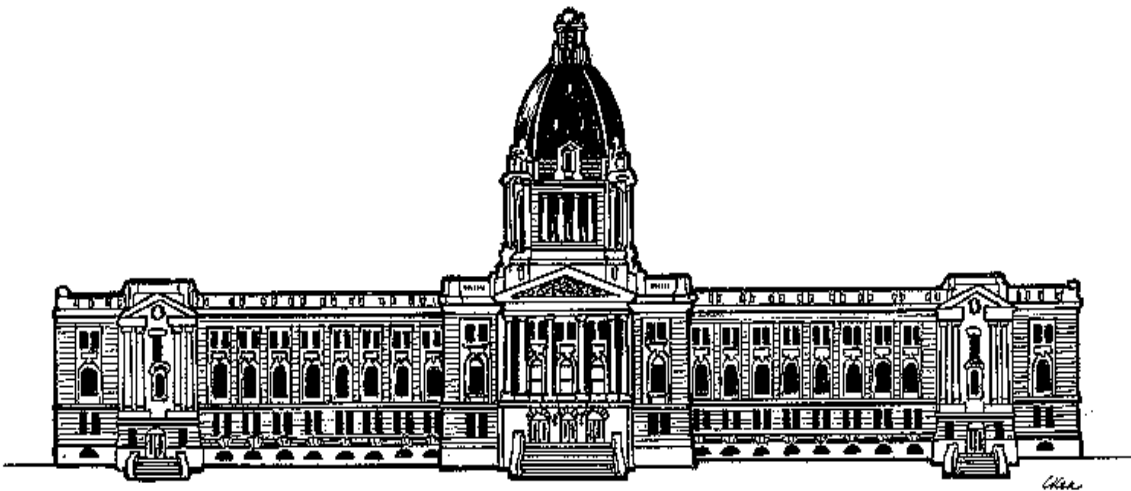




STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

Hansard Verbatim Report

No. 12 – November 24, 2004



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Twenty-fifth Legislature

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY
2004**

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Regina Wascana Plains

Hon. Deb Higgins
Moose Jaw Wakamow

Mr. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert
Wood River

Mr. Kevin Yates
Regina Dewdney

The committee met at 15:00.

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates
Industry and Resources
Vote 23**

Subvote (IR07)

The Chair: — Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We are back in committee once more, and today's agenda includes one item. It is the vote 23 on the supplementary estimates that are contained in the document on page 13: vote 23, Industry and Resources investment programs (IR07), northern uranium mines rehabilitation in the amount of \$12 million. I will now entertain the minister and ask if he would introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. It's a pleasure for me to be back here at the committee. And with me sitting to my right is Mr. Larry Spanner, who is the deputy minister of our Department of Industry and Resources. And to my left sitting here is Mr. Jim Marshall, who is the assistant deputy minister for resource and economic policy. And sitting behind me is, on my left, your right-hand side, is Jay Fredericks, who is the director of mineral policy for the department. And beside him is Mr. Richard Turkheim, the executive director, resource and industry development for the Department of Northern Affairs, which obviously also takes an interest in the cleanup of uranium, abandoned uranium mines in northern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Chair, with your permission, if acceptable to the committee, I do have some remarks to make about why we're doing this and how it comes about.

The Chair: — Please proceed.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Okay, thank you. A long-standing issue for northerners and a concern for our uranium industry are the abandoned uranium mines in the vicinity of Uranium City, which as you will know is quite far north, very close to the border with the Northwest Territories. These mines operated in the 1950s and 1960s at a time when the understanding and regulation of the environment was not as developed as it is today. At the end of the lives of these mines, the companies simply walked away from the operations with little or no decommissioning and reclamation of the sites. In total there are 42 former uranium mine and mill sites in northern Saskatchewan that could require remedial work. The largest of these sites are the Lorado and Gunnar mine mill sites. The rest are all very small, satellite uranium mine sites, some of which were only exploratory sites.

I want to stress that the operators of these abandoned sites are not linked to the companies currently mining uranium in the North and that the current mines have financial assurances in place totalling more than \$160 million to ensure that funds are available at the end of their operating lives for the full decommissioning and reclamation. In fact new mines in Saskatchewan are not allowed to commence operations without an approved plan for decommissioning and reclamation in

place.

The Gunnar mine and the Lorado mill site were large operations in their time and require actions to reclaim tailings as well as general site remediation activities. These are the only two sites with tailings areas that require actions. The other mine sites, which in some cases are no more than shallow trenches, require basic remediation primarily to reduce the risk of physical injury.

More recently through due diligence investigations by the province, we identified two responsible parties for the Lorado site. One is EnCana Corporation, the corporate successor to the original company that operated at this site in the past. Discussions with EnCana have been very positive, and they are now working with the province and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to address their responsibilities for this site.

The other party we've identified as having a direct responsibility for the tails at the Lorado site is the federal government. The federal government through its Crown corporation, Eldorado Mining and Refining Ltd. now Canada Eldor Inc., contributed directly to the tailings at the Lorado site through the custom milling of its own or from the nearby Beaverlodge site. To date the CNSC (Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission) has not pursued the federal government to accept its responsibilities at the Lorado site. We continue to raise the issue though. And in addition we continue to complete due diligence work concerning the Gunnar site to confirm whether there are any responsible third parties that should be involved in the remediation of that site.

The province has undertaken a careful examination of the other former uranium mine sites in the region and has developed detailed cost estimates to carry out the decommissioning and reclamation activities. The intent is to return the sites to a stable condition that safeguards the public and protects the surrounding environment from the risk of environmental contamination.

The total cost for all activities we estimate at \$24 million. While we have not identified other corporate successors, this does not mean the province has sole responsibility for the cleanup of the other 41 sites. The province believes that the federal government bears significant responsibility for the cleanup of these sites as a result of its role as the primary regulator of the industry at the time these sites were developed, brought into production, and then abandoned. As well, the federal government exercised a complete monopoly over the sales of all production from these sites in the 1950s and 1960s.

In conjunction with this belief, the province has discussed cost sharing the cleanup of these sites with the federal government and continues to pursue this initiative. But to demonstrate the commitment of the province to undertake this work and to spur the federal government to make a similar commitment, the province has formally transferred its estimated share of the cleanup cost into the budget of the Department of Industry and Resources.

I want to stress however that these funds will be made available only on the basis of a commitment of matching funding from

the federal government. We have recently communicated this new development to federal ministers. We are hopeful for a positive response, particularly given consistent signals that the federal government is now developing a framework of priority projects for the remaining funding in its \$500 million contaminated sites funding program. This program was announced in the federal throne and budget speeches earlier this year.

So that is the explanation, Mr. Chair, and members, for the \$12 million we want to transfer into the department's budget to try to lever, in effect, a fair contribution from the federal government for the reasons I've indicated. And I thank you for the opportunity to make that statement.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister Cline. Mr. Wakefield.

Mr. Wakefield: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you, Mr. Minister, and welcome to your officials. Just for clarification, to make sure that I have this in hand, the \$12 million that is proposed in vote 23 is contingent on matching sharing from the federal government. Is that what I heard you say?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Yes, the \$12 million in a sense is not contingent in terms of going into our budget, but we are not prepared to spend the \$12 million until we have an agreement with the federal government. So that I suppose if we didn't have that agreement by the end of the year, we wouldn't have spent the money and the accounting rules would say what would happen to that money. But we would, I think, be prepared to put the money up again next year. We think it sends a powerful signal to the federal government to put their money up as well.

Mr. Wakefield: — Mr. Minister, why now? Is it because you have some extra dollars that appeared? Is there an urgency now, or what is driving this initiative at this point?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well this is really a culmination of discussions that have been going on for some time so that it's very timely in the sense that before we had the mid-year financial statement with the extra money that is in the budget this year, we already were trying to make an agreement with the federal government to cost share the cleanup of these sites, especially since they set aside \$500 million in their budget to do just that. So this did not come about just because of this extra money. But when the extra money appeared, it seemed like the time to make the money available. We would have spent that money I think in any event. We would have had to come up with that money.

Mr. Wakefield: — Was there not an increasing environmental situation that has to be addressed right now? That isn't the case, is that what you're saying? It's because of the timing of different budgets coming together? Is that what I'm hearing?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well I think there's an ongoing environmental concern. I think it's certainly a high priority that these sites be cleaned up. And I think most people would agree it is time that this situation was addressed. And so I'm not sure I said what you may have just said I said. I think I said that we are committed to getting this job done. And as a matter of coincidence, we found a good source for our share of the money at the same time. But had we not found that source, I think the

environmental problem is there.

And what I said in my previous answer is we would have had to find the money to pay our share to clean these sites up in any event. We're just lucky that the province is doing quite well right now, and we actually have the money to do so.

Mr. Wakefield: — In your opening statement, Mr. Minister, you talked about 42 former sites, and I don't remember the exact words but I think you said some or most would be, would be included in this program, maybe not all. Who makes that determination?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I think I said that they all would be included. The distinction I made, Mr. Wakefield, or through you, Mr. Chair, to Mr. Wakefield, was that there really are two sites that are very large sites — I think it's fair to say — the Gunnar and Lorado. The others, I think I referred to 41 as being quite really minor cleanup jobs but nevertheless jobs that need to be done. And they all need to be cleaned up. There is simply a difference between whether it's a very, very large job or whether it's a small job.

But in fact what I might do is ask the officials if there would be a list of the estimated cost with respect to each and every one of those 42 sites so that we could provide the committee with a breakdown of the estimated costs. But the answer is they all have to be cleaned up.

Mr. Wakefield: — Okay, thanks for that correction. If I misunderstood that, I apologize.

When we're talking about cleaning it up, who does the supervision? Who does the action plan, so to speak, on these? Is it a joint, a joint compliance or an action plan endeavour by the two bodies that will be or more . . . two or more bodies that will be financing the cleanup? To what level?

I guess we can be spending a considerable amount of money and think we have the job done. And just a bit down the road, either new technologies or more stringent regulations will come in place, and then we have to do this all over again. So I'm just wondering, who are the ones that sets the parameters of the level of compliance? And who makes that determination?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I think, Mr. Chair, I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to take that question because he is familiar with the details and logistics as to what the standards would be, how they would be met, and how we would ensure that the job was properly done.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Proponents for operating sites — current operating sites — have to develop decommissioning plans. And these former or sometimes called abandoned uranium sites have to basically follow the same approach.

So first, for the Gunnar site there has to be a final determination made as to the responsible parties for that site. In that regard this government continues now under an access to information request of the federal government to secure historic documentation so that we can complete our due diligence, and as we did, in a report filed earlier this year with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, determine whether or not there are

any third parties who would be proponents for the site. In which case, if we did so identify, those parties would be responsible for developing the requisite decommissioning plan which is required under the Nuclear Safety and Control Act.

If there are no third parties identified as responsible for the Gunnar site, then it would fall likely — and I say likely — to the provincial government to take action with regard to the site, but that needs to be the subject of discussions with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

Moving more specifically to your question, a decommissioning plan must be prepared by a proponent. That's a requirement of the federal legislation and our own provincial legislation, The Environmental Management and Protection Act. The proponent bears responsibility for setting forth the proposed series of options to deal with the decommissioning and remediation of the site.

The federal regulators and provincial regulators then judge the adequacy of that proposal against their respective statutory requirements under legislation and in the end must approve that decommissioning plan on the part of that proponent and issue the corresponding licence in the case of the federal government and requisite permits under EMPA (The Environmental Management and Protection Act) here, provincially.

Mr. Wakefield: — Thank you. That sounds rather complete, but I guess my question would be then, was none of this decommissioning and regulation requirement in place originally? Or was it at such a level then that it is ineffective at this stage?

I guess my point being, what happens 100 years from now? Do we have to go through this process again with new requirements that will in fact require much more additional funds because of more stringent detail?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well I want to make it absolutely clear that we have very stringent requirements upon any uranium mine that is currently operating or will operate in the future. And it's important to recognize that the international people that oversee issues surrounding uranium mining and nuclear energy have been to Canada and, in particular, Saskatchewan and they have said that our standards for environment and worker health and safety are a model for the rest of the world.

So in terms of the known procedures that we should follow, Canada's and Saskatchewan's standards are the highest standard in the world. And we believe that any new development is, you know, subject to rules that will take, when the mine shuts down, will take the area back to where it should be.

Now in terms of what may happen, I mean, 100 years from now, I mean, nobody knows. But in terms of the best science available to all of us, that science is used by governments, federal and provincial, and the industry to really be a showcase of the way uranium mining should be done.

Now in answer to the first part of the question, that was not the case in days past. I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment as well, but I believe that the rules at the time — this goes back some 50

years and 40 years — were basically that the mines would operate and, like a lot of other industries, not a lot of thought was given to what to do when you shut those industries down, because I don't think they had the kind of planning we have today. But I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to confirm or vary that.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and that's exactly correct. In Canada we did not establish environmental protection legislation until 1975 in Ontario. In the '50s and '60s there was none. In the United States, it was 1969 before such legislations began to evolve. So these sites were walk-aways except for the salvage of commercially valuable machinery, equipment, etc. And that's why they're termed legacy sites.

Mr. Wakefield: — Mr. Minister, that's encouraging, but I guess at one time that was in fact the case where there was abandoned military bases or gold mines or whatever, and I know this, Mr. Chair, might be just slightly off topic a little bit, but using that same kind of reasoning, are those decommissioning and reclamation requirements at the level you're talking about, are they in place for the current mines in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Yes, yes, they absolutely are.

Mr. Wakefield: — And will there be, will there be any requirement from earlier mines for doing the same kind of thing as you're budgeting here for, for uranium? For earlier, I guess the word is not negligence but certainly lack of regulation at that time.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment, but I believe that basically the environmental people in the federal and provincial governments across the country have determined that there are a variety of mine sites that need to be cleaned up, many of which would have arisen before these standards came into being in Canada. And that's why the federal government has put forward this fund of \$500 million for environmental cleanup.

Now I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment on the issue of the responsibility of the operators, if still in existence, to participate in the costs and how that sort of works when in effect standards were imposed, say in 1975 or thereafter, on projects where the investors may have built them in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. But I know that we're taking the position that there has to be contribution from the owners or their successors, if available and identifiable, and I guess if they have the resources to participate. And I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment further on that.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Minister. There is no going back in time, and as the minister has pointed out, that's one reason why the federal government committed earlier this year in throne and budget speeches a total of \$4 billion — \$500 million of which is for contaminated sites, of which these are representative examples across Canada. It is a question of good governance both at national and perhaps provincial levels, recognizing the need to take care of the past and to do right by the present for the future.

That's the situation that we face with regard to these legacy sites from the Cold War era in the North. More specifically in

terms of the question, what standards apply, and as the minister has framed it, would proponents today, if identified as responsible third parties for these sites, bear obligation to decommission and reclaim to current day standards, yes they would, both in terms of the federal legislations as well as applicable provincial legislations.

In the particular case of EnCana Corporation, the largest independent gas producer we've got in Canada which we identified as a responsible party — they in fact own title to a portion of the Lorado site. EnCana Corporation fully recognizes and is fully co-operative and responsible in approaching that site and agreeing yes, certainly, it needs to be reclaimed to the standards that will be set by the CNSC — Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission — under the Nuclear Safety and Control Act federally, as well as our own Environmental Management and Protection Act. Current day, best standards available based on best science.

Mr. Wakefield: — Just for clarification in my mind that you referred to the \$500 million environmental cleanup in the federal budget, or the federal budget focusing on cleanups, or what's the right word? Environmental decommissioning . . .

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Remediation.

Mr. Wakefield: — Remediation. Some of that then would apply to where you hope you're going with the uranium mine sites and I suppose that would be the fund that you would use for other cleanup in other mines — gold or whatever other sites.

And I'm wondering if there is any money set aside currently to leverage some of that 500 million federal dollars for other sites as well, other than uranium.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — No, I don't believe there is. And that then begs the question, I think, what other cleanup work is there that should be done and what would the cost of that be, beyond uranium?

And I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment on that, whether he's aware of other mines, types of mines. Mr. Spannier or Mr. Fredericks might want to comment as well because not all of them will be in the North.

And you're basically asking, are there other issues out there. And you know, I think it's a good question and I'll ask the officials to describe the other issues there may be in other areas of mining.

Mr. Spannier: — Just to build on what the minister indicated about the 500 million in the federal budget. It's earmarked for federal sites where clearly the federal government has acknowledged responsibility for those sites and that's why we feel that, given the link they have to uranium sites here, we see as cost-matching dollars coming from that 500 million.

But I'd turn it over to Richard if there's anything else he'd like to add.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Larry. Unfortunately I can't shed any additional light in response to your question. There are additional sites that are contaminated — industrial and other

former mine sites, copper, gold, etc. — but from Northern Affairs' perspective, the department I work for, I'm not aware of any other additional strategies at this point in time, either federally or provincially, to address those other sites — non-uranium sites.

Mr. Wakefield: — Mr. Minister, I think Mr. Spannier's comments about the federal . . . the 500 million federal budget applies only to federal interest. So any of these other sites is going to be extremely expensive on our provincial budget if we're going to have to go after them. And there's a lot of sites that . . . and I'm certainly not an expert but there's a lot of indication, I think, that there's other sites that need to be addressed environmentally. This uranium is certainly one, but there are other industrial sites as you referred to — underground fuel tanks and those kind of storages are, you know, a huge problem. But, you know, we may want to get into that another time.

Let me follow that then with a question. Are there, to your knowledge, are there any new or potential mines that are on the drawing board or being planned for uranium so that we know that the environmental reclamation/decommissioning plans are in place? Or are we just developing what's on the plate now?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well, two things. One is the Cigar Lake mine which is going through the environmental approval process right now, and they hope to obtain licensing in the next short while — several weeks I think — to proceed with the Cigar Lake uranium mine. And that of course will include a full reclamation and remediation plan.

Also Cluff Lake is presently approved to be decommissioned by its owners, so that will be a major decommissioning activity going on.

I might add that there's a lot of the exploration in uranium going on right now in Saskatchewan and the world demand for uranium is projected to remain quite strong. Prices are projected to remain strong. And we believe that there is a very good chance that, you know, in the future there will be more announcements of some additional uranium mines. But as to locations or specifics of that, I don't know them right now. I don't think that's . . . they're at that stage. But I think that's what we're going to see in the future. And as we do that, each mine like Cigar Lake must proceed before it is licensed to have a full reclamation and remediation plan that would be approved by the environmental authorities.

Mr. Wakefield: — Mr. Minister, would other industrial sites that show contamination, would that be under your department? I'm thinking of manufacturing plants around the cities.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — No, they would . . . generally speaking, that would be an issue for the Department of the Environment.

Mr. Wakefield: — Okay, there's some issues that I wanted to follow up, but will do that then with the minister responsible and that department.

I just have another question. When you are trying to identify the previous owners of the uranium mines that we started with . . . you're referring to when we started, and you can't find who

they are or you can't find that they have the ability to help recover, does the \$24 million that you estimated for cleanup, does that all of a sudden become your responsibility then and not just the 12 million?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I'm not sure. I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment on, you know, what the total costs would be. And if . . . I think your question is if we had some contributions from others, would that reduce the 24 million estimated cost? Because I think the 24 million is seen to be sort of the maximum. And to the extent that you had other parties that would be contributing, I believe that you'd move down from the 24 million to some other number.

Mr. Turkheim: — Yes, Minister, that's exactly correct. Our estimate — and this is based on analyses over the past two and a half years, as well as more research that was back in 1998 — suggests that a 23 to \$24 million cost figure to address the Gunnar site possibly and between 8 to 11 of the other 41 small satellite sites.

That estimate of 23 to \$24 million is a, what I call a worst-case scenario estimate of cost. If the results of our due diligence work, examining for third parties responsible in history and currently for the Gunnar site reveal positive results, as the minister has indicated, that total price drops. Therefore the price shares to the federal and provincial government are also reduced below the 12 that we're talking about now.

Mr. Wakefield: — Thank you, Mr. Minister.

The Chair: — Mr. Huyghebaert.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Yes, just along some of the same questions that Mr. Wakefield asked, I just copied down a couple of questions as we were talking. And one of my first questions was, did the companies in the '50s follow the correct procedures when they left the mines? And I gather your answer was yes; they followed all the rules and regulations of the day. And is it my understanding that now we're going to go back to try and locate those companies to have them put up part of the reclamation bill? That's correct?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Yes.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Then it follows, I guess, to what Mr. Wakefield's question was about the decommissioning plans of today and technologies change in 40 years, which we're talking about a 40-year differential from the late '50s to today. So are these companies going to be on the hook 40 years from now as technologies change?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to comment on that.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Minister. And I understand your question about continually evolving technology. I would say the answer is no. The companies would not necessarily be in a situation of jeopardy forecast 40 years down the road.

First we go back to the '50s and '60s. There were no environmental remediation or decommissioning requirements in place at that time. So the walk-away circumstances were simply ones of following good corporate business practice of salvaging

commercially still viable materials and equipment. So those companies did not necessarily, back then, adhere to any environmental standards. There weren't any.

They follow the best practice today, not only of the province under Environmental Management and Protection Act but the federal legislation as well, that ensures then that they would be in a situation to request release from any ensuing obligations on those sites and that the federal and provincial authorities would necessarily judge as well and make that determination.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, a question that I have also is: do we have a target date for when this will start? And do we have a target date for when the completion would be . . . it would be completed, the cleanup process?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well the target date for beginning would be as soon as we reach an agreement with the federal government, which we hope to reach, you know, over the next several weeks.

Now in terms of the completion, that's a little more difficult to say because it depends upon the specific remediation plans that they come up to with respect to each site, and those have to be approved by the environmental people. And I don't know how long that process would take. And I can't really prejudge what each plan would entail either, so it's a little bit difficult to say. But I'll ask Mr. Turkheim if he could estimate — say a period of months or years — from the time we would get an agreement from the federal government that this should reasonably be expected to be completed.

Mr. Turkheim: — Thank you, Minister. And I hope as well that we can achieve a memorandum of understanding and work towards it, then an agreement with the federal government within several weeks.

In terms of the general project timeline estimates that we have been working with now for the past two years, we have consistently suggested to federal authorities and others that we look at this as an eight-year project for the development of the decommissioning plan and its approval, and then the undertaking of the approved work. Eight years. Thereafter there's a period of time required for what's called post-decommissioning monitoring. And that is for purposes of care and maintenance to ensure that the science, the formulas, the calculations, and that site is performing according to the measures, as per the plan.

So one can look at the total project as being an eight-year time period. Two for planning, roughly, and CNSC officials — I just met with yesterday in La Ronge — generally concur with this. Two years to plan, six years to do the work, and then at the outside a 10-year period of time watching it carefully to make sure it's performing according to plan. And that's where we take our comfort and assurance that we've done right.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you. Mr. Chair, again Mr. Wakefield asked this question, and I believe the answer was, that it was . . . but I was wondering if it was consistent with other industries, and I don't just mean mining, I mean industries. Do we have reclamation regulations within the province for other industries that have to be adhered to?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I would say yes, we do. I don't think it's totally unique to uranium mining. I mean, one example would be, you know, when the government decided a number of years ago — it was quite some time ago now — that all the gas stations had to be cleaned up. You'll remember that. And some of them, the then owners were still the owners, and they cleaned them. And some of them were abandoned, and I think the Department of the Environment and the government became involved.

And, you know, there are actually other examples of environmental cleanup that have been ordered around the province. There are several sites. Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon — they've all had them. So no, it isn't the principle that would be unique to the uranium mining industry that at some point society would say, look, you owned this land. You've undertaken this activity in this land. We've identified an environmental hazard. We expect you to clean it up. And there probably are several precedents for that.

So it's true that at the time they operated in the '50s and '60s nobody required them to clean up. But the principle that at some point society comes along and says, you know, there's an environmental hazard here and you're responsible and we expect cleanup, that's not a new or unique principle for uranium mining companies.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, again this might border on or outside of the minister's area of responsibility, but the reason I asked the question is because we have seen sites from Crown corporations, for example, that have been abandoned and no reclamation. And one could debate and argue whether it's an environmental issue or an industry issue, and whether it's toxic or noxious. And I look at a site in my constituency that is one, and nothing has ever been done on it.

I've asked the question so it seems to be a double standard. If you're a Crown corporation it's okay. But if you're an industry of something else, that now you have to go back and do the reclamation.

And the other example I'd like to bring forward, especially when we address the \$500 million from the federal government, on federal government, maybe federal government-associated projects . . . is how about abandoned rail lines? And we get nowhere it seems with that. And that is, that is causing issues and problems, again maybe not to the standard of toxic, but sure with noxious weeds. So I wonder if that's outside of the minister's purview or if he would like to address that?

The Chair: — If I could interject, I appreciate the member's interest in environmental cleanups, but I would want to remind all members of the committee that the issue we are discussing in committee today is specific and that it is supplementary estimates of \$12 million appropriated for multi-year costs associated with the cleanup of former uranium mine sites in northern Saskatchewan. And I would ask members to limit their questions to the purview of the estimates before us today.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well, Mr. Chair, I was just trying to find the standard.

The Chair: — I'm sorry . . .

Mr. Huyghebaert: — I'm trying to find the standard, if there's a standard for the uranium industry which directly relates to the supplementary estimates. I was trying to associate a standard with that to other industry.

The Chair: — I'll allow the question, but I will ask members to confine, if they would, their comments to the estimates before us. It's easy to get off on other areas; I understand that. There are other areas where environmental concerns exist. And I will allow the minister to answer.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well the Minister of the Environment would be in a better position whether there's one standard for Crown corporations and another standard for others. But you know, I think the answer would be that there shouldn't be more than one standard, and I doubt that there is.

I mean I can't comment on the specifics that Mr. Huyghebaert is talking about in his constituency because I don't know anything about it. But I would point out that in fact Eldorado Nuclear was a Crown corporation, albeit a federal Crown corporation, and that's why we're saying that the federal Crown as operator of Eldorado Nuclear should cleanup or participate in the cleanup of that site. So in fact what we're doing is proof positive that we expect the Crown to be responsible. That's the whole point of what we're doing here.

We're putting up \$12 million of Crown money, which is the taxpayers' money, to clean these things up, and we're also saying that the federal government as the owner of a Crown corporation must participate. So from our point of view, quite obviously, we don't give any special treatment to governments or the Crown corporations. If there's a problem, we want to deal with it. And that's what we're here to try to do, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: — Okay, are there any . . . Mr. Yates, I believe . . .

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My question has to do with the reclamation of the legacy mines. It was just a year ago I believe that we passed a new environmental protection Act that allowed for seeking remuneration from third parties who would have been involved in contaminated sites previously. Did the passing of that legislation play any role in us getting to this point and moving forward with this issue?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Chairman, in answer to Mr. Yates, I'm advised that no, we would have been proceeding down this road the same way in any event. So the passage of any particular legislation has not led us to the point we're at today.

Mr. Yates: — Okay, thank you. That's my only question.

The Chair: — Are there any further questions? Mr. Stewart.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. One follow-up question on a question that was asked by Mr. Wakefield, where I think it was the minister or one of the officials stated that new uranium mines would have to have a plan for reclamation upon being built. And the answer was that that plan would have to be approved by the proper environmental authorities. And I wondered what all departments and agencies does that include, federal and provincial?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — I'll ask Mr. Turkheim to describe that process and how the different governments and departments are involved. Thank you.

Mr. Turkheim: — It's a pretty healthy list, and I'll give it a shot — although I'm not from Saskatchewan Environment department.

Federally, lead, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, and in theory they are also responsible for ensuring coordination of the requirements with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and as well the very powerful Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, CEAA as it's often referred to.

Provincially, Saskatchewan Environment obviously the lead under The Environmental Management and Protection Act, and that is the statute under which the authority has existed for a little while to pursue third parties responsible for sites. But in addition to Saskatchewan Environment, there are of course attendant requirements under the mines Act, Labour Standards Act, etc., with regard to occupational health and safety, so Department of Labour provincially as well obviously has input into the review of any decommissioning plans. But the approval of those plans per se rests with Saskatchewan Environment under EMPA and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission under the Nuclear Safety and Control Act federally.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you. That's all I have.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Stewart. Are there any further questions from members of the committee?

Okay, if not, the question before us then is supplementary estimates on page 13, Industry and Resources, vote 23, investment programs (IR07) in the amount of \$12 million. Is the committee ready for the question? All those in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Then we have another chore here, and that's to move a resolution moving the \$12 million on to the House. I will entertain a resolution then:

Granting Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums to the General Revenue Fund executive branch of government for Industry and Resources the amount of \$12,000,000.

Mr. Yates has so moved. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

Subvote (IR07) agreed to.

Vote 23 agreed to.

The Chair: — That, ladies and gentlemen, then concludes the work of the standing committee as it relates to supplementary estimates, and we will then have to move both sums. We have dealt with the Department of Agriculture supplementary estimates and Industry and Resources. Your committee has reviewed both estimates and has agreed that they be moved

along.

Therefore if I could have a resolution:

Be it resolved that granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums: budgetary expenses for Agriculture, \$40,000,000; for Industry and Resources, \$12,000,000.

Could I have that moved? Mr. Yates has moved. All those in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

Oh, a very simple motion, this last one. It's a motion to adjourn. But before we do I'd like the minister to thank his officials.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, I'd like to thank you and the members of the committee for your questions and co-operation. And I'd like to thank the officials here today for assisting all of us in these deliberations. Thank you.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd as well like to thank the officials and the minister for his co-operation today. And the officials particularly are always very helpful, and we do appreciate it.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. And I would like to thank all of the committee members for their diligence on these matters. And Ms. Hamilton has moved a motion to adjourn. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — This committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 15:50.

