll leave it in.

Now there were some cases touched on in the Hon. Minister of Mines and Petroleum Resources' (Hon. Mr. Nimsick) riding. I can assure you that he's been pestering the daylight out of me to get those done. Blanshard hill is in; it will be going.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Yes, that's right.

You asked about level crossings — it is the department policy to eliminate them wherever possible.

Coming back to the Member for North Okanagan (Mrs. Jordan) — 85 per cent of the problems are local. I'm glad to finally hear someone admit that.

MRS. JORDAN: I've always said that.

HON. MR. LEA: Good. I compliment you for that because it is true.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Oh, I've been down there a number of times. I'll be back to that.

Talking about consulting with small areas, I think that for the first time I know for the first time in this province, at least the Department of Highways is doing more consulting with local people than ever before. We have an experimental project going on just outside of Nelson at Foul Creek, where the residents there were not satisfied with either the design of the highway or some of the ecological factors. Those people now have had a public meeting and from that public meeting are working with the highway engineers actually designing their own roads. It's an experimental thing; I'd like to see how it works out.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: They were talking about highway policy generally....

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, the Members of the Social Credit Party were talking about broad highway policy — how we're spending the money, where we're spending the money and how we're spending it in terms of ridings. If you'll cast your minds back to the policy you had when you were government, I can guarantee you that it hasn't changed. (Laughter.)

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver–Capilano): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to deal primarily with local questions related to North Vancouver. But first of all

I want to congratulate the Minister with respect to something he has done on the subject of bicycles in the past year. There has been many a time that I have tried to get through the Deas thoroughway on a bicycle. Of course, I've had to take a car through and unload the bicycle at the other end. I congratulate the Minister on the new scheme he is introducing for a kind of bike bus service through there.

I'd ask him if he's done anything to take up a suggestion I made last year that many of the highways of British Columbia could be very cheaply upgraded to carry bicycles. Of course, a shoulder programme automatically does that; it's another reason for doing it. I'd ask him if he's had a chance to do any kind of an evaluation programme as to what should be the priority areas for shoulder-paving in terms of bicycle-use demand.

The Minister gave a progress report on the Lions Gate Bridge renovation in response to the Hon. Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams). I'd suggest to him that the cost is likely to overrun by a great deal the originally contemplated amount. That may be unavoidable. But I do hope that he's able to keep a close tab on the project so that in terms of timing it doesn't suffer the fate of the Upper Levels Highway in West Vancouver, which has caused so much difficulty and danger to so many people passing through there.

I should say as well that I support the proposal of the Hon. Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) with respect to a new westbound bridge on the Capilano River at the foot of the Lions Gate Bridge. A three-lane structure there, I think, would do a great deal to alleviate the difficulties of the traffic backing up from the Taylor Way bridge. I support that proposition, which is in my colleague's riding.

That leads directly to the problem of a lower-level road in West Vancouver. That, I think, is the bridge the Minister and the chief highway engineer were alluding to earlier on. My understanding is that at the initiative of the Department of Highways, which I again commend, a study is being undertaken with the cooperation of the three municipalities and the Squamish Indian band to consider how such a road might be built. I would trust that that study will be brought to a fruitful conclusion and that ways and means will be found around the difficulty of intermunicipal cooperation, particularly, the problem of Ambleside Park in West Vancouver. I would suggest to the Minister that he should not spare cost and provincial government participation in that road if that is necessary to solve the problems between the municipalities, because that road is going to increasingly acquire the role of an intermunicipal carrier. This comes about for two reasons, both of which are provincial responsibilities.

First of all is the new ferry terminal at the foot of Lonsdale, which I must support. I think the ferry scheme is going to be a good one. I think it's going to take a lot of pressure off the two bridges across the inlet. But for that to be done successfully there must be a means of feeding people into that ferry head. That is one of the roles of the new lower-level road — the lower-level road that should be built.

The other role comes about from the just-released report of the Greater Vancouver Regional District called the Livable Region Report, which proposes that there should be a much higher ratio of jobs in the North Shore in order that fewer people will have to cross the inlet in order to get to work. To do that we need a feeder and distribution route for the new commercial activities which will provide these jobs along the front of the inlet. For this reason and for the ferry access reason I think the province should be very generous in the amount they pay in the share of this lower-level road when it is finally built — I hope soon — and, in particular, any of the bridges are associated with it.

I was delighted to hear the Minister say a few minutes ago that it is department policy to eliminate level crossings as soon as possible. There are two dangerous level crossings in my constituency which must be among the most heavily-travelled of any of the highways of British Columbia. That's on the Upper Levels Highway at Westview and at Lonsdale. For many years most of the land has been available to put grade separations at these points. I ask the Minister when he can be ready to move ahead with those grade separations, which have been a moral commitment from the time that Upper Levels Highway was built, as is evidenced by the acquisition of the property.

In the meantime, can he tell us what the plans are for proceeding this year on an upgrading of the level crossings at those two points, at Lonsdale and Westview? By putting more lanes, both left-turn lanes and straight-across lanes at those two areas, a great deal can be done in the short run to alleviate the traffic condition there.

Mr. Chairman, I don't want to take any more time at this time of night, but I would be grateful for any answers from the Minister.

HON. MR. LEA: I would like to thank the Member for North Vancouver–Capilano for what I consider constructive advice and information. I think you misunderstood, though. We were talking about eliminating level railway crossings. The crossings you were talking about are designed. The money isn't there this year, but they are designed.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: See me about that.

One point I forgot to mention: the Hon. Member

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for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot) mentioned the Molson hop farm outside of Kamloops and asked what the department policy will be on access now that a government agency, the B.C. Development Corp. is looking at it. He also mentioned the travel booth at Golden and the access to that. Where is it?

MR. CHABOT: On a hill at Golden.

HON. MR. LEA: Okay. First of all, dealing with the Molson hop farm, I have had discussions with the Hon. Minister of Economic Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk). In terms of safety I don't care whether it is a government agency or a private developer; the rules and regulations will be exactly the same. It doesn't matter.

I've discussed the factor of loading the highway.

MR. CHABOT: Are you going to turn them down?

HON. MR. LEA: I will turn them down if they don't meet the safety standards that we in this department feel are required. I will turn them down. They will have to be worked out so that that safety hazard isn't there.

The travel booth. We will take a look at that and we will write you on that. I am not familiar with it but, again, if there is a safety factor — it's on a hill; there's a double line — we'll take a look at it. If it is a safety factor, I don't care who it is. We won't give the access.

MR. PHILLIPS: I just have a couple of questions for the Minister of Highways. This evening we are carrying on. Tonight we have reached an all-time high, Mr. Chairman. We reached an all-time high, a record in the Legislature this year.

HON. MR. LEA: Get off that stuff. (Laughter.) At least don't go around bragging about it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, the humour of the Minister of Highways sometimes really gets to me.

Tonight, Mr. Chairman, we are speeding through, at an ever-increasing rapid pace. Tonight we have reached an all-time high of \$110 million-an-hour. The average for the session will be \$24 million-an-hour. This afternoon we whipped through with \$90 million-an-hour.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are you waiting to waste your time for?

AN HON. MEMBER: He's not wasting his time.

MR. PHILLIPS: So tonight, Mr. Chairman, this is another record.

AN HON. MEMBER: There won't be anyone left.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member speak to the vote, please?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly will.

I would like to ask the Minister, first of all....

AN HON. MEMBER: There won't be anyone to cut the economy next year.

MR. PHILLIPS: What is your policy and what will you do when the Alaska Highway is paved? The federal government has finally come to the realization that that highway is the main link between Dawson Creek and Alaska. They have realized that it is a link reaching to the resource-rich north and they are spending a lot of money on it. In many areas, they are rebuilding the road, rerouting it, installing new bridges. I predict that within two years the highway will be paved at least to Fort Nelson. Once it is paved, have you made any agreement with the federal government with regard to taking it over and maintaining it?

What is your policy with regard to the Fort Nelson–Fort Simpson highway link? Whether we like it or not, we must realize that the Mackenzie Delta is going to be developed. There is a tremendous amount of activity in that area at the present time. All of the commerce going into that area is going up through the Hay River road. The British Columbia Railway has the opportunity to serve that development by transporting via rail into Fort Nelson. With that link, it would be a tremendous economic boost to British Columbia.

I don't want you to get up and blame it on Ottawa.

HON. MR. LEA: I won't.

MR. PHILLIPS: I want you to tell me that there have been some honest-to-goodness, sincere negotiations to put that highway through.

I would like to ask a third question. What does the Minister plan to do to fill in the potholes on Alaska Avenue in the City of Dawson Creek? At the present time, Mr. Chairman, if you're not lucky you'll lose your automobile. That's how bad it is. I understand that there is nothing in the budget this year to repair that main thoroughfare through the city.

Mr. Chairman, the pioneers of that great Peace River country did not take kindly to the Minister's songs on the radio saying that somebody cares. You know, he says: "Finally somebody cares." That money that that Minister is spending....

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AN HON. MEMBER: He sings it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, you'd think he was Charlie Rich singing, you know, "I'm tired of following." The people up there, the pioneers of that country, are tired of following those trails and those potholes.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Highways.... It used to be the Department of Highways; now we should call it the Department of Back Roads or the Department of Potholes, because that's how much the highways have deteriorated in this province. I don't care where you go in the province — the Highway 97, or your Highway 16 west of Prince Rupert, or from Prince George to Dawson Creek.... The Hart Highway is unsafe to travel on. I was talking to the Members of the farmers' union that travelled down to this city in their buses. They couldn't believe the condition of the Hart Highway from Mount Le Moray west to Prince George.

I haven't heard the Minister of Northern Affairs (Hon. Mr. Nunweiler) — the Member for Fort George whose riding that highway is in — standing on the floor of this Legislature fighting for his constituency.

Mr. Chairman, I haven't heard you up this evening fighting for the roads in your constituency. Now they're finally going to get that bridge finished.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about the tunnel?

MR. PHILLIPS: But the main highways in this province, Mr. Chairman, are really deteriorating. I remember that last year when we were discussing the Minister's estimates the Minister said: "We're not going out and we're not going to build new highways." You remember very well, Mr. Chairman, exactly what he said. He said: "We're going to maintain and upgrade the existing highways." But he hasn't maintained and upgraded the existing highways.

The highways of this province, the highways that existed under the good Department of Highways, have gone to potholes and he's built no new highways. There is no forward planning; there is no vision in this department any more. It's no wonder that your own Members have to start writing letters to your own party organ complaining about the Department of Highways.

I'd just like to read this letter to you. It isn't only us who are concerned about the potholes. I want to tell you further, Mr. Chairman, that it is costing the Insurance Corp. of British Columbia, commonly known as Moscow Mutual, millions of dollars a year to pay off claims from auto accidents that are caused because of the deteriorating conditions in the Department of Highways. Not only do we have a subsidization — moneys from the gasoline tax going to subsidize the Insurance Corp. of British Columbia — but we have increased accidents and increased claims due to the deteriorating condition of the main highways in this province. So we're not building any new highways and we're doing a very poor job of maintaining the existing highways.

Mr. Chairman, this Mr. Miller is very concerned, and he writes to the *Democrat*:

"As an old time CCFer I'm worried about the party's chances in an election. I hear lots of people blame the condition of the roads on the NDP when the Highways department is loaded with SC" — I presume he's referring to Social Credit — "members hired by the former government and working to rule in hopes of defeating the NDP. When a driver hits a pothole on the highway, and there are millions of them, 9 times out of 10 they blame the NDP, not the Highways department."

Well, Mr. Chairman, who should they blame? They should blame the Department of Highways, which is an organ of the NDP and being operated by the NDP. He says:

"They're sloughing the job. The public are easily fooled, and it only takes a piece of rough road to swing an election."

It's pretty bad when the NDP organ, the socialist rag of the province, Mr. Chairman, has to publish letters condemning the Department of Highways.

HON. MR. LEA: He doesn't want answers.

MR. PHILLIPS: Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you that in the rural ridings of the north — North Peace, South Peace, Cariboo and Prince George — the biggest single factor in developing that area and providing a service to those pioneers who went in there to develop that area, to develop it for the benefit of the rest of the province so that the resources of the province can be opened and so that the people of the province can be fed, mainly the farmers in there.... And what is the policy? What happens when these people go in and develop this country? They need roads. They need roads, Mr. Chairman, they need roads to go out and buy their services; they need roads to get the sick people and their problems to hospital; they need roads to get their children to school.

HON. MR. LEA: Does he want answers?

MR. PHILLIPS: And if we want to continue to develop this province, why don't we have some money for those pioneers who developed this province?

HON. MR. LEA: I'll give you the answer.

Interjections.

MR. PHILLIPS: Now we can sing on the radio all we want to, we can waste our money on advertising. The people of...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! My attention having been drawn to the clock, I am now leaving the chair.

MR. PHILLIPS: ...highways in this province do not give one hoot about the advertising that this Minister says that we care. If he really cares, he would be providing money, Mr. Chairman. But, no, he is more interested in advertising.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Hon. Member be seated, please?

MR. PHILLIPS: is it closure again? We are having closure again.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. PHILLIPS: The Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke), who's in his riding...

MR. SPEAKER: Standing orders state that the House sits to 11.

MR. PHILLIPS: ...doesn't have to worry about his constituents getting their children out to the hospital, getting their children out to get an education. He doesn't have to worry about that at all.

MR. SPEAKER: There being disorder, under standing order 22 I adjourn the House until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 11:07 p.m.

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