

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

## head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Title: **Thursday, June 15, 1989 2:30 p.m.**  
Date: 89/06/15

**Bill 6**  
**Securities Amendment Act**

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

## PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, we thank You for Your abundant blessings to our province and ourselves.

We ask You to ensure to us Your guidance and the will to follow it.

Amen.

## head: Statement by the Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Yesterday some concerns were drawn to my attention with regard to the rule of anticipation. Specific references on anticipation can be found in Standing Order 23(e), which reads:

A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member...

(e) anticipates, contrary to good parliamentary practice, any matter already on the Order Paper or on notice for consideration.

And *Beauchesne* 513(1):

In determining whether a discussion is out of order on the grounds of anticipation, the Speaker must have regard to the probability of the matter anticipated being brought before the House within a reasonable time.

Furthermore, I draw to the attention of all members that on April 19, 1988, the Chair made a statement to the House concerning the matter of anticipation with regard to motions or Bills which may be on the Order Paper. In essence the Chair made the following ruling: questions can be developed and not ruled out of order if a Bill has been introduced in the Assembly. "Once the Bills reach second reading stage, then they're going to be ruled out of order in terms of question period." Questions developed after a Bill's introduction should not be detailed and should relate to the general policy rather than a clause-by-clause examination of the Bill. If this occurs in question period, these questions will be ruled out of order.

Thank you, hon. members.

## head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce in your gallery today the Member of Parliament for Prince George-Bulkley Valley. Mr. Brian Gardiner is the federal New Democrat forestry critic. Prince George is a forestry riding. It shares a boundary with West Yellowhead and a common concern. Mr. Gardiner's here to help the Official Opposition lobby for more federal money for forestry development in Alberta, in meetings we held this morning.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 6, Securities Amendment Act, 1989.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide additional protection for the interests of small investors. Major aspects of the legislation include additional controls to methods used in company takeover attempts, expanded definition of those restricted from trading with insider information, and significantly increased penalties for those who contravene the Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 6 read a first time]

## head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table with the House the 1988 annual report for the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table guidelines and policy from income security programs for 1988 and 1984 for the information of the Premier and the hon. minister, who seemed to not know what I was talking about.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, it's just a matter of a straight tabling. [interjection] That's for all members.

Mr. Minister, please.

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table with the Assembly four copies of the 1988 annual report of the Workers' Compensation Board.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, under section 4, subsection 3 of the Election Act I am pleased to table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 1988 general enumeration.

## head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly 28 grades 5 and 6 students from the Rosebrier community school, whose catchment area is shared with the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc. They are accompanied today by two teachers, Mrs. Jenell Pluim and Mrs. Pat Murray, together with parents Mrs. Switzer, Mrs. Cleland, Mrs. Hawthorn, Mr. Ingles, Mr. and Mrs. Monaghan, and Mrs. Reimer. I'd ask that they rise -- they're in the members' gallery -- and receive the usual welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a group of students from the school of Newbrook, 18 students along with their two teachers Wayne Crosswell and Nicole Hickie, parent Danny Diachyshyn, and bus driver Herb Megley. They are seated in the members' gallery. I'd like them to rise at this time and get the usual warm welcome they get from this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud I'm pleased today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a class of 58 students from the Duggan elementary school. They're accompanied by teachers Mrs. Beech and Mr. Ostfield. They're seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Redwater-Andrew.

MR. ZARUSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me pleasure today to introduce to you and the rest of the Assembly 13 grades 5 and 6 students from the Waskatenau school in the heart of the Redwater-Andrew constituency. They're accompanied by teacher Miss Rhonda Nelson, parents Mrs. Emily Ollikka and Vivian Rondeau, and other guests Shelley Jackson and Bob Kulchyski. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce 12 members of an English as a Second Language group from the Alberta vocational school. They're seated in the public gallery and are accompanied by their teacher Lorna Jamison. I would request that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Social Assistance Policy for Students

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the minister of social services. This government likes to give lip service to the family, lots of lip service, but some of their policies they just can't be trusted to bring in, because they actually move towards the opposite. In fact, they may even lead to the breakdown of the family. I'm talking specifically of the example of a Calgary woman on welfare who financed her education by taking student loans. Highly motivated, got her degree in two and a half years, but because she illegally took the student loans while she was on welfare, she ended up spending a year in jail. I think the punishment here far outweighs the crime. The point is that this woman was put into the welfare trap. Either you stay there or you try to upgrade yourself.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, they're getting nervous; I don't know.

My question to this minister. Why does the social services department have such a backward policy? Shouldn't they be trying to get people off welfare, precisely what this woman did?

MR. OLDRING: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader as usual asks a number of questions. I would like to take the opportunity of talking about our family initiatives, but I want to respond to the questions he did raise. He's making reference to a specific case down in the city of Calgary. I want to begin by pointing out that this province has a tremendous program in place for funding students. Our student programs are second to none in Canada, and we're proud of those programs. With them go

some rules and some regulations and some requirements, and we expect all Albertans to adhere to those policies to ensure that the program can stay in place for all those students who do want to take advantage of it.

We also, Mr. Speaker, in this province have a program for helping those who for circumstances beyond their control at times need our support to be able to provide them with those basic necessities of shelter and clothing and food. Although I am somewhat sympathetic to this person's situation, I regret that she took advantage of both of these programs. It's the intent of this minister to ensure our programs are adhered to on a fair and equal basis and that they're accessible to all Albertans on a fair and equal basis, and we'll continue to do that.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, some policies; a woman tries to get out of welfare and she ends up in jail. That's the great policies that you're talking about?

My question to the minister. They have short-term programs: filing. But if a person wants to go to university, they can't go under this program or they end up in jail, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware that in the early '70s they did have a program here where women or men could go to university and also stay on welfare? Why did they change it?

MR. OLDRING: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would want to make one thing very clear. It wasn't this minister nor this government that sent this individual to jail; the judicial system decided that.

In terms of the policies of this government, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that as the new minister responsible for Family and Social Services, it would be my intent to work with those Albertans who find themselves on social assistance, to help them regain independence and find themselves meaningfully employed in society once again. And we'll continue to do that.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap; lip service is cheap. My question to this minister. Is he then prepared to look at this narrow-minded, cruel policy and change it so that they actually encourage people to get off welfare, so people like this can go to university and will not end up jail in the future? Will he change this policy now? [An hon. member clapped]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. No clapping.

MR. MARTIN: This is a more important issue than that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair entirely agrees, but the procedure of the House is also going to be adhered to. Thank you.

Mr. Minister.

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, I would only want to conclude by saying that many individuals achieve removing themselves from welfare through the support and the initiatives of this government, without breaking the law. Many students place themselves through university through considerable sacrifice and effort, without breaking the laws. The policies of this minister, Mr. Speaker, will continue to do everything we can within reason to support individuals on social assistance to become self-dependent and self-reliant and meaningfully employed in society once again. We've done that in the past, we're going to put a greater emphasis on it in the future, and I would just invite

this leader opposite to watch the progress that will be made in this department.

MR. MARTIN: You admit that it's been pretty bad.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Avonmore.

### **Social Assistance Policy**

MS M. LAING: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, today I have tabled for the information of the Premier and the Minister of Family and Social Services the social allowance policy from the minister's department about the employability of mothers with four-month-old infants. On June 12 in this Assembly the minister asked for a specific instance of a mother of a four-month-old infant being required to seek paid employment. In view of the information tabled today, will the minister now admit that this has been department policy since at least 1984?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, again, this minister indicated earlier in question period that it is the intent of myself and this government to work with individuals in giving them every bit of assistance and support that we can, be it assistance with job searching, be it assistance with training, be it assistance with day care. But it is our intent to reduce the caseloads we're seeing on social assistance in this province today, to work with these individuals and to help them become meaningfully employed and productive and back in society as quickly as we possibly can.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, is the minister now contradicting the Premier's 1986 statement, and I quote: "We believe . . . the best quality child care comes at home and is the clear responsibility" of the family. How does he square his present position and policy with that statement?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, the minister isn't contradicting that statement one bit.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, how then does the minister think that a mother in the paid labour force can at the same time be providing care for her child in the home herself?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, the Premier was talking about an ideal situation. I would also want to point out that this government recognizes all the forms of family that exist in today's society. Again, both the hon. leader and the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore have talked about our lack of commitment to the family. I just welcome the opportunity of talking about this government's commitment to the family.

MR. McEACHERN: Talk's cheap.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. The Chair is very much aware that talk is cheap, having had to listen to some things that transpire from time to time in terms of my own life. Perhaps you could keep quiet long enough so that the Chair could hear the minister. Thank you.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, because I do want to

talk about some of the recent initiatives of this government as it relates to the family. We are determined to, first of all, build upon the good things that have been done through a unique program called family and community social services. It's a program that was developed and evolved in this province and is accomplishing a lot of things . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. There doesn't seem to be much interest in what's going on here.

Perhaps the Chair could now recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

### **Natural Gas Prices**

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, one of the premises upon which the government looks to greatness for Alberta is the statement that deals with revenues. The budget says that "most analysts expect natural gas prices to firm up and show substantial increases over the next few years." But instead of going up, natural gas prices have been coming down. In April prices on sales by Western Gas Marketing hit a 12-year low. They fell 14 percent from the March price and were down 15 percent the same month last year. In addition, statistics show that the United States replaced 80 percent of its natural gas production with new finds, despite low prices. My question to the Minister of Energy is this. Is he aware that these natural gas prices have hit new lows, longtime, substantial lows, and that there are some analysts who believe that this flatness or these lows will continue, thus eroding the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. We've had two questions.

Minister of Energy.

MR. ORMAN: Firstly, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is dead wrong. The United States did not replace 80 percent of its gas supplies last year.

MR. DECORE: Perhaps the hon. minister didn't hear my question. The reports are clear that gas prices have fallen. What is his advice to his government, to his colleagues, when we're basing our financial revenue on this brittle foundation? What's his advice? What's his contingency plan?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the hon. member should know about natural gas: it's probably one of the most exciting fuels and most demanding fuels in North America. As a matter of fact, in a discussion I had yesterday with the president of Western Gas Marketing, he told me that one single initiative -- that is, President Bush's announcement on eliminating SO<sub>2</sub> emissions -- could result in a demand in the United States for an additional one trillion cubic feet of natural gas. That is double the natural gas that this province produces to the United States today. If the hon. member's information is dated, I can't help him with that, but if he follows Mr. Bush's announcement, he will see that the demand for natural gas is extremely exciting.

I should say, too, on this particular issue that I had the opportunity to meet with the chairman of the Power Authority of the State of New York, who's responsible for 30 percent of New York State's power. He told me that because of environmental pressures in his state he will be looking for an additional 20 bil-

lion to 25 billion cubic feet a year of natural gas. The demand is very high; it's moving very quickly. We're simply constricted by pipeline capacity.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the hon. Provincial Treasurer has started to increase his praying. What happens if we don't meet the projections? What happens if it isn't flat or substantial increases? What's your game plan to make sure that we don't continue rising in deficit?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to that because I believe that has to do with our government's fiscal regime with regard to the oil and gas industry. My colleague the former Minister of Energy, Dr. Neil Webber, announced in October 1988 that we would be moving to a price-sensitive Alberta royalty tax credit program. That royalty tax credit program will be much more sensitive to lower prices and will have a leaner regime in higher prices. Right now it is not price sensitive. If he's asking our game plan, Mr. Speaker, that's the game plan, and it's highly supported in the industry today.

#### **Environmental Impact Assessment Process**

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of the Environment. As the minister is well aware, my constituency boasts the highest rate of welfare in the province of Alberta. Some of the communities within my constituency face an unemployment rate of 60 to 80 percent. Some of my communities within the constituency are losing a high percentage of our population due to unemployment and poverty. My question to the hon. minister is: the environmental assessment process that's presently under way in relation to Alberta-Pacific industries -- can he assure this Assembly that this process will be completed within the time lines so we can keep that industry in that constituency?

MR. MARTIN: Have fun, Ralph. You should be able to handle this one.

MR. KLEIN: I'll try, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is looking forward to hearing from the minister.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, no, there are no assurances because there are a number of things that have been factored into the environmental impact assessment, including negotiations with the federal government relative to their possible involvement in this particular process. Providing we can reach some kind of agreement with respect to federal government involvement, we hope to have the review panel in place by next week. Within four to five weeks following that hopefully the public review process can begin. That is basically within the time frame.

MR. CARDINAL: My question to the hon. minister. Can he give me some indication as to what cumulative negative environmental effect these pulp mills will have in Alberta?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, we don't know at this particular time, and that is going to be part of the EIA process. There's

been a lot of talk about concern for the cumulative effect of pulp mills on the Peace River and on the Athabasca River, and I'd like to read from some documents which contain guidelines for the EIA process. It's quite a lengthy document, but I'll read two paragraphs, if I can. One is under Monitoring. And these guidelines have been in place for a long time. As far as I know, they are public documents, and they've been available for people who want to research them if they would ever take the time to research them. But since they haven't, I'll read it for them:

Where the density of development requires such as in the Athabasca River, and that's used as an example,

individual Licences to Operate will stipulate the formation of larger cooperative industry programs to ensure that the potential cumulative effects of pulp mill development are monitored effectively.

Under guidelines for Project Approvals, Permits and Licences . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Perhaps we could have that for the final supplementary and read more quickly. Thank you.

MR. CARDINAL: I direct the final question to the hon. minister of forestry. When the FMAs, or forest management agreements, are signed, can he assure me that the local people in that constituency, including contractors and native people in northern communities, will be included in the agreement as far as employment and other opportunities?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, that's a major part of all our forest management agreements with all companies. We want to make sure that all small operators are protected as well as the native groups, and in some cases on projects it's the Metis settlements. Also, we want to make absolutely sure that there's that opportunity, not just once but over the course of the life of the project, to have that input and that opportunity to participate. Forest management agreements are umbrella agreements that spell out the area and the management of that area, but their annual operating plans are open during the course of that year, and there's opportunity to change as circumstances change with respect to that. So I assure the hon. member there is that opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

#### **Social Services Caseloads**

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. We've heard over and over again how this government is supposedly committed to the family, and in the throne speech they made a promise to ensure that families remain strong. Child welfare workers play an extremely important role in strengthening the families in this province by intervening and supporting families that are in trouble. How can this government and this minister be trusted to support families when they expect social workers to provide a service to families in trouble with caseloads so high that sometimes it takes social workers three weeks to answer the calls?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows full

well that this government added an additional 50 social workers last year and that we're seeing their caseloads drop considerably as a result of that. We're also introducing other new initiatives including computerization, differential utilization of staff. I would want to say that we're working very closely with our caseworkers. We recognize the very important job that they are providing here in the province, and I think that through the co-operation that is in existence between caseworkers and our management, we'll continue to work towards solutions.

MS MJOLSNES: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The fact remains that the caseloads are far too high, and I would ask this minister: is he prepared to act immediately and hire further additional social workers, who are badly needed?

MR. OLDRING: Well, Mr. Speaker, again the members opposite don't always use the imagination required to find the solutions to some of these challenges. I've outlined some of the initiatives that we're taking already. But I think the real answer -- and it's encouraging for me to see that the numbers of individuals on social allowance are starting to go down, and that's as a result of the initiatives this government has taken as it relates to diversification: the 40,000 new jobs that were created in the province last year, the 25,000 new jobs that are being created in the province this year. I think, again, we are taking some initiatives, we are taking some steps, and we are reducing the caseloads.

MS MJOLSNES: Well, Mr. Speaker, it amounts to another broken promise. The social workers themselves and child welfare workers have indicated that caseloads are so heavy that eventually a tragedy will occur, and I would ask the minister this: is the minister saying, then, that it is acceptable to leave these children and these families in Alberta at risk in this way?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, as a government and as a department we take every possible step we can to avoid any potential risk to children that need our support in this province, and we'll continue to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Buffalo, followed by Grande Prairie.

### Teaching Standards Monitoring

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Education. Mr. Lou Little taught in the Waldorf schools in Alberta for seven years despite numerous complaints to the boards of those schools. The Alberta Teachers' Association in a recent brief to the Minister of Education pointed out that private school regulations do

little more than . . . condone a system of private schooling that enables the province to abdicate its responsibility for maintaining a high standard of education.

The minister is now saying that it's the responsibility of parents to look after children in these schools, even though the province licenses and funds these schools. I'm wondering now whether the minister can tell us whether he's saying that he's completely satisfied with a system in which it took seven years to get rid of this teacher and that there are absolutely no improvements or changes required or possible in order to improve this system. Is he completely satisfied?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied that this gentleman's bad teaching practices were found out through a process that allowed for a parent or a member of the public or, in this case, a member of the social services department to lodge a complaint. That complaint was acted upon immediately, an investigation was begun, and that teacher is no longer teaching in any of Alberta's schools.

MR. CHUMIR: Only after seven years.

Is the minister satisfied with a system that allowed the Waldorf school to hire Mr. Little on the basis of phone calls to three references provided by Mr. Little, without even making so much as an inquiry of the Edmonton public school board, which had recently reprimanded Mr. Little twice and had forced him to resign?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied that there is a process in place that gets to the root of a problem when a teacher is a bad teacher. What I am satisfied with with the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards is that they are helping us to take initiatives to not only identify those teachers that have a problem, but they're also helping us to identify excellent teachers in this province through an excellence in teaching awards program.

MR. CHUMIR: This minister is not prepared to do anything. I'm wondering whether the minister is prepared even to take the very simple step of requiring private schools to inform parents and their own teachers that they can complain to this Council on Alberta Teaching Standards when they have a problem. Is he prepared to even go that small, little step on this issue?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, we have made that information fully available to all Albertans, and I will continue to make sure that that process is available and open and made known to all Albertans. The fact is that the hon. member opposite and perhaps his party oppose parents' making a choice about their children's education. He opposes private schools. On this side, in this government, we support that choice; we support parents' choice.

MR. SPEAKER: Grande Prairie, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

### Community Recreation/Cultural Grants

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Recreation and Parks concerning changes in the funding formula for the community recreation/cultural grant program. The minister's department had an excellent program with clearly defined parameters. Now municipal jurisdictions in the Grande Prairie constituency are receiving notices of changes, and I would like to know why these changes.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Grande Prairie has really identified a very good program that we have. The community recreation/cultural grant system, or CRC program, is a program designed to aid volunteer community groups and municipalities in the provision of recreational and cultural services, and it has some local initiative input to it. It's a per capita based grant, some \$240 million set out in 1985, ongoing till this date; \$163 million has been delivered, and the \$240 million will

be delivered

In answer to that question, during the development of our budget and fiscal management it was necessary to look at all programs on an ongoing basis, so a restructuring of the CRC grants took place in which the program will be extended from its conclusion date in 1990 to 1992-93. The commitment of \$240 million is there still, and it will help to phase the program over a longer period of time, aiding the communities to better adjust in their management.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, the concern is that many of these municipal jurisdictions have their budgets well under control now and they're well into their fiscal year. So why now, at this time, with respect to the municipal budget fiscal plans?

DR. WEST: In the preparation for the budget that came down on June 8 the CRC restructuring took place, and for obvious reasons it was impossible at that time, before the budget came down, to inform the municipalities, but immediately upon the tabling of the budget, some 400 different communities, administrators, and elected officials were informed of the program.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, my final supplemental. Does the department have any other programs that would assist these municipalities through this particular time concerning these kinds of activities?

DR. WEST: The Department of Recreation and Parks, of course, is in the delivery of recreational services to many areas of our communities. I think that at the present time, with this program going to 1992, they will be aided with other programs such as the Sport Council grants that come forward, those grants coming through the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and there is, of course, \$100 million in the community facility enhancement program that is being delivered up until '92 to our communities that aids in the development of their facilities. There are many, many other programs I could add to this -- such as the municipal recreation/tourism areas, cultural support for libraries and museums -- but I'm sure we can get into this during the estimates of Recreation and Parks in more detail.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Edmonton-Meadowlark, then Innisfail.

#### **Funding of World Blitz Chess Championship**

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Tourism gave \$100,000 in April and May of this year, I understand, to the Royal Bank of Canada in order to cover expenses of the organizers of a now-defunct chess tournament in Calgary. One of the people associated with the organizers of this event was the minister's brother. To the Minister of Tourism. Will he inform the House that he did attend a social function where he discussed the project with the proponents and that his brother was also in attendance?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, the preamble of the member opposite is very definitely wrong. When the contract was signed back in October of last year, a payment was made shortly thereafter to Global Chess. A second payment was made on May 3 after much discussion with the city and the local sponsor, the Alberta Commercial Travelers. The two payments were that

far apart; they were not made as the member stated. Very definitely, as I stated earlier, at no time, and as my deputy has clearly stated -- the inference to my brother being involved: he was not involved in any part or parcel of the process.

And yes, I do meet with my family, and at a social with many others around this project about Global Chess was talked about: how good it could be for the community of Calgary. So the answer to the last part of his question is yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How does the minister then reconcile what seems to be an obvious contradiction: that he was aware of his brother's involvement, and that statement that he referred to, made in this House last Thursday, that "at no time was [his] brother involved with reference to the grant or grant application"?

MR. SPARROW: He answered his own question, Mr. Speaker, when he was asking. Very definitely, the only involvement I had was one meeting when Global Chess came forward.

I think that for the record, Mr. Speaker, we should put it on the record that the department entered into this project with due care and diligence and with sound strategic intentions for tourism in the province. Global Chess Group Inc. had successfully organized the 1988 chess festival in Saint John, New Brunswick. The economic benefits of that festival were estimated at over \$10 million to New Brunswick. When the city of Calgary got involved with Global Chess in July of last year, they then approached us, in August. As I said earlier, after studying the project, our staff in early October entered into a contract -- not a grant, a contract -- to participate in the function.

And by the way, Mr. Speaker, the social function I was involved with that the member refers to was in December.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, is it the case that the minister was aware of his brother's involvement in this project when approvals of money and advances of money for this project were made? Was he aware of his brother's involvement when those advances were made?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I'm still not aware that my brother was involved in anything to do with the tournament. Inferences have been made by others that he did introduce some people in Calgary, but to my knowledge my first discussion -- as I stated earlier, it was not until December of the year that I had any discussions with him.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Innisfail, followed by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

#### **Environmental Impact Assessment Process**

*(continued)*

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. This government has consistently tried to rush megaproject development without proper environmental impact assessment. Not only have they neglected environmental concerns but now, with the uncertainty created by federal government intervention, they have even placed business in an untenable, impossible predicament. To the Minister of the Environment. Why did this government not anticipate federal concerns at the outset and nego-

tiate a joint approach to the assessment of these projects which would have avoided the crisis which is occurring now?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, had the hon. minister for Edmonton-Meadowlark taken the time to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Member, not minister.

MR. KLEIN: Member; I'm sorry.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, somebody's got to do it, Ralph.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hopefully he'll never be a minister.

MR. KLEIN: An undeserved promotion for sure.

Had the hon. member taken the time to examine an agreement that has been in place for the last three years and was to be re-signed on May 15, he would have seen that there was an agreement between the province and the federal government which clearly set out the parameters and guidelines for participation by the federal government in provincial EIA processes. Very basically, that agreement stipulated that if there were EIAs to be conducted in the province and those EIAs were submitted to the federal government and the federal government agreed with them, then the permits to construct and/or operate could be issued. That agreement was in place. As a result of the Rafferty-Alameda decision in Saskatchewan, the government was prompted to take another look at the process.

MR. MITCHELL: Will the minister confirm that one of the reasons for federal intervention at this time is their perception of the need to assess the cumulative effects of pulp mill projects in the north, which Alberta's process has so sorely neglected?

MR. KLEIN: Well, to answer the last part of the so-called question first, the question of the cumulative impacts of pulp mills has been addressed. I alluded to it in answer to the question put by the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, and I would like to add to that answer now because I didn't get to the second part of my quote. I thank the hon. member for giving me this opportunity. I quote from guidelines for Project Approvals, Permits and Licences. It's very short, Mr. Speaker, very short

In order to achieve environmental objectives such as the maximum reduction in [absorbable organic halides] and chlorinated organics of kraft mills, each mill may have its own environmental protection standards. The standards . . .

MR. FOX: Look, look; see Ralph read. What's it all about, Ralphie?

MR. KLEIN: Just listen; pay careful attention, please, okay?

The standards will reflect the type of operation and best achievable technology at the time of permitting/licencing. The cumulative environmental impacts of other sources of wastewater are considered as part of the approval process . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order. There's quite an accumulation, thank you.

Final supplementary question.

MR. MITCHELL: In light of that tirade, then, could the minister indicate why it is that federal officials have stated very explicitly that one of their concerns with our environmental impact assessment process is that it hasn't considered cumulative effects, and will he admit here and now that their intervention is a categorical indication of the inadequacy of our environmental impact assessment process?

MR. KLEIN: First of all, Mr. Speaker, the federal government has not intervened. We are negotiating now with the federal government relative to their co-operative participation in the process. Relative to their co-operative participation in the process. That, of course, relates to those areas of jurisdiction over which the federal government thinks it might have some control. We're willing to participate with the federal government in the citizens' review process because we want to make sure that whatever evolves is done through a fair process and that if deficiencies are identified through this process, they will be addressed.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Innisfail, followed by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

### Forest Management Policies

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Coming from an area where there's no forest, there is still some concern in my riding with the number of pulp mills coming into production in the next little while, or proposed. The question I'd like to ask the minister of forestry is: what percentage would these projects be cutting down of our forestry industry?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, it's a very small percentage of the total area. In a forest management agreement area, for example the Athabasca project, there would be less than 1 percent per year that would actually be cut. There are areas that will never ever be cut. That is, there are parks; there are ecological reserves; there are sensitive wildlife habitats: a wide variety of those that will never be cut. But less than 1 percent. And over the course, when all of the projects are up, in full operation -- all of the projects -- there will be the equivalent of about 150,000 acres a year. To draw some comparison, in 1981 we had one forest fire in Alberta that destroyed over a million acres in a 10-day period, so the amount that will be cut in any one year would be very small.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As there any plans for requirements for replacement of these trees?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. Contrary to what has been suggested by the opposition, reforestation practices in Alberta are recognized not only in Canada but in North America certainly as being among the best in the world. We have a very stringent requirement to make sure that the reforestation practices that are practised in each of our areas are excellent. In fact, I'm looking at the moment for ways to enhance and even improve that further to make Alberta standards without a doubt the best in the world.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Innisfail.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I think all members of this Assembly are aware of the greenhouse effect that's talked about so much lately. What effect will these projects have on the greenhouse effect? Are we contributing to this, as are some of the other countries?

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, no. In fact, it's the contrary. We will help prevent the greenhouse effect, because it doesn't take much common sense to know that there is more oxygen generated, more carbon dioxide used, by a growing forest than there is by a mature forest. If you don't believe that, would you rather breathe with 40-year-old lungs or 120-year-old lungs?

MR. SPEAKER: I'll settle for what I've got.  
Edmonton-Jasper Place, followed by Calgary-McKnight.

### Oldman River Dam

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta government applied for and received a federal permit to construct a dam on the Oldman River under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Today in court the government's lawyers showed up and announced that the Alberta government has unapplied for that permit, if you can believe that. I wonder why the Minister of the Environment, who talked yesterday about co-operation and federal participation -- all nice words -- is engaging in such cheap legal manoeuvring today.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I really haven't been briefed on that matter, and I will have to take it under notice. If the hon. member will give me some time, I'll try and get him an answer tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary. Not asking of a legal nature, though.

MR. McINNIS: The minister is apparently not informed. He's apparently lost a power struggle within the government. I wonder how he can remain a part of a government that puts the protection of its jurisdiction ahead of protecting the environment, through measures like this.

MR. KLEIN: Again, Mr. Speaker, this involves a court action, apparently, that took place today. I don't have the details; I haven't been briefed on the matter. I would be more than happy to take it under notice, and I would be more than happy to provide the hon. member with an answer.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, last weekend I couldn't be in the midst of 8,000 to 15,000 people soaking up the sunshine and listening to music because I was up in Prosperity, Alberta, talking to the real people with real problems.

MR. McINNIS: You now have to be in favour of a pulp mill to be a real person in Alberta.

I would like to ask the Minister of the Environment: if he's not going to be told what this government is doing on environment issues, will he resign in protest?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I just got the job. I hope to keep it

for some time, thank you.

### High School Science Curriculum

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the Minister of Education told this Assembly that his department is responding to concerns expressed about the proposed new high school science curriculum by producing a second draft program of studies in all of those courses. Yet in a letter dated April 5 to Alberta school boards the minister stated:

I'm committed to the introduction of the new science curriculum and don't intend to change the basic direction or structure of the program.

My question is: will the minister's review of the new science curriculum include a reconsideration of the structure of the program, or is he merely reviewing course content?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I am committed on behalf of my colleagues in government to ensure that students get the very best education -- in this case, the very best scientific education -- so that our students will graduate in the years ahead with a better understanding of the basic scientific concepts as they exist today and an even better understanding of how those concepts are applied to issues that are global and issues that are very much relevant to Alberta today.

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer my question about whether he would reconsider the entire structure.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, that's inappropriate. [interjections] Order please. It's inappropriate under *Beauchesne* to make a comment of such nature.

But the time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Hon. minister, on a supplementary -- or Member for Calgary-McKnight. We're trying to promote everybody.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Education give consideration to a compromise alternative which would address the majority of concerns expressed by Alberta science teachers and allow Alberta students an option of taking either the general science 10 course or the individualized special courses in grade 10, such as physics, chemistry, biology 10, rather than denying the students the option . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Let's get with it.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's suggestion. I am going to wait until we have received all of the suggestions as a result of the first draft of the curriculum that was distributed in January of this year. Once we have finished the review of those suggestions, a second draft will be distributed. As I said to the hon. members of the Assembly on Tuesday, we will continue to do it until we have it right.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Calgary-McKnight.



MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister indicate to this Assembly whether there is a subtle attempt to channel students away from specific science courses and into the general program of studies by awarding greater credit levels to the general science program?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, the only hidden agenda that I am aware of in this Assembly rests with the members of the Liberal Party; I'm not aware of one on our side. Our approach in this government is to ensure that students get the very best high school education. In this case we're talking about science, and the better our students understand the basic scientific concepts and a better understanding of the application of those scientific concepts, the better citizens they are going to be in their lives beyond high school.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would make a request of all hon. members in the House that rather than using acronyms in terms of questions and in answers, they'd be good enough, for the sake of all members in the House who might not be familiar with all of the letters of the alphabet that get fired out in certain sequences, and also for the benefit of the people that are listening to both the radio and the telecasting of the session -- for greater understanding of all persons involved, could we please have the full titles spelled out of the various programs?

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

#### head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to introduce two school groups on behalf of my colleague the Premier. First of all I'll introduce a group from Halkirk school. There are 19 members in the party. The teacher is Andrew Billings, accompanied by parents Bernie Doan, Cindy Hazen, and Len Solick. I would ask that the members from Halkirk rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The second group, also from the Premier's constituency, the Theresetta school in Castor. There are 16 members in the group: teacher Genevieve Blume, parents Duane Nichols, Marguerite Nichols, Mike Bain, and 12 students. I would ask that they rise and on behalf of the Premier receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce 10 students from the Edmonton public schools adult basic upgrading program who are here visiting with us. I hope they've enjoyed question period, and I look forward to meeting them with my colleague from Vegreville on the steps shortly. Would they please rise and receive the welcome of the members of the Assembly.

#### head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would move that the following written questions stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker, by way of information I would advise that we are going to deal with some questions and motions for returns today, and the following should retain their places: 145, 146, 147, 148, 163, 164, 166, 167, 168, and 178.

[Motion carried]

165. Mr. McEachern asked the government the following question:

As of the moment it so calculates, what is the government's best estimate of the dollars it spent advertising its support for the Canada/United States free trade deal during the federal election campaign period which concluded November 21, 1988, including specifically

- (1) television station air-time charges,
- (2) radio station air-time charges,
- (3) print media advertising space charges,
- (4) private advertising consultants' charges,
- (5) charges back to Treasury from any and all government departments related to public relations efforts in this regard,
- (6) government in-house material charges related to paper supplies, typesetting, graphics productions, and printing, and
- (7) the mail costs related to sending print material to each household in Alberta?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the government will accept Question 165.

183. Mrs. Gagnon asked the government the following question:

What grants have been approved through the community facility enhancement program from its inception up to June 1, 1989, including a complete listing of all grants indicating

- (1) the recipient of the grant,
- (2) the amount of assistance provided,
- (3) the nature of the project, and
- (4) the constituency in which the project is located?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention of the government to accept Question 183. The matter will be dealt with in discussion with respect to Motion for a Return 176. Motion for a Return 176 was placed on the Order Paper prior to Question 183.

#### head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, dealing with motions for returns, I would move that the following motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper: motions for returns 149 to 162 inclusive, and 169, 170, 171, 174, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182, and 184.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the Government House Leader . . . [interjection] Order please. All those in

favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MS BARRETT: This is a debatable motion, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Oop, oop, oop. Goodness gracious. The Chair had not recognized anyone standing at that time, but that's fine. [interjections] There's a proper way of having this discussion take place, hon. member.

The Chair now recognizes that someone wishes to speak. Who might it be? Edmonton-Highlands. Thank you.

MS BARRETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would, and the proper way for the discussion to take place is for me to be recognized when I stand up to debate a debatable motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjections] The procedure in the House is still the same. When the member is recognized, perhaps the member would speak to the motion rather than engaging in other extraneous comment. Thank you.

MS BARRETT: If I wasn't the one who initiated it, Mr. Speaker.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I would like to object to the motion by the Government House Leader, and there are a number of imperative reasons at this point. First of all, it's not clear that this House is going to sit for several months, during which time the government would ordinarily be given a fairly extensive period of grace by the opposition when it comes to obtaining information requested on the Order Paper. So one has to assume naturally -- the government is on record as saying that they're only going to introduce a few Bills. I don't know how long this sitting is going to last. I speculate that the Government House Leader doesn't either. The point is this: if we are only in session for another month or two and if there's no fall sitting of the Assembly, if we don't get this information, if we don't make our case for getting this information, then we won't get it until this time next year. In that instance, the information will arrive too late.

Now, I'd like to point out that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has got 15 motions for returns on the Order Paper with respect to the proposed forestry projects, forestry management agreements, leases, sales, and other dispositions of land, not to mention the construction of pulp mills, et cetera, proposed for this province, perhaps to commence as early as next month. I don't see, Mr. Speaker, without some indication from the Government House Leader as to whether or not they even intend to supply this information to the House, how we can sit here and say, "Oh, okay," week after week. We've been through several Tuesdays and Thursdays already in the House in which the opposition has said okay to the motion to let them stand and retain their places. Two days ago . . .

MR. JOHNSTON: You said no.

MS BARRETT: I was about to say that, Mr. Treasurer. Two days ago we finally started to indicate that we're not going to just sit and say okay, okay. We believe that we're extending enough of a grace period in what is presumed to be, probably accurately so, a relatively short sitting of this Assembly. And if

the Government House Leader is prepared to stand up and assure the Assembly that if this information isn't delivered this summer, there will be a fall sitting of the Assembly, then we'd be more than pleased to extend that grace period for those motions for returns which don't have an urgent nature about them; in other words, if projects related to the information requested are not planned to go ahead in the immediate, as within the next six months, future.

Mr. Speaker, now that takes care of the first 15. Those are just the ones from the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, who may have additional comments on the requests for information or attempt to solicit an indication from either the minister or the Government House Leader as to whether or not it is the intention of the government to answer these questions in an expeditious manner.

Another one that concerns me very much, Mr. Speaker, is that this government often claims points of order on a lot of matters, and I believe they have abused the rights of the Assembly time and again last year and the year before when they referred to studies and information and so on and so forth that supported the government's opinion over whether or not the proposed free trade agreement was one that would be beneficial for Alberta. Now, we have no indication as to whether or not the government intends to even answer Motion for a Return 170 sponsored by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway. Now, I think this is a pretty important issue. My money, your money was used in what I believe to be a wrongful manner. . . . [interjection] -- I'm speaking to the urgency of getting this information -- in a wrongful manner in my view in October, November of 1988. The House has not sat since last July. We haven't had an opportunity to find out precisely how the government plans to use taxpayers' dollars for their support of that free trade agreement signed by the Mulroney government after it was elected on November 21, 1988.

Now, this request is really an old request. It's two years old, Mr. Speaker. Since the free trade agreement was first uttered by any of the Conservatives' counterparts in Ottawa, we've been saying, "Cite your sources." It's a requirement of this Assembly that you do that when requested, and that is particularly true of any government minister. Several government ministers during the last two years refused to cite their information and have refused categorically to table the information. I say, as a member of this Assembly and on behalf of the Official Opposition caucus, we have a right to that information. So what is the government's intention? Are you ever going to reveal this information, or are you simply going to tell us: "Too bad. We spent half a million bucks of the taxpayers' dollars, and you don't ever get to find out why."

I think this is an urgent public matter. In fact because of the escape clause in that free trade agreement, I think it's made even more important before we're too deeply entrenched -- and have the right to the information requested here. Is the government -- and I realize that the Government House Leader has the right to close debate on this matter. I hope he will respond and tell us if it is the intention of the government to provide us with this information, and if not him, then perhaps another minister who feels responsible for the dissemination of that information.

Now, I have looked at Motion for a Return 171, and I'm sure my colleague from Edmonton-Kingsway will want to specify why it is that that information should be forthcoming as soon as possible.

There is one more, Mr. Speaker, that I'm interested in. I un-

derstand, then, that motions 172, 173, and 175 will be satisfied by the government, if I'm not mistaken. I'm very glad to hear that information.

MR. SPEAKER: They're not part of this motion.

MS BARRETT: Pardon me?

MR. SPEAKER: They're not part of this motion.

MS BARRETT: No, they're not; that's right.

MR. SPEAKER: So they're not going to be commented on with respect to this motion.

MS BARRETT: No, I'm just specifying for clarity, Mr. Speaker. I'm not intending to talk about them in any detail.

Then I go back down to questions related to what we believe to be a very irregular financial arrangement between the government of Alberta and two companies that were ultimately merged under its authority, North West Trust and Heritage Savings & Trust. Again I ask . . . [interjection] I can do that when I'm finished, Mr. Minister. What I want to know is: is it ever your intention to table this information? If it's not, then please specify. I mean, we have a right to know, Mr. Speaker -- and the minister can make funny faces all he wants -- but we have a right to know in this Assembly, all 83 of us. Once again, I would like to ask, particularly because it is related to what we believe to be Ouija board economics in the Provincial Treasurer's budget of June 8, 1989, whether or not it is the government's intention to ever table information with respect to Motion for a Return 182? We'd like to know if that money is ever to be forthcoming, and we'd sure like to have the documents that form and support the claim.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I believe that all members of the Assembly have a right to look at the summary of complaints received by the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee during 1988. If this government isn't being defensive about that particular review, then it should indicate -- it may be up to the Government House Leader in the instance of today -- if it's their plan to give us that information.

Mr. Speaker, there's a fundamental issue here, and that is: how can members of all parts of this Assembly respond to the tabled annual reports that are coming in in streams and droves without certain information being presented to support the claims that are made in those specific annual reports? Similarly, the Provincial Treasurer's budget of last week, or a number of other policies enacted behind closed doors of this government.

MR. JOHNSTON: Are you running for the leadership of the NDP party federally?

MS BARRETT: The hon. Treasurer doesn't understand that the ND Party is a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Both members, through the Chair.

MS BARRETT: Oh, yes. Mr. Speaker, the Treasurer wanted to know something about the NDP "party," and I'd just like to remind him that it is the New Democratic Party of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair respectfully reminds both members

that you're both out of order because they're not germane to the topic under discussion.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but the Treasurer is good for a little bit of humour every once in a while.

In any event, I now rest my case and ask for a commitment from the Government House Leader with respect to the arguments I've made in requesting the information. I think we've given the government due time to make a commitment on this information. We don't want to impose undue constraints, but surely you can let us know if you plan to answer them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support my colleague in this debate about the need for some of this information. In fact, Mr. Speaker, some of the information we're asking for is based on some questions that I asked the Treasurer to do with public accounts of the 1986-87 fiscal year. He suggested that I put them on the Order Paper so we could get answers to them. Well, they're on the Order Paper, and I think we should have those answers. In fact, we are starting public accounts next Wednesday. Here we are into the 1987-88 public accounts, and he has not given me the information on my questions on the '86-87 public accounts. I just find that totally unacceptable. The government is supposed to account for the dollars they spend in this province to the taxpayers of this province when they spend it, not years later, and that is what we see this government doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, some of those are questions rather than motions for returns. Nonetheless, it seems to me that the government of Alberta has an obligation to bring the taxpayers up to date. We asked for that information; I put those questions on the Order Paper. I have even more questions yet from that same series of questions that I wanted to ask him on the 1986-87 public accounts. Because the whole hearing process of public accounts is inadequate to cover all departments, and because we can't get the Treasurer back again to get that information, he then says, "Put it on the Order Paper." We put it on the Order Paper, and then they stall us and stall us until the session is over. I mean, last year I put some things on the Order Paper, and I didn't get the answers until the day the Assembly broke up, on July 6. That kind of accountability is not acceptable, and some of you new members in the Tory party should get on the backs of some of the cabinet ministers and tell them to start doing their jobs.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to limit my comments to the motions for returns dealing with the agreements with the forest companies; in particular, Motion 150. It seems to me the Minister of the Environment is desperately trying to organize some type of public participation process over the future of the Alberta-Pacific project. The Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche had some questions about that today, as did the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Now, the Member in that area very clearly would like to know what it is the government agreed to before they can evaluate the proposal. Mr. Speaker, how can you evaluate a deal unless you

know what the deal is? Sooner or later the government's going to have to come forward, I trust, and reveal the commitments that it has made to the forest companies and what commitments they may have made in return, but the difficulty is that the Minister of the Environment is organizing a process with a very definite time frame. Sometime in August he hopes to have this deal wrapped up. The government will be issuing a permit to construct. The Daishowa mill already has a permit to construct; they are applying for a permit to operate. There are very substantial taxpayers' funds involved. How is it possible for taxpayers and voters and people who live in the area to evaluate these proposals if the government won't reveal what it has agreed to on behalf of all us?

Now, these particular motions, Mr. Speaker, were filed with the Clerk's office before the Assembly went into session on June 1. That was two weeks ago, according to my count. I suspect that during that period of time, the government has come to a conclusion about whether or not it's prepared to let the people know what they've agreed to on behalf of the taxpayers.

I don't think people in government should forget that when they agree to things, they agree on behalf of somebody else. This isn't a private club or a private business that you're operating over there. This is all of us. This is the taxpayers. I really think that after two weeks it's no longer acceptable to say, "Well, we haven't decided yet whether we're prepared to make this information available or not," because what we're talking about are agreements which are forever in effect. The culmination of the process in the government, as it's been outlined to me by the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and to a lesser degree by the Minister of the Environment, who very seldom makes any information of any kind available, is a perpetual type of agreement, 20 years renewable.

I think at some point we have to know: what is it that this government has agreed to? What have they gotten us in for? I really hoped that the government would at least come to a conclusion about what its position would be by this point in time.

MR. SPEAKER: Government House Leader, summation.

MR. HORSMAN: That was a veritable whirlwind there, Mr. Speaker, earlier. The fact of the matter is that we have had an opportunity to deal with these motions and questions on four occasions -- this is the fourth occasion when this could have been done -- and we are trying to deal with some of them in an orderly way today. By way of information, I could advise the hon. members -- if they had asked me, I would have told them that it would be our proposal to deal with the motions relating to forest management agreements next Tuesday, and that will hopefully be done.

As to the specific issues related to others, obviously when motions come on the Order Paper some are worded well, others are very poorly drafted. Amendments have to be considered, and ministers have to take those under consideration. Questions have to be reviewed as to whether or not the information can, in fact, be ascertained. I won't deal with them individually, as the hon. House leader for the Official Opposition tried to do in some instances, but we will be doing our very best to supply the information requested and deal with the motions in an orderly way. I don't think anything unreasonable in terms of the length of time has gone on, in terms of the fact that this is only the fourth occasion. We are going to deal with a number of matters today, and as I indicated, 14 or so will hopefully be dealt with

next Tuesday afternoon with respect to the one set of questions leading to forest management agreements. Perhaps some others can be dealt with at the time either by accepting, rejecting, or by amendments which have been proposed a number of times.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that often amendments have been dealt with by discussions between the respective minister and the questioner proposing the motion, so that the information which is available can be provided, and agreed amendments have often been arrived at. It will be our intention to try and seek that course of action to prevent the necessity of any lengthy debate relating to motions, and we're going to be reasonable with respect to trying to achieve those ends.

So with that explanation, Mr. Speaker, I trust that the umbrage which was mounted with such great enthusiasm today may be allayed somewhat as we deal with this matter on the next possible occasion, which would be Tuesday next.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps hon. members would like to check off on their own scorecards here what the motion is. It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the following motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper: 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 169, 170, 171, 174, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184.

[Motion carried]

172. Mr. Ewasiuk moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing, since 1983, an itemized account of how dollars assigned for social housing programs under the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation, AMHC, have been spent, including specifically

- (1) for each year, the amount allocated and the amount actually spent,
- (2) the specific projects which were funded by the AMHC under this program,
- (3) the number of housing units provided in each of these years for the inner city within Edmonton and Calgary,
- (4) the average cost per housing unit for all AMHC units under this program, and
- (5) the average cost per housing unit constructed or rehabilitated under this program within the inner city of each, Edmonton and Calgary.

MR. HORSMAN: It is acceptable; we will accept that particular motion.

[Motion carried]

173. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the Kurt Salmon Associates report on the state and future of national and international fashion manufacturing in Alberta, commissioned by the Department of Economic Development and Trade, the public release of which was scheduled for December 1988.

MR. HORSMAN: On behalf of my colleague the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, I can advise that we are prepared to accept the motion. But I do want to add a little reservation, because I am advised that the copy in question has, in fact,

been filed with the library of the Assembly, and therefore it is a matter of public record. The member may not have been able to find it, but that's my advice, that it's there.

[Motion carried]

175. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the Woods Gordon report on the state and future of clothing and textiles manufacturing in Alberta, commissioned by the Department of Career Development and Employment, the public release of which was scheduled for December 1988.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, we will not accept that motion for a return as it is a matter of public record. It has been on file with the department library since late last winter, in late 1988, and it has been made available to the Legislative Assembly's library. I would also add that there is an appendix to that particular report that contains some information identifying particular companies and so on that were interviewed, so that is not a part of the public record.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Kingsway? Call for the question?

MR. McEACHERN: Well, if the minister is saying that the report is available in the library, then I will go to the library and get it. I'm wondering what the appendix -- I didn't quite understand from her comments whether the appendix is also available in the library or not. [interjection] Then why are you holding back the appendix, I guess, is the question I would like to ask. Has it got something in it that's so secret that you can't pass it out to members of this Assembly? It seems to me a reasonable request, that we should get it.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the appendix available? No, it's not available.

[Motion lost]

176. On behalf of Mr. Sigurdson, Ms Barrett moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing, by constituency, the amount of money allocated and to which groups under the community facility enhancement program since its commencement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If there ever was a motion for a return on the Order Paper that is redundant, Motion for a Return 176 is such an example of a totally redundant motion for a return. All projects that have been approved under the community facility enhancement program -- a program that, put in perspective again, was announced by the Premier along with the current Minister of Education and myself in October of 1988 and set aside \$100 million out of lottery funds over three years to improve family and community life. What we have done in terms of ensuring that the people of Alberta are aware of that program is that as projects are approved, news releases are issued. There's a public information document associated with every project

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, it would be my intent to make sure that every project is identified with a sign indicating that it is the province of Alberta's commitment to making community and family life better. There'll be a sign identified with each of the particular projects. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, plaques will be provided congratulating the worthy groups for their important involvement with respect to all of this.

Mr. Speaker, this information is public. I would point out, then, that on that basis I really question this business of fiscal irresponsibility coming forward when individuals would stand and put motions on the Order Paper requests for public information that's already public; I would put it in the light, essentially, of the support that's being requested by the ND Party, as an example, in the Official Opposition Services, and the Liberal Party Services. If we take a look at the estimates being requested, we'll see that the Official Opposition Services are requesting a whopping 9.2 percent increase in their support, increased to some \$855,410. The Liberal Party Services are asking for an increase of 39.9 percent. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. With due respect, hon. minister, perhaps we could come back to the motion for a return.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The point I was making is that this is a redundant motion. If in fact dollars are being provided to caucuses to do research, then those dollars should be spent doing research.

Mr. Speaker, it will be the intent of the government to accept Motion for a Return 176. I'll repeat that: it will be the intent of the government to accept Motion for a Return 176, but repeating again, Mr. Speaker, that it's redundant. The information is public. And further to the filing, when I file the motion I also intend on filing with the motion the cost to the public purse of preparing the motion for a return. That actual dollar figure will be identified with the motion for a return, and I think it would be only appropriate that when the estimates of these two opposition parties are being debated in this Assembly later, in fact their fiscal dollar figures should be reduced by the amount of dollars that's now being asked to file this particular motion for a return.

The government will accept the motion, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried]

185. Rev. Roberts moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (1) a copy of the job description for director of public communications, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife,
  - (2) all documents relating to the removal of Mr. Donald McMann from that position, and
  - (3) a copy of the position description for the job to which Mr. McMann has now been assigned at the head office of the Alberta Public Affairs Bureau, including a description of specific duties, the job title, the position number, and a copy of the bureau's organization chart on which Mr. McMann's position is clearly identified.

MR. SPEAKER: On behalf of the government, Motion 185.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, Motion for a Return 185 as on the Order Paper -- I would like to move an amendment to it, and

I have sufficient copies that perhaps could be circulated to the members of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Page, could you give it to Edmonton-Centre, please. Thank you.

The minister, speaking to the amendment.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You'll note that the amendment that has been circulated would have added after the words of motion 185 where the current section (2) reads "all documents relating to the removal of Mr. Donald McMann from that position," the words "after seeking and obtaining the written permission of Mr. McMann for the release of such documents."

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the amendment, I think it's extremely important that we have that clause in there, in the light of recent discussions with respect to pertinent files and cases and everything else. I'm sure all hon. members of the Assembly would see the merit of that amendment, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion as amended carried]

#### head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

203. Moved by Mr. McInnis:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly appoint a special select committee to consider, hold public hearings, and make recommendations regarding regulations designating routes for hazardous cargo in rural areas, safety standards relating to the construction of containers for hazardous cargo, training and safety procedures for operators who handle such cargo, and emergency safety procedures for dangerous occurrences involving the transport of hazardous cargo.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. This has the potential to be a very great day for Alberta's environment, because we're not only dealing with a very positive initiative on the subject of transportation of dangerous goods but you'll hear from me again this afternoon when my private member's legislation on environmental impact assessments is up as well.

The motion calls on this Assembly to appoint a special select committee to do some work. I'm suggesting that it's time the members of this Assembly, some of us anyway, rolled up our sleeves to deal with the problem of spills of toxic and hazardous materials throughout our province. The motion calls simply for the committee to hold hearings and make recommendations on regulations regarding designating routes for hazardous cargo in rural areas of the province, for safety standards relating to the construction of containers and packaging for hazardous cargo, for training and safety procedures for operators who transport and handle hazardous cargo, and also emergency response and backup safety procedures for unanticipated spills or other dangerous occurrences.

By way of background, Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of very high-profile spills in our province in the early part of this year. There was a major diesel spill in Calgary in the CPR yards which went undetected for some period of time; I believe that was in January. I'm sure every member here recalls the occurrence on March 31 of this year when a Byers Transport

truck dumped 800 litres of sodium dichromate on highway 831 near Lamont. It caused the highway to be closed for a period of three weeks, Mr. Speaker, which was not only an inconvenience to the traveling public but it may very well have ruined the business of one Mr. Bob Rogers, who operated a convenience store and a service station along that particular route. It would be an inconvenience for any business to force closure for that period of time. That was a fairly significant occurrence and helped, I think, to draw to the public attention the problem of transportation and handling of hazardous cargo.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

In my constituency, Edmonton-Jasper Place, we had a spill on Highway 16X on April 19. It involved a substance very similar to sodium dichromate; it was in fact chromic acid. There was some hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid, and a few other goodies in there as well, but chromic acid was the primary ingredient in that particular spill that caused closure of the highway for a period of time. Fortunately, in that instance a passing motorist saw the material leaking from the back of the truck, flagged the driver down, a report was issued fairly quickly after the occurrence took place, and Alberta Environment was on the scene within an hour. I arrived on the scene a couple of hours later, and they had the equipment there ready to commence the cleanup. The only problem was that nobody was quite sure what the material was, so they had to send some samples off to a laboratory for analysis. It wasn't possible to determine from the documentation with the shipment what exactly was in the material, or at least there was a contradiction between the shipping material and the label. So there was a delay while they had a sample sent off to the lab.

Anyway, these particular incidents are part of a fairly major problem for Alberta, and the problem is best described this way. In Alberta there are as many hazardous and dangerous chemicals transported around as there are in the province of Ontario. The reason is that our economy is largely made up of petroleum and petrochemical industries which use some fairly hazardous chemicals, especially in the petrochemical industry, as part of their business operations. With present technology there's no way around that fact. The records show there were 220 spills recorded in 1986, 249 recorded in 1987, and 224 spills recorded in 1988. Now, in the first four months of this year we've had 104 spills, which suggests an increase. If that rate were to continue in the balance of the year, it would be somewhere in excess of 300 such occurrences, which does appear to indicate an upswing in the number of occurrences.

Now, I'm aware of the suggestion that's been made that because of the change in the law, because of improvements in the reporting requirement, we may in fact be only learning about more

spills, that there have been spills in the past that went unreported and therefore the previous statistics are invalid. That could well be. I have no way to evaluate that. But I think when you have a level of spills of 109 over four months, that's a serious problem that has to be dealt with and has to be addressed. Whether it's up in a major way from previous years or the same is not as important as the fact that there's a lot of hazardous material which has been spilled on our highways and, to some degree, railway yards and other means of transportation, and that's a problem that has to be dealt with.

Further to the background of this, Mr. Speaker, the Legisla-

tive Assembly passed the Alberta Transportation of Dangerous Goods Control Act in 1986, which was intended to reform the law in this area and to help protect the public. This particular legislation was assented to in May of 1982. I would like to run through just a few brief provisions of this legislation to explain why it's an appropriate time to set up a select standing committee right now, Mr. Speaker.

This is, by and large, very good legislation. It's strong legislation, and it provides authority in the hands of the minister and the government to deal with a serious public problem. There are provisions for exemptions from the provisions, but I just want to refer briefly to the powers of inspectors under this legislation.

It is possible for inspectors, under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Control Act, to take for analysis samples of goods being transported in the province. But they also have very strong powers of enforcement. It's possible for an inspector to seize any dangerous good if he believes there are reasonable grounds to think that there may be an escape or an emission. An inspector may remove the material

to an appropriate place, and

- (b) take other measures that are practicable to protect persons and property.

An officer can order the material be destroyed or otherwise disposed of, if there is some degree of risk to the public. So there are very strong powers that are available under that Act.

As I said, the minister does have the power to waive that, under special requirements. There are strong powers there in terms of the cleanup of dangerous materials. It's possible for people acting under the authority of this Act to go ahead and hire a cleanup crew, to bring a cleanup crew out, clean up the situation and, in effect, send the bill to the company. I suppose there is some concern about how these people are selected. In fact, I've heard from some contractors who are active in this field that they feel that there are preferred lists, that people get called, and that there isn't necessarily an open system for inviting people and contractors to come and help clean these things up.

The one thing, though, that I think is missing from this legislation -- and I believe it's something that a committee such as this could address -- is that it's not against the law anywhere to spill or to pollute our environment. In fact, it's not against the law -- any law that I've been able to find in the province of Alberta -- to pollute the environment, which means, in effect, that citizens who are traveling on the highways or otherwise exposed to occurrences like this have no particular right in law to a clean environment. I think that's a deficiency in our law. Some people will argue, well, it's not against the law to have an accident either. But if you made it an offence to spill dangerous materials on the highway or other places where it could be a hazard to public health, I think that would put a greater onus on people operating in that area to make sure that it doesn't happen.

Charges, I would remind members, were laid in the case of the Lamont incident. But the charges were only laid because the driver phoned the wrong phone number when he finally got to his destination. He phoned the local Environment department number, which on a Friday morning was unattended. A message was left on an answering machine, it wasn't discovered for some hours later, and then that, of course, delayed the cleanup. There were charges laid in respect of failure to report, but there were no charges laid about the actual occurrence, because it is not, in the province of Alberta, against the law to dump a hazardous chemical on a highway or any other such place. You're

required to hang a sign on the side of the vehicle to indicate the general category of material that's contained, whether it's corrosive, flammable, explosive -- we've all seen the red diamonds that indicate that, and there are certain requirements that I'll get into in a moment -- but it is not against the law to spill that material on a public highway or in any other place. So that is, I think, the main deficiency of the legislation.

The legislation provides for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations, as most legislation does, and I believe that the categories of concerns dealt with in the regulatory section do cover all the concerns. For example, the Lieutenant Governor does have the power to

- (h) [prescribe] safety marks, safety requirements, and safety standards [in] general...

which much of this resolution is about

- (n) governing the route and time of travel of vehicles transporting dangerous goods on highways,

which is again a concern of this motion.

- (p) governing the reporting of any discharge, emission, or escape of dangerous goods.

These powers exist in the legislation, Mr. Speaker. But what do we find when we look at the regulations? It's a very curious matter, and it's one that I've never run across before. This is section 16(1) that I refer to, the regulation-making power.

Rather than develop their own regulations, this provincial government has simply enacted a regulation to adopt federal regulations which cover similar categories holus-bolus. I would just like to read it. It's very, very brief. Alberta regulation 383/85 says -- and this is the important point; the federal regulations are defined under the Definitions section.

[It] means the English version of Parts I to IX of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations . . . made [by the federal government] under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (Canada).

And section 3 of that regulation says simply:

The Federal Regulations are hereby adopted and shall be deemed to have full force and effect with respect to handling, offering for transport or transporting of dangerous goods in Alberta.

So what we've done, Mr. Speaker, is simply adopted the federal regulations as the law in the province of Alberta.

Now, my question is: well, why would we assume that federal regulations can solve all of Alberta's problems? It seems to me this is a government that has in the past taken a strong position that the province ought to be able to make laws in its own jurisdiction, regulations that are for the benefit of the people of Alberta, and it's a bit unusual to see the province adopting federal regulations holus-bolus. I would suggest that there is more to being the minister responsible for Public Safety Services than simply copying down these federal regulations. Actually, they're not even copied in the regulations; they're simply referred to. These are the federal regulations. They're quite extensive, I'll grant you that, but I would think there would be a little more to the administration of this particular Act, given the unique nature of the economy in Alberta and the type of occurrences there have been over the last several years, especially in the earlier part of this year. I would think there'd be a little bit more to it than simply saying: "Okay. Well, we adopt the federal regulation. Whatever they do, we do," and leave it at that. There are approximately 500 pages of federal regulations. I won't refer to them in any great detail except to focus in on the deficiencies in those regulations, which is what this motion and the process that's suggested by the motion are intended to deal

with.

One particular deficiency, and it's one that our legislative intern pointed out to me directly, is the definition of a "trained person." These regulations do require that hazardous materials are only handled by trained persons. A trained person is defined as someone who is trained

in the aspects of handling, offering for transport or transporting of dangerous goods related to his assigned duties

(a) when his employer

(i) is satisfied that [he] has received adequate training in aspects of the handling . . .

That's the definition of a trained person. So you're a trained person under these federal regulations if your employer is satisfied that you're trained. It's one of the more lax definitions of training and training standards that I've seen, especially in law and regulation. Persons who are transporting dangerous goods under these regulations don't even themselves have to be trained persons; they can be working under the supervision of a trained person.

So what you can have is a person, likely a supervisor -- the person on the desk, let's say, in a trucking operation -- who's trained to the satisfaction of his employer. He then supervises some drivers, and they're covered because they're working under the supervision of a "trained person," and the basis of this is nothing more than the satisfaction of the employer, according to the federal regulation. It's not at all certain that everyone transporting those goods has sufficient expertise in how to handle those materials. In fact, in some cases I would suggest that drivers of some of these vehicles aren't even aware what it is that's in the vehicle that they're driving, which puts them a long ways from being equipped to handle and take care of the transportation of those materials.

That's a particular deficiency under the federal regulations, and we have, as I've said, Mr. Speaker, no Alberta regulations that supplement these federal regulations at all.

To the items specifically enumerated in the motion, the first is the designation of routes on which dangerous goods may be transported. Under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Control Act it is the responsibility of individual municipalities to determine what route the hazardous goods should travel through. The Act and regulations and the operation of the department, as described in the annual reports tabled in the Legislative Assembly, are to assist municipalities in preparing such bylaws. The department is very helpful in that respect. They publish a model bylaw, and this is the look of it. It's -- I don't know how many pages. I would compare it to certain other documents, but I've been in trouble for that already, Mr. Speaker, so I won't. It's a very extensive document published by the department intended to guide municipalities in how they can draft a bylaw to control the transport of dangerous goods. Currently municipalities prepare these bylaws -- they don't have to consult with the Public Safety Services, although they may -- which must be reviewed and approved by the minister for Alberta Public Safety Services.

At present the following municipalities have received bylaw approval: Beaumont, Blackfalds, Bonnyville, Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Fort Saskatchewan, High River, Red Deer, St. Albert, Spruce Grove, and Strathcona county. Those are the ones that have bylaws presently in place; that is, they have been approved by the minister responsible for Public Safety Services. Bylaws are under development or review for Airdrie, Brooks, Camrose, Eaglesham, Grande Prairie,

Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Okotoks, Olds, Stettler, Stony Plain, Sundre, Taber, Wainwright, and Whitecourt. And that's it, Mr. Speaker. The others are in limbo at this point in time.

I think one of the things to note about that particular list that I just read out is that the only county that has a dangerous goods control bylaw is the county of Strathcona, located immediately to the east of the city of Edmonton. None of the other counties has them or, for that matter, has them under development, according to the information that we received from Public Safety Services.

So, outside of that area the only thing that exists is a kind of informal understanding or consensus, if you like, about what is the appropriate place for a driver to haul a load of hazardous materials, and there are some very well-traveled routes in the province in which no such bylaw exists. It would be quite a lengthy list to enumerate them. Rather like the motions for returns, it would have been quicker to name the ones that we deal with rather than the ones that we don't.

The criteria by which the Public Safety Services minister judges the appropriateness of bylaws, I submit, should be contained within an information package being sent from the ministry. That's not there at the present. They give you a model of what they want, but they don't give you the criteria the minister uses to review them or to judge them. It's a fairly lengthy and complicated process as it presently exists.

There's a further problem with the bylaw approach, and the problem was raised in this House by the Member for Taber-Warner the other day. The prosecution of municipal bylaws is now becoming the responsibility of the municipalities themselves. In smaller municipalities, in particular, they of course have no staff who can prosecute under these bylaws. They have to go out and hire counsel at some fairly ferocious rate, no doubt, to engage in these prosecutions. So we put municipalities in the position of, in effect, enforcing a provincial Act, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Control Act, at their own expense. Not only do they have to find out who may be transgressing their bylaw, if they get it through the department and if the minister finally gets around to approving it, then they have to send inspectors or police out to try to find out who may be transporting dangerous goods outside of the prescribed area. And if they do find the perpetrator under the bylaw, they then have to go to the expense of prosecuting from municipal funds, which is a hardship on some municipalities and, I suggest, may make the enforcement of this particular legislation, the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Control Act, less diligent than it would be if we were talking about a provincial enforcement process, which I believe there should be. I think it's very appropriate for the government to be consulting with municipalities. There should be a dialogue concerning a provincial plan on which roads dangerous goods should go through.

One of the cases that brought this to my attention, Mr. Speaker, was the case of the Lily Lake highway. There's a secondary road that goes by the Alberta Wildlife Park. The county wants to push a secondary road across Lily Lake right next to the Wildlife Park. You draw a line on a map from the petrochemical industry in Fort Saskatchewan and the county of Strathcona up to the hazardous waste centre at Swan Hills, and it goes right through Lily Lake. They're very concerned that there's nothing to prevent hazardous materials going through there. So, the designation of routes by which dangerous goods may be transported belongs to individual municipalities, and I submit that there is a risk involved in this that we can't afford at



this point in time.

Let me give you another example. When 2,200 litres of gasoline was spilled near Innisfree on April 18, it occurred close enough to elementary and high schools for classes to be canceled that day. Innisfree is a municipality without a dangerous goods bylaw, and this spill might have involved more serious substances than gasoline. In fact, not only does Innisfree not have it, but the adjoining municipalities, Vermilion and Vegreville, don't have them either. The risk is that if you don't have that kind of control bylaw in place, very hazardous materials are being transported next to schools, hospitals, and other facilities where some very defenceless people are being placed at risk.

A second concern of the motion is the lack of safety standards relating to containers. I mentioned the chromic acid spill on the Yellowhead Highway in my constituency. What appears to have happened there is the load shifted when the truck went over a bump, there was pressure put on one of these plastic containers, it cracked, and the stuff was all over the highway.

Now, I think it's unacceptable that we have some very corrosive and highly toxic materials and there are no standards for what containers they can be contained in. By and large, manufacturers try to choose materials that are up to the job, but sometimes things are mixed and remixed; they don't always end up in the containers in which they were originally manufactured. I think if we develop packaging regulations in Alberta and not wait for the federal government to do that, we have a chance to develop an industry here around safe packaging. I know there are many businesses who are working on that problem right now.

In terms of reporting requirements, I believe there is some confusion in the minds of people in the industry about who they report to. I think it's getting better. I would like to see us have monitoring devices in certain hazardous materials -- that's not provided in the regulations -- so that a driver knows when material is leaking. How about a secondary barrier, Mr. Speaker? I think, again, if we have regulations, we could develop technology in our province. We might have industries based on safe packaging, monitoring equipment, and I think there are jobs to be had in safely transporting these materials.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

So I'm proposing in my motion, Mr. Speaker, that the Assembly get to work on this problem, that the Assembly develop some standards which will assist the government in performing the function that it has to perform under the Act which was passed by the Assembly. I think the bottom line is that it's simply not good enough to copy down the federal regulations. Our people, our economy, are too important for that. There are some prospects for businesses and jobs to be had and to be made out of improving safety standards in this area, and I really think the Members of the Legislative Assembly could very easily co-operate to make that a reality, not only to make our highways safer and to make our people safer in relation to the hazardous chemicals that are going to be transported in our province but also to secure our economic future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, Motion 203 is a very important one and I think one that will be of interest to all of the citizens of Alberta, and certainly to all of the Members of the Leg-

islative Assembly.

In looking at the motion, the motion asks for the appointment of a special select committee to consider, to hold public hearings, and to make recommendations for specific areas -- as best I can understand it -- one, regarding regulations designating routes for hazardous cargo in rural areas; the second, to look at safety standards relating to the construction of containers for hazardous cargo; another item looking at training and safety procedures for operators who handle such cargo; and then lastly, a look at emergency safety procedures for dangerous good occurrences involving the transport of hazardous goods.

Mr. Speaker, it's an all-encompassing motion and one that certainly deserves the attention of the House. I think it's important that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. minister. The Chair hesitates to interrupt, but the time of 4:30 has arrived, and under Standing Order 8(3) we must now go to other business.

head: **PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS  
OTHER THAN  
GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS  
(Second Reading)**

**Bill 202  
Environmental Impact Assessment Act**

MR. McINNIS: I'm sure we won't have too many speaking requests from members of this Assembly, for a few days anyway, after this.

At a time when public opinion surveys are clearly showing that environmental concerns are the number one priority of citizens in our province and elsewhere, the process currently used by this government to do environmental assessments is nothing short of disgraceful, Mr. Speaker. There are many, many things wrong with the current process. The fact is that we have no comprehensive legislation governing environmental assessments in this province. The process as it currently exists derives from one particular section, I believe it's section 8, of the Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act. The fact is that we don't have legislation that spells out the context, the requirement, and the detail of how an environmental impact assessment is to be done.

To begin with, the question of whether or not an environmental impact assessment is done at all is left up to the Minister of the Environment. The minister can decide, on virtually any given project, whether he wants an environmental impact assessment or he doesn't. There's an exception to that, and that's energy developments, which are governed by separate legislation. I think that's interesting, Mr. Speaker. If you've got an energy project in this province, you've got a right to have public hearings; you've got a right to have intervenor funding. For any other project you've got no right whatever. You don't even have a right to an environmental impact assessment.

But we've seen in the case of forestry development, \$3.5 billion of projects, forest management agreements covering 200,000 square kilometres, virtually the whole of the green zone of the province, that there are no public hearings on any of those projects. There is no environmental impact assessment in the forestry component of those projects. Instead we have a process that changes as often as the Minister of the Environment makes an appearance in this Legislative Assembly.

Just looking at some of the forest projects presently under way, in the case of Weldwood and Daishowa there was next to no public participation process, a few meetings sponsored by the company. [interjections] Well, I invite the members to take their place in the debate as I am, because without any question, they have a different view of it. Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that if you have an energy project, you have something closer to a proper environmental impact assessment, you have public hearings, and you have intervenor funding? In forestry projects you don't. Why is there that difference, hon. members?

What passes for public participation in this province is, in effect, public relations exercises orchestrated by the companies proposing the developments themselves. This process is designed so that companies can make a sales pitch for their projects to local communities. I went to the public participation process sponsored by Alberta-Pacific/Mitsubishi/Honshu corporations. They presented an overhead projector presentation which was primarily economic in character. It was basically designed to promote the idea that everyone in the community would become rich by supplying goods and services to the company, which is interesting and it certainly has its place. But I talked to people who've seen that same presentation six different times from the company when they were looking for answers to specific questions about environmental issues. This type of process is not a substitute for a proper environmental impact assessment which the legislation, Bill 202, provides.

For years I think many Albertans have been telling this government that its environmental assessment process is completely inadequate. Now the federal government is telling the provincial government that their environmental impact assessment process is inadequate. I find it strange in the extreme that the Minister of the Environment comes here day after day and says: "There's no federal intervention. The federal government is merely looking after their interests. They're not involved in criticizing our process." I say baloney. The federal environmental review guidelines, which I have in front of me, say very clearly that the federal government cannot under law become involved if they are duplicating another process. If the provincial government had an environmental impact assessment process which covered the bases, the federal government would be prohibited by law from conducting an environmental impact assessment. The Minister of the Environment should know that

In the case of the Rafferty-Alameda decision, which the minister referred to today, the judge said, and I quote:

I agree that unwarranted duplication should be avoided but it seems to me that a number of federal concerns were not dealt with by the provincial environment impact statement.

That's what caused the federal judge to lift the permit on the construction of the Rafferty-Alameda dam. I'll repeat that:

... a number of federal concerns were not dealt with by the provincial environment impact statement

He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker.

As such, I do not think that applying the EARP Guidelines Order would result in unwarranted duplication but would fill in necessary information gaps.

Mr. Speaker, that's what we're talking about, "information gaps." There are information gaps in the provincial process which are so big you could drive a pulp mill through them.

What are some of these gaps, Mr. Speaker? The gaps are in the area of the cumulative effect of seven projects -- whatever makes the government believe that you can look at a pulp mill in isolation from the river system it's a part of is beyond me -- and the lack of public hearings, meaningful public hearings, and

it doesn't have to be something that ties people up in court forever. The environmental assessment review process guidelines have worked very well, and they have a set of guidelines on public hearings which are friendly to laypeople. For example, all hearings of a panel shall be public hearings conducted in a nonjudicial, informal but structured manner. Nothing wrong with that. You don't have to be a lawyer; you don't have to have a lawyer to be involved in that. Witnesses before a panel may be questioned but may not be sworn or subpoenaed. There are public information sessions that go on before the hearings are held so that people have the information before them.

I don't know what this government is afraid of that it doesn't want to have this kind of environmental impact assessment. I tend to agree, after consultation with a lot of people, that it's appropriate to have the developer of a project prepare their own environmental impact statement. That's fair enough, Mr. Speaker. But then that document has to be subject to review not only by the environmental assessment authorities of the Department of the Environment but also by the people who are affected. Now, I'm sure the minister is well advised by technical advisers who are capable of spotting errors and omissions and contradictions, incorrect data, and they will do that from their perspective. I'm sure the minister can go to those officials and have all his questions answered to his satisfaction.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

That's basically what people in the community are asking for. They want a process that allows them to have their questions answered to their satisfaction. And it's not the same thing. Just because a minister of the Crown is satisfied that everything is rosy, it doesn't mean that people in the community are. I say that because there are serious scientific and technical issues involved with any one of these projects, the citizens in the communities should have the right to hire their experts. They should have a right to have the technical information translated into English so they can understand it, so they can have people who know what they're talking about quiz the experts about how they arrived at the conclusion. You get people who come to these hearings and say, "Well, you're not going to be gagged by sulphur fumes because there won't be a temperature inversion in this town more than one or two days a year." You know, not everybody can forecast the weather with that kind of accuracy, and sometimes experts are wrong. Sometimes people who have a lot of letters behind their name submit a report that they think their employer wants them to submit. Sometimes that happens, Mr. Minister; it really does in the real world.

There have been scientists along those lines until very recently who denied that there's any problem with the ozone layer. Deny, deny, deny. Well, it's now a fact that we've got holes over the north and south poles in the ozone layer, and it's a fact that more people than ever before are dying of skin cancer as a result of it. But still, there were scientific people with degrees and experience and bona fides who were prepared to say everything is fine. And you get that sometimes in the environmental impact assessment process. So why not allow people in the community to have their experts look at the material so they can ask the right questions and have their questions answered to their satisfaction? It shouldn't just be the government that gets satisfied in these things. It's got to be the people at some level at some time or other. And that's provided for in this legisla-

tion. A provision is made in this legislation to have the public hearing process conducted by the Environment Council of Alberta.

I'd like to say a few words about why our party feels that the Environment Council of Alberta is the appropriate body to do these types of hearings. The ECA has a very long history of conducting fair and impartial public hearings which goes back several decades in our province. They have a reputation for scientific and technical excellence, they have a reputation for political neutrality, and I think those are the kinds of things an agency would want to bring to bear in holding public hearings. There has to be that level of trust in the community. You have to have people who can talk to all sides.

I heard the minister today refer to the people who are rallying in favour of quick approval of the Al-Pac mill as being real people, as if the rest of the people were in some sense unreal. I think that tends to put him in the camp of endorsing their particular view of this project. It's a dangerous thing for somebody in his position to be there. Now, he would probably allege that I have biases as well, and as humble as I am, I would probably admit that that's true. The Environment Council of Alberta doesn't carry that bias, and they don't have that particular problem. That's why I think they should be selected. It's also why I think the minister should be very careful about who he chooses to be the new chief executive of the Environment Council of Alberta, because whatever else he does, he doesn't want to destroy the neutrality and the credibility of that organization which has been built over a couple of decades and which is very well deserved.

The proposal in this legislation is that the Environment Council of Alberta be the ones to conduct the hearings, and they would ultimately produce a report which would address the concerns of the local people, address the scientific and technical issues, and make a recommendation to the government. Now, the government ultimately has the responsibility to decide these things; there's no question about that. The government is elected by the people. If they make incorrect decisions, sometimes they have long-term consequences, but at least they can be thrown out and hopefully one day soon they will. But I think the government should not be afraid to have all the issues on the table when they make that decision. All we're asking is that the Environment Council be allowed to hold hearings on major projects, that they be allowed to have the issues clarified in a structured, semiformal type of environment where questions can be answered, where notes can be compared, where things are on the record, and then come to a conclusion one way or the other. That, presumably, would result in a recommendation to the government, and it's up to the government from that point to decide whether or not they wish to proceed with the project. They still have the right to make that choice. But at least all the issues would be on the table; there would be clear understanding of what the environmental impact of the project is.

Now, why is it so important that we have a clear understanding of what the environmental impacts of projects are? It's because oftentimes environmental problems with projects don't occur and don't become apparent until many years later. Very seldom do you see a company come along and say, "We'd like to invest some money here, we're going to create some jobs, but we're going to ruin your environment, we're going to ruin your health, and we're going to make your lives miserable." Has anybody ever heard that from a project proponent? I don't think so, and I don't think you ever would. They make promises that

sort of omit that. In fact, they tend to promise that the environmental impact is either negligible or benign, or often you hear the argument that it's going to actually improve on the environment. I believe it's only engineers and Tories who think that Mother Nature can be improved upon. I think Mother Nature can be worked with, things can be done, but it's seldom that the engineer comes along who's got a better idea. [interjection]

AN HON. MEMBER: You woke up Red Deer.

MR. McEACHERN: Go back to sleep.

MR. McINNIS: Sorry to disturb you.

So what we have to look to in our province is: what are the consequences of development? I think there's a pretty good example, a fairly recent one, in our province that makes the point perhaps as well as any other. In the community of Drayton Valley there's a project called Pelican Spruce Mills. Pelican Spruce Mills manufactures oriented strandboard and some lumber products as well. Now, they have a mill built on land which was owned by the municipality of Drayton Valley. It was land they were induced to buy by the Alberta Housing Corporation under one of these housing development scams which litter the province. The developer came along and the municipality suggested, "We'll go on this land because we haven't got anything else to do with it. We've got this big loan from the provincial government and don't know how we're going to pay it so let's put the mill on the Alberta Housing Corporation development."

They had some discussion about it, and sure enough, the developer came to the town council and said, "Well, this is going to be a great development and you've got to have it right here in town; it's going to make the economy prosper," and so on and so forth. Well, the mill was built and it turns out to make a long story short Mr. Speaker, that it spews a lot of ash, soot and, in some cases, sawdust up in the air, which settles down on top of everybody in the community. You know, kids can't keep clean; people who have breathing difficulties suffer much more than they did previously. There are quite a few health complications and problems that result from the fact that this mill spews a certain amount of ash and soot and sawdust all over the community.

Now, I think it makes sense, Mr. Speaker, that the prosperity of a community would be just as much there if that mill were 10 kilometres out of town than if it's right in town. If it was spewing ash and soot and sawdust, it wouldn't be on top of a town; it would be on top of some land where the impact would not be so great. It's a fairly elementary and simple example. But the environmental impact assessment process, such as it exists in the province, was not able to identify that ash and soot and sawdust were going to fall on the people from this mill. If it had, it would have been a relatively simple matter to move the mill 10 clicks out of town where it wouldn't have that problem. Why would the government be afraid of a process that would spot a problem like that and allow the thing to be moved? But when you have that sort of thing, it has a way of illuminating issues quite clearly.

I was interested in some of the discussion at Grassland over the Alberta-Pacific mill, where the company documents point out . . . They were discussing the question of site selection: why is the site near the community of Prosperity? Some of the people who lived in Prosperity wanted to know, "Why us? Why are you putting it by us?" The company said, "Well, that allows

us to get away from the town of Athabasca." And somebody said, "If it's so important to you to get away from the town of Athabasca, does this mean that this thing would have an environmental impact on the vicinity nearby?" The company, in my opinion anyway, didn't have a very good answer for that question, why it's so important to move the mill away from town when it's not going to have any environmental impact anyway. You know, questions like that deserve to be probed in some depth. If a company feels it's important to move the plant some distance out of town, there must be some reasons for it. What are those reasons? What do they relate to? What will the impacts of those things be on people who are there?

It was also pointed out at the meeting in Grassland that the environmental impact statement prepared by the company didn't have a lot of material or research in it about the effect of pulp mills on agriculture, even though it is an agricultural area that they propose to put the mill in. Now, it does seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that if you're going to put in a pulp mill -- the largest of its kind in the world, as the publicity material states -- you should be prepared to study the effect of that pulp mill on agriculture, and there should be some study, some literature, something to back that up. Well, that's not the case, Mr. Speaker. At this point in time, the citizens in the area aren't sure what forum they will have to ensure that they get answers to their question about the impact of a pulp mill on agriculture. Why shouldn't there be a formal process in legislation?

What we have now is a government that's scrambling after the fact to try to make up a process. They didn't have a process -- not an adequate one at least -- in the case of Daishowa, so during the election campaign all of a sudden this is a political issue. What happens but that the then Minister of the Environment goes up to Athabasca and announces, "We're going to have a citizens' review panel." Well, Mr. Speaker, a citizens' review panel was announced in the middle of the election campaign, but it doesn't exist to this point in time. At this point the minister is still considering who's going to go on the panel, what interests they will represent, and, I suggest, ultimately how they might vote in terms of the future of this project. And like any process, if it's made up on the fly, chances are that it's not going to be fair to everyone concerned. It's going to be more expedient than it is fair, because it was born of expediency; it was born in the heat of an election campaign. It just so happens that the Leader of the Opposition was going up there within 48 hours of this particular announcement. Some cynical people suggested that perhaps the timing of the two visits was not unconnected, that perhaps the government had dispatched the Minister of the Environment to go up to make this announcement to try to blunt the impact of anything the Leader of the Opposition might have to say.

This government has said -- or at least the minister has said that he favours the concept of sustainable development. Now, I think it's pretty important that we know what sustainable development is. The Brundtland commission defines it as a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and the institutional changes are made consistent with future as well as present needs. I think that's really what the environmental impact assessment process is all about. It's trying to put our future needs into the process before the decision is made. What we have with these forest projects -- decisions were made. They were made before the present Minister of the Environment was elected. In fact, he was still in the afterglow of the Olympic

Games at the time the decisions were made. The questions related to future needs were given whatever consideration they were given at that point in time. None of us will ever know that. We can't even know what they've agreed to, let alone what consideration was given to the future concerning the decisions on these projects.

Giving as much weight to the future as the present is what environmental politics is all about. In the environmental impact assessment process all we're really trying to do is to determine what the future is under a particular project proposal. Unfortunately, for those who have a simple view of the world, it's pretty hard to look at the future of a particular project or to make a decision about a particular project without considering the alternatives. I think that's a critical point that's lost in the process. We end up arguing about who's going to be on the panel, how long the panel is going to meet, who they're going to talk to, who will be the witnesses, and forgetting about the alternatives. What are the alternatives in the case of some of these projects?

Alberta-Pacific is asking for and, according to my reading of the government announcement, has basically been given 100,000 square kilometres of the province of Alberta to support their development. That means that no other forestry development is going to take place in that 100,000 square kilometres. That's a very, very large piece of area, and these forest management agreements are renewable every 20 years. So this is it. This is the game as far as that 100,000 square kilometre block is concerned. There's no point in the environmental impact assessment process, as it currently exists, when alternatives can be considered. Maybe we'd be better off with a chain of smaller mills making different products, selling in different markets, utilizing some waste wood, some sawlogs for pulping along the way. Maybe we'd be better off with that than creating a 100,000 square kilometre plantation for one Japanese concern to run through the mill and send off to Japan in the form of pulp. Maybe, just maybe, that's a better way to go, but in the government's current process there is nothing at all to mandate consideration of those alternatives. So they set the game up. You've got a project that has to be considered, a process which is determined, as the case may be, under section 8 of the Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act, and that's all we have to deal with. So I'm proposing Alberta's first comprehensive legislation regarding environmental impact assessments which would replace and repeal the existing provision. Section 8 of the Land Surface Conservation and Reclamation Act provides for full public involvement in environmental impact assessments for developments which have an impact on the environment.

There are several main features of this legislation -- I'd like to deal with these in highlight form -- which stand in fairly sharp contrast with the present legislation. First of all, it's comprehensive; it applies to all such developments if they have an impact on the environment. Secondly, it contains precise guidelines on the types of studies to be done in legislation, not in a memo or on the back of an envelope or a guideline or any other particular document. Thirdly, it provides for full public hearings to be conducted by the Environment Council of Alberta. Fourthly, it leaves the decision-making authority in the hands of the government, where it belongs, but it ensures full access to information by all the affected parties. Mr. Speaker, access to information is one of the very few most important environmental issues today. If you're going to talk about sus-

tainable development, about putting the future in the same position as the present, you have to know what's going on; you have to know what's going to happen. Fifthly, it ensures that alternatives to development proposals are considered in the process. That's a very important point. Legislation would be binding on the government. It ensures that a comprehensive environmental impact assessment will precede all development proposals, not just some of them.

Under this legislation, environmental impacts are assessed from both a technical and a human point of view. This ensures that public input is involved prior to making decisions. The provision is made for the Legislative Assembly to grant funds, if that's required, to help balance the process. I believe the intervenor cost should be paid by the proponent, which is the model recognized around the world and certainly in our own province as far as energy projects are concerned and as far as the Public Utilities Board process is concerned.

Commercial confidentiality is there so that processed information doesn't have to be revealed. This is an excuse that's often used not to release crucial information about projects. But it makes it clear that commercial confidentiality doesn't take precedence over public health and safety. Public health and safety are the primary concerns of this legislation.

It ensures that the Minister of the Environment can assist in facilitating public involvement by publicizing environmental impact assessment processes. It says that the minister, of course, has to make that information public, guarantees freedom of information, provides for public hearings by the Environment Council of Alberta. It also provides a process for public information meetings to be called by citizens who are affected. If a group of 10 or more citizens petition the Environment minister, that will happen. Public hearings will have the legal status of a public inquiry under this Act. If evidence is arbitrarily withheld on a matter of public health and safety, there are remedies in this particular legislation. It provides that decisions can't be made until a comprehensive environmental impact assessment, with public hearings, has been completed.

So, Mr. Speaker, that in outline is the provision of the legislation and the reason for it. I hope the government members and the members of the Liberal Party will find it in their hearts today to do something positive for our province by putting the future in the same position as the present by approving this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to enter the debate today. Even though I totally oppose the legislation, I'm certainly very supportive of any debate we can have on this issue. One of the factors that bothers me significantly is all the misinformation and 'insinuation' that's cast about, saying, "What if, maybe, just maybe, this may happen; that may happen." Based on what fact? There's nothing forthcoming to express on what facts they base those criteria.

Talk about having environmental impact assessments, there is an environmental impact assessment on each project, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the Minister of the Environment will speak on his own to this legislation, expressing clearly what the environmental impact assessment process is. The environmental impact assessment takes into account the mill site and includes the effect on air quality and water quality. Also, it looks at the social assessment. But that's on the mill site alone. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place raised Lily Lake earlier today. There's an EIA under way on the Lily Lake project.

We're looking clearly at what is the best approach to use.

I care as much about the environment as anybody. I think we all do. No one likes to be cast on one side or the other. You can never have a safe, stable, secure economy without a safe, stable, secure environment. There has to be both.

MR. TAYLOR: Come on over.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I already came over. I saw the light, Nick, over here.

All of us want our children and grandchildren 20 to 50 years from now to go and be able to fish in the streams that are there and know full well that everything that was done by our ancestors, and by us at this time, was done correctly to make sure we didn't jeopardize our future.

I had a kick today when I read a news release that came out from the NDP. They state in their news release some comments that I found absolutely amazing. They talk in the news release about "other economic development options" for northern Alberta. What are they? We've been looking 80 years for them and haven't seen them yet. There just may be -- may be -- something, but I haven't heard anything coming forward on what that might be. We've had an aspen resource in northern Alberta that's been considered a weed and been thrown away, and all of a sudden there's a use for it. The economic development options we have for northern Alberta -- and the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche has one of the highest unemployment rates and has people on social assistance in that area. This project is one they fully support. But just maybe the NDP might have a better idea. We don't know what that is, but it's interesting.

Let's talk about the environmental impact. They say, "Why don't you have an environmental impact assessment on the FMAs?" You'd have to have one every year, because the forest is a changing resource. Similar concerns were raised previously. In 1973, through C.D. Schultz & Company, Limited, in a report titled the environmental effect of timber harvesting in Alberta, and again in 1979, through the Environment Council of Alberta in the Environmental Effects of Forestry Operations in Alberta, there were a series of recommendations made. Those dealing with environmental issues and multiple use of our forest land base have been incorporated into the forest management plans and into various timber harvesting plans. The companies operate at present under very, very strict operating ground rules.

Let me follow through, after you get the environmental impact assessment approved and where you go from there. Are you done? No. You need a permit to construct under the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, and you need a licence to operate under the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. You need licences under the Water Resources Act, an historical resources impact assessment by Alberta Culture. You need a development permit through the municipal development control authority. Then you need a forest management agreement and negotiations under way with that. It's a contractual agreement which conveys the timber rights. Land ownership and management is retained by the province, but they get the timber rights under very strict terms and conditions, and it must be managed under those terms and conditions. It requires approval of the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and authorization by the Executive Council.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Then you need a forest management plan, and that has to be prepared by the company over the entire rotation of that forest and has to take into consideration all the long-term forest management goals and objectives, and the company must meet them. It has to protect and maintain watershed, wildlife, and recreational values. Then you need an annual operating plan. That annual operating plan has to spell out clearly what the company can do and what they can't do before they can cut any timber, and they have to have detailed maps. It goes through that whole process, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that, there is the opportunity for public input on a continual basis in those forest management plans. The forest management agreements are public documents once they've been gazetted. There's the Alberta Newsprint one that was recently signed and will be gazetted soon. That will make it absolutely clear to anyone what these very strict guidelines under which they must operate are.

But we wanted to make sure there was enough public input into that. Even with all that opportunity you can have people question you all the time. Now, our forest officers have to have four years of university. During that time they take environment, they take wildlife and a wide variety of other things, plus they need another two years of on-the-job training. It's just about equivalent to being a doctor. When you go get your appendix out, you say, "I'm not going to let you touch my appendix till you explain to me, in words that I can understand, everything that you're going to do." You trust the doctor. We've got forest officers out there that do that, and we're very, very strict on it.

I was surprised to read in the news release -- they talk in here about our forest management practices in Alberta. They want to have a federal/provincial agreement to put more money into that. I agree with more money in the agreement. I'm working on that. But to do that to try and improve our forest management -- and the MP from British Columbia is joint in this news release. He should talk about forest management in British Columbia compared to here, talk about the mills compared to here. I can't even show you a mill that's a comparison to Alberta-Pacific's mill, because there isn't one anywhere in the world that's that advanced in technology; nowhere is there one. I can't take you and show you that.

The future of the province is in good hands in utilizing this resource and creating jobs and at no sacrifice to the environment. The department also, and the Athabasca project is one example, held 41 open houses and public meetings in 41 communities across the northern part of the province. I appointed an expert panel. I wanted to make sure that anything people said at those meetings would be totally open, and if we could find a better way to improve something, if something came out of that I didn't want to miss it. So I had a company go in and monitor every meeting and write it down, and then I appointed an expert task force to take all of that and see if there's some way we can improve it.

The public input process too. If people want to go in and look at the forest management agreements, at an annual operating plan, we're prepared to do that. In fact we're the only jurisdiction I know that has every cut block in Alberta since 1966 on computer. You tell me where it is, and I'll tell you who cut it, likely where the wood went. I can also show how it was reforested, by whom, what the regeneration standard is. No-

body else does that. In fact Weldwood is looking at the second cut on what they cut the first time, and they're going to get 30 percent more wood the second time around. We're growing better and higher quality wood.

If members really want to do something to enhance forestry in Alberta, be supportive of the heritage fund putting some more money into tree nurseries in Alberta so that we can even improve the genetics and the number of trees we have. But to come out with something where we're going to bog something down and go forever without getting any projects in Alberta, then sit back and say: what have you done?

I could talk about the jobs, Mr. Speaker, but I want to leave time for the Minister of the Environment to express his opinions with respect to the legislation. I urge all members to defeat this legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was interested to note that the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife was the first speaker on behalf of the government against this particular bill. It struck me that he should be congratulated for jumping into the breach, into the hole left this afternoon by the Minister of the Environment as he disintegrated before our very eyes in question period and afterwards in the scrum.

I find myself not in fact being persuaded by the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife but having, unfortunately, to agree with his party's decision to vote against this particular Act. I would like to qualify why I say that. There is much that is wrong with the current environmental impact assessment process, such as it is, that is utilized by this government. I would like to congratulate my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place, who is the sponsor of the Bill, to the extent that he has at least attempted to improve that process, and while he would implement through his Bill a number of improvements, there are several weaknesses which would render it impossible for us in my caucus to support this Bill as it stands. His fundamental intention, the premise upon which he has approached this Bill is, however, to be congratulated.

The government's current environmental impact assessment process is not only bad; it is worse than useless. It is not an effort to address the substance of environmental issues. In fact it has disintegrated instead into a public relations exercise to attempt to buy off those people who have concerns with the environment rather than to address those concerns, to seek out the facts about those concerns, and to come to some conclusions about pulp mill projects and other major development projects based upon facts. Nobody is saying that we should not pursue pulp mill projects. What we are saying is that when we pursue them, when we do them, they have to be done in the right way and for the right reasons. The process that has been undertaken in projects such as Alberta-Pacific is so suspect as to convince any reasonable, reasoned person to question the outcome of that process, to erode the credibility of any findings of this government of any rulings of this government, and in fact raises serious questions about whether those projects should proceed at all as they are currently conceived.

The government has manipulated the environmental impact assessment process. Announcing as they did in December a number of these projects and over the months before that a number more, they have raised expectations. They have implied a decision. They have clearly indicated in their actions and in

their words that they are not prepared to reverse that decision. From that point on, the environmental impact assessment process has been nothing more than a public relations exercise to attempt to support a decision that is already made and that is irreversible.

The process is inadequate in a number of very, very significant ways. With respect to the pulp mill projects in the north, the environmental impact assessment is not geographically comprehensive. As difficult as it is to believe, this government's environmental impact assessment process does not require Alberta-Pacific to consider the impact of its mill on the delta of the Athabasca River. Secondly, it does not consider cumulative effects of the literally vast number of pulp projects which currently exist or will be existing in the future in the Athabasca River basin. In fact, today we have seen very clearly that the federal government's initiative to intervene in our environmental impact assessment process is, among other things, premised upon the one important weakness that they have identified, that our process has not considered cumulative impact.

Thirdly, it does not provide for adequate public hearings. Public hearings were in fact not called for until, as an afterthought, this Minister of the Environment's predecessor announced on February 23, three days into an election in which he personally knew he was in trouble -- proof positive is that he lost his riding -- and in which his government was in trouble over these pulp mill announcements, came out with an environmental assessment board process which is fundamentally inadequate for all kinds of reasons: among them is that that board is not impartial, will not have the depth of expertise and experience required to consider the complex submissions that will be presented to it, will not have power or authority under legislation to make a ruling, and in fact will be used by a government that will say, "Well, everything's okay; we had community members on that board." What the community needs is to be an equal participant before an impartial board funded in the way that the company is funded to make their presentation so that their case can be equally forceful and can be considered on an equal basis by an impartial board.

Fourthly, the environmental impact assessment process is not objective. How do we know for sure? We know for sure because the company, the proponent, undertakes that environmental impact assessment. Now, you might argue that, well, that's okay, because the government can assess their findings. If you look in the budget of the Environment department, that budget for assessing environmental impact assessments is about \$450,000. It is up from about \$390,000 last year despite the fact that there are five or six additional pulp mills alone that have to be assessed.

There is no commitment on the part of this government not only to seeing that it is, in the first place, being done objectively but, if it must be done by the company, as is now the case, giving the government its own department, its own employees, the resources with which to properly assess the impact assessments done by, of course, a biased company. I'm not saying that the company's intentions are wrong. Companies will do what they must do to promote an economic commercial activity. However, we have to be cognizant of the fact that they are inherently biased in that activity, and instead a properly functioning process should be undertaken by the Department of the Environment. They should do the environmental impact assessment, and they should charge the proponent. Is that so difficult to understand? Is it so difficult to embrace that idea? No. It is

currently done now by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. They are required to do many things which they in turn charge back to the proponent in a given project.

I believe that in the last several days we have seen that the inadequacy of our process has been emphasized time and time again by the recent federal decision to intrude into our environmental impact assessment process. They're here for one reason and one reason alone, and that is because whatever our process, it is categorically and fundamentally inadequate. If it had been done properly, if the government had a year ago, two years ago, taken the time to assess the preparatory stages that were required properly, to put that preparatory stage in place properly, then there would have been no need for the federal government to enter into the fray and to begin to do it right on our behalf.

Today the minister has started to contemplate the possibility of a court challenge, a constitutional challenge with the federal government. Well, one can only question what that really means. What it really is is an effort on the part of this government to distract from the profound embarrassment it must feel over the fact that the federal government is very clearly indicating by its actions that this is a rotten process, to distract from that process by making some federal/provincial relations mammoth case out of it, and to take us away from the substance of the issue. The substance of the issue is that the Alberta government has been unable to protect the environmental rights, the environmental concerns, interests of Albertans, and the federal government has had to move in and do it for us.

There are some strengths to this Bill 202, and I would like to congratulate the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place on those strengths. First of all, it does provide for public hearings, clearly laid out in the legislation. That is to the credit of this Bill. No such provisions exist in Alberta law elsewhere, and it should be an embarrassment to the Minister of the Environment, who sits across from me today, that he would proceed with these kinds of projects without ensuring that public hearings were properly structured, properly thought out, and were handled consistently from program and project to project. In fact, what is very, very disconcerting and frightening is that this minister or any Minister of the Environment in this government would even contemplate authorizing projects of this nature without having a proper public relations -- they definitely have proper public relations exercise -- a proper public hearings process in place. How such a minister could sleep at night without knowing that the process has given him the public input, has had people under oath cross-examined to get to the facts is difficult to contemplate.

Secondly, and a second of strength of this Bill, is that it does provide for the funding of public intervenors and public groups. Clearly, the public is at a disadvantage over some mammothly well-funded company, as is the case in many of the projects that we are contemplating in this province. They have the resources to mount a case, to make that case to the public, to make that case to whatever rigged board this government is prepared to establish. On the other hand, concerned citizens with a quality of life interest, with a specific interest, a local community interest, or a broader provincial interest in that project simply are at a disadvantage because they do not get provincial funding. Again, that's not such a difficult idea to embrace. The ERCB funds public intervenors. And you know who pays for it ultimately? The company pays for it ultimately, because it is charged back by the ERCB.

Thirdly, there is some improvement in this process as con-

templated by this Act to the extent that it allows for an outside board, the Environment Council of Alberta, which is noted. I would argue in support for the quality of its work, for the quality of its members. It will have an impartiality and a depth of expertise that I believe is a profound improvement over anything offered by this government to this point. However, it is not good enough. The Environment Council of Alberta, for reasons that I will mention later -- not reasons to do with anything such as an inadequacy on its part; quite the contrary, due to structural reasons -- should not be the external board that would undertake public hearings and supervise the public hearings process.

There are problems with this Bill that force me to speak against it and will force me, should it arise for a vote, to vote against it. First of all, it is the role of the Environment Council of Alberta in such a process that I would question. The Environment Council plays a very, very important role, would play an even more important role if its funding were sustained and it were given an executive director to direct it and its staff weren't cut unnecessarily, in providing in-depth analysis of policy options and recommending those policy options to government. It is extremely important, given the nature of environmental issues, to have a body such as the Environment Council of Alberta to undertake that kind of exercise. It is important because they are structured, if they were allowed to, to undertake and conduct public hearings.

In developing public policy in the environmental issue area, it is very important to bring in public debate, to establish those roundtables, as well as two fundamentally important ways of creating debate in our society about where we should go with environmental policy. That role, which I think is extremely important -- and to the extent that the Environment Council of Alberta has been allowed to do it, they have done it extremely well -- is in conflict with the quasi-judicial role of an environmental impact assessment board. On the one hand, you can't have a group such as the Environment Council of Alberta proposing policy and, on the other hand, have it ruling on that policy in a quasi-judicial manner.

The government itself has discovered that to be a problem in the past with the structure of the Alberta Securities Commission and, in fact, to their credit have moved recently to split those two functions. That's a very, very important acknowledgment of administrative law, if you will, of regulatory law, and I believe it's a precedent that should be acknowledged in our environmental impact assessment process. So while I believe that we need an external board, I am sorry to say that I must disagree with my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place in stating that that board should not be the Environment Council of Alberta. When our Bill, my caucus' Bill, the one that I am sponsoring on the environmental assessment process, comes up, I will be elaborating upon what kind of board and what it should be prepared and able to do to make this process work properly.

Secondly, there is a contradiction in the member's presentation on his Act. On the one hand, he says that its strength is that it requires open information. Yes, and that's admirable if it were in fact a strength of this Bill. To some extent the Bill addresses that, but at the same time it contradicts that in section 6, where it says:

Where, in the opinion of the Minister, it is in the public interest or in the legitimate interest of any person, the Minister may, subject to the regulations, withhold or limit production, public inspection or discovery of any information or document of a proprietary nature.

I would feel happier with a provision like that if we had access to information legislation. Unfortunately, I feel and I am concerned that this particular provision in this Act, section 6, falls exactly into the game that this government plays time and time again. How many times do we hear this government telling us: we cannot reveal that information because it is proprietary? I simply feel that this member has not proceeded far enough in developing this and in fact is calling for a limit to access to information, contrary to what...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Finish the section.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please in the whole House. Order. Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: I let him speak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a limitation in and of itself, and it has no place in a properly structured environmental impact assessment Bill.

There is no real power for the Environment Council of Alberta in making recommendations to government. Instead, the board that supervises public hearings in the environmental impact assessment process should have broader and specific powers to make a decision, and what is now accounted for in this Bill by a recommendation to cabinet would instead be replaced by a much more difficult, a much more entrenched process, which would be a process of appeal to cabinet. It wouldn't be just a matter of course for the cabinet to change the decision of the external board; it would be a matter of importance that would be given public prominence.

Finally, I am concerned with this Bill because, while it provides for environmental impact assessment, it does not provide for a broad look at social impact assessment. Nor does it provide for an economic impact assessment a process whereby a project could be considered in terms of its opportunity costs for other economic development projects that could be established in a given area using given resources. In the case of the Alberta-Pacific mill, it remains to be seen whether the jobs that will be created are in fact good jobs, are long-term jobs, are safe jobs.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. I wonder if in view of the hour the member might make a request to adjourn debate.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I move that we adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Those in favour of the motion to adjourn, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I move that when the members assemble at 8 o'clock, they do so in Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the Deputy Government House Leader, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.



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MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.

[The House recessed at 5:30 p.m.]

