

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, June 26, 1989 8:00 p.m.**

Date: 89/06/26

[The Committee of Supply met at 8 p.m.]

head: **COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, I see it is now 8 o'clock. Can we all take our places?

Before proceeding with the business at hand, though, I would like to say that I have received a letter from the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, which reads as follows:

I wish to advise you that there was a typographical error relating to my departmental estimates.

Reference number 3.3.10 which reads "Tycor Electronic Products Limited" should read "Tycor International Inc."

Would you kindly read this [letter] into the record for the benefit of committee members. Thank you.

Peter Elzinga.

head: **Main Estimates 1989-90**

Environment

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, the business at hand is the Department of the Environment. The main estimates are to be found commencing at page 145 of the big book, and the elements commence at page 57.

I will recognize the hon. Minister of the Environment, the Member for Calgary-Elbow.

MR. KLEIN: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I welcome this opportunity to make a few brief opening comments. It's my pleasure, of course, this evening, to present to the Assembly the estimates for the Department of the Environment, 1989-90.

Mr. Chairman, to open, I believe that the environmental agenda is perhaps becoming one of the most important political agendas in the world today. Hardly a day goes by when we don't read or hear or see something about the environment. Indeed, it is a matter of great public concern. As a matter of fact, in recent times a group of environmentalists delivered to the federal Minister of the Environment, Mr. Bouchard, a paper called the green paper, a paper suggesting an environmental agenda. I haven't read the paper, but I would suspect that it's a very complicated document in its analysis of the problems affecting the environment today. But the problems I see affecting the environment today are very, very simple. They can be brought down to very, very elementary terms, and that is a worldwide appreciation for clean water and clean air and clean land. It's an appreciation that I think is being felt now worldwide, and particularly in the province of Alberta.

I believe that as the Minister of the Environment -- and by the way, Mr. Chairman, this is the portfolio that I indicated to the Premier that if I were selected to be a member of his cabinet, I would like. I think now that perhaps I should have my head examined; nonetheless, it's proven to be an extremely challenging portfolio, to address these very, very simple issues of preserving clean water, clean air, and clean land, because indeed

it's really the future, the future for us all.

You know, in this House not so long ago I was accused by the leader of the Liberal Party of being a public relations huckster and that I ought to be muzzled. But people over my eight and a half, close to nine years of political life have had a hard time muzzling me, so I'm going to speak out this evening. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, this is my opportunity to respond. I would rather be a public relations huckster than a former mayor of Edmonton who couldn't even put together a proper sewer system. That's one of the problems I have to deal with today, and I would much rather be a public relations huckster than a political huckster, than a political huckster, because public relations involves talking to people. It involves talking to people about their concerns and their desires and their thoughts for the future. That's what public relations is all about, and there is no way that you're going to get a handle on the environmental agenda unless you talk to people, Mr. Chairman, unless you get out there and find out what people want relative to their future and the future of this province, the environmental future.

So I think public relations plays a big part in the environmental agenda. It involves talking to people about setting and putting in place a proper environmental impact assessment process, and that is evolving now. We see it coming about; we see it coming about with respect to the Alberta-Pacific project, where a citizens' advisory review board has been put in place. We now see the involvement and the participation and the co-operation of the federal government in that particular process.

I've undertaken to travel to all parts of this province, from Prosperity in the Athabasca region to the Pincher Creek area in the region of the Oldman dam, to look at drainage problems just north of Edmonton, to look at landfill problems in central Alberta. As a matter of fact, if there's anything that I can be accused of relative to this portfolio, it is probably spending more time and more money on government aircraft than any other minister, because I've been on government aircraft I think half my time as the minister, traveling to these places, talking to people, listening to their concerns, and trying to respond to their concerns. I think it's been a very, very positive exercise, a very, very positive public relations exercise to be able to talk to people, to listen to people, to see firsthand the physical problems that we are encountering today relative to the environment, to have that understanding.

So, Mr. Chairman, I don't apologize in any way, shape, or form for using public relations and public relations skills to address the problems and the questions of the environment, because it is indeed a public relations question. Indeed, it's perhaps one of the largest public relations questions we face today. It's a matter of how to deal with those questions that I think is the challenge before us, and I think that the budget I would like to comment on briefly tonight, and leave some room for the opposition to debate this and ask me questions, is going to set the scene for future environmental programs.

Members may recall that the 1987 Speech from the Throne significantly altered our mission to that of achieving "the protection, improvement, and wise use of our environment now and in the future." I think that is a very, very bold and a very, very significant statement, Mr. Chairman. This change was necessary as a result of new government initiatives respecting sustainable economic development and our proactive response to environmental matters. This word "sustainable" economic development has become sort of a buzzword in our society. Sustainable economic development: sustainable by what? It is eco-

conomic development sustainable by good and solid and proven environmental practices. In other words, one should not be better than the other.

The estimates of the Department of the Environment are increasing by more than 9 percent in this fiscal year, to \$119 million, and this significant increase continues the commitments made by the government to protect and enhance our natural heritage. The increase of 9 percent in our budget is virtually all dedicated to programs and not to increasing administration and staff. In other words, Mr. Chairman, it's been the commitment of the Department of the Environment to draw on the resources of some very, very fine people in that department and to put those resources to better use. Because as well as public relations, matters that have to be addressed with respect to the environment involve imagination, innovation, and most of all, commitment. I think that has been instilled and brought out in a very, very significant way through the Department of the Environment.

As committed in the Speech from the Throne, our government has placed a very high priority on the establishment of a roundtable on the environment. Mr. Chairman and members of the Assembly, I want to allude again to this phrase "public relations," because what I have found in this portfolio of the Environment is that there's a lot of yelling. It's a very, very emotional portfolio, and all the yelling doesn't come from the opposition. There are people out there who become very, very emotional about this issue, and they talk in loud voices about what they want to see relative to the environment. One of the ways I think we can bring reasonable, thinking people together and to develop agenda is through a roundtable on the environment, where the good-thinking people from the academic community, from the law community, from industry, from environmental groups, and from just the ordinary citizens can be brought together in a sense of co-operation, in a sense of wanting to set an agenda -- a good agenda, a reasonable agenda, an honest agenda, an agenda without political motive -- and to discuss these very, very important matters in a rational way. Our commitment -- and it's in the estimates -- is to put in place, certainly by this fall, a roundtable on the environment to get good, reasonable discussion going on this extremely important question.

Mr. Chairman, I guess one important part of Alberta Environment's work that can't be quantified in the yearly estimates is commitment. You know, I just went through my first Environment Week as minister, and I guess I saw something that a lot of the members of the opposition don't bother to go around and see, because it's good and it's nice and it's positive. And that's Environment Week, where kids are out getting involved in the environment, where ordinary folks are out getting involved in the environment. They're out doing just the basic kinds of things like cleaning up riverbanks, getting involved with school programs: good, positive things.

MR. MITCHELL: I hope they're not drinking water from the Wapiti.

MR. KLEIN: They're drinking good, clean water all throughout this province. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, one of the things we can pride ourselves on is the quality of drinking water in this province. There are still rivers where you can drink water out of the river without treating it, and in some urban environments as well. [interjections] And that doesn't happen in

socialist Albania.

We have committed people from the department talking to the children in the schools. As a matter of fact Mr. Chairman, it may interest the members of the opposition to know that practically every member of my staff in the operational fields have adopted a classroom in this province, have committed themselves to attend classrooms and talk about the environment. But we don't hear that in the Legislature, because that's nice; it's good; it's positive. And education is a priority of mine as the minister. We operate an educational branch that is extremely active, and it's funded in these estimates under vote 1. Those teachers and those students who have been involved in the program -- and there have been thousands and thousands and thousands of them -- know now what it is and what we are doing relative to the environment, whether it be information on acid rain or the ozone layer or pulp mills in northern Alberta or the Oldman dam in southern Alberta or water erosion and water management programs. They know, and they understand. They understand a lot better than the members opposite; I'll tell you that. And I'm talking about grade 3 students.

Mr. Chairman, the estimates of Alberta Environment being presented today include important programs that improve the protection and the enhancement and the research into our environment. These are increasing by more than 13 percent in 1989-90. Some of the enhancements are as follows. We have the program HELP, Help End Landfill Pollution. That program has increased funding of \$1.8 million to help end landfill pollution in this province and to find alternatives. We have the program called MUST, the management of underground storage tanks, a five-year initiative to clean up all those underground storage tanks that are leaking and sending toxic pollutants into the environment through underground routes.

We have increased funding for urban and industrial waste recycling through more recycling research and support to communities and societies throughout Alberta. Right now SO communities, including the city of Edmonton, are involved in recycling, and the city of Calgary is soon to become involved in a major way in a recycling program. So we will clearly have more than two-thirds of Alberta involved in recycling. As that happens, the department will be developing ways to market and make viable in an economic sense those products that are to be recycled, because you can't have one without the other. You can't have one without the other. Pesticide containers: a first for any province in this country. Where storage sites have been established for pesticide containers, an additional \$850,000 is being provided for a major cleanup program. It started last year, and we hope to continue it and to enhance it with better and more productive recycling programs.

River water and air quality protection. In line with our recent announcements on sulphur recovery guidelines and leading-edge technology for pulp mills, there is a need to enhance the environmental protection program, which will ensure a high level of protection of our river and air resource. Also, we plan to enhance funding for a review of Alberta lakes for assessment and long-term rehabilitation of water quality.

With respect to regional landfills and due to the demonstrated success of operating regional landfills and the increasing public concern for safe management of wastes, the demands for grants and operating funds have increased significantly. So we've added another \$400,000 to that program.

Research, Mr. Chairman: another very, very good thing that this province does better than any other province in the country.

There is no other province in the country that has an environmental research station such as we have in Vegreville. Will the hon. member pay attention? Vegreville: I was there just the other week. It's a phenomenal centre, where some of the greatest research in the world goes on relative to environmental studies and how to deal with the environmental problems of the future.

In addition to that, of course, we have become the leaders in the disposal of hazardous waste materials with the facility at Swan Hills. This province is being called on -- and we plan to stick by our policy of not accepting -- to collect waste from all over this country, hazardous waste. The reason we're being called upon to do this is that no one else, no other province, has had the initiative or the foresight or the courage to go into a program of this nature.

Today, Mr. Chairman, we had the culmination of the medical substance roundup. Over the past month we have been able to accumulate eight tonnes from households and through the Pharmaceutical Association of pills, cough syrups, deadly drugs of all sorts, discarded drugs, drugs that were found in the corners of bathroom closets. Eight tonnes, and we were able and we are able to discard those toxic materials immediately. You know, no other province in this country can do that, because they have no place to put these materials, no place to put these materials. Again a community-initiated program, but something we were able to accommodate, just like the Toxic Roundup of old paints and so on the month before, because we had the foresight and the commitment of the private sector, a 60 percent commitment by the private sector to enter into an agreement with the province of Alberta to put something of this nature in place. So that's our commitment, Mr. Chairman, to environmental research. We are the leaders -- not the backwater, the leaders -- in environmental research in this country.

Under vote 3, Water Resources Management, this vote is also receiving a substantial increase, and the majority of the increase is the result of much-needed programs such as the water supplies assistance program. It's being continued at a cost of \$5 million to enable individuals and communities to deal with severe water shortages. River flood damage reduction programs, because there's something that happens in this province, as I found out through traveling and finding out firsthand: that while there's an abundance of water in the north country, there's often a shortage of water in the southern part of the province.

You've got to balance these problems with programs, meaningful programs such as the river flood damage reduction program, ostensibly a northern program which provides for federal and provincial government funding on a SO-SO cost-shared basis for flood-risk mapping and designation of 40 flood-prone communities in Alberta; again, mostly in the northern part of the province. This program has a 10-year duration and will provide long-term benefits to urban communities in Alberta. Then we have the water management and erosion control program. An increase of 9 percent is provided in the estimates for the water management and erosion control program, which provides financial assistance to local governments to encourage them to implement water management projects to solve local water problems such as flooding and erosion.

Then vote 4, which is the actual dollar commitment to special waste management assistance, and I alluded to that program earlier. This vote will provide funding for the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. The Swan Hills treatment centre will undergo a capital expansion for the installation of a

rotary kiln to meet the processing of a backlog of solid waste material. Once that is in place, we will have a full-scale operation unmatched anywhere, unmatched anywhere in this country.

So, Mr. Chairman, these are my opening remarks regarding the enhancements and the proposed estimates for the wise use and the protection of the environment this year. I think I will be happy to hear any comments from the opposition or respond to any questions that the members may have of me.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Order please. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to begin by congratulating the Minister of the Environment on his appointment and say how glad I am to hear that he actually wanted the job, because there are a few people in this province that he's led to believe he was the only one over there who wanted it. I guess if you look around and you see the issues, the things that people are coming to terms with, it's not hard to understand that. I want to congratulate the minister on the beginning part of his term as the Minister of the Environment. He's off to a good start. He's begun by being prepared to meet with almost anybody who has a concern about the environment. I think that's appreciated, and I want to congratulate him on that in this forum. There's a feeling of openness, a feeling of dialogue which hasn't been there with previous ministers, and it's a good start.

But it's only a start. I think it won't be very long before people are going to want to know when he's going to get off the government aircraft and get his feet on the ground and begin to follow up on some of the concerns that have been put forward. I think that time is arriving fairly soon. There has to be more to being the Minister of the Environment than defending decisions that are made by somebody else. I think that's the bottom line of it. At this point in time, a lot of the decisions that are being dealt with are decisions that were taken by previous ministers in previous governments, and I recognize that's a tight spot to be put in, Mr. Chairman, and I have some sympathy for the position that he's in.

I listened very carefully to the minister's opening remarks, hoping to divine some shred of philosophy or vision, some direction, which I think the department so badly needs at this point in its development because, as the minister mentioned, in 1987 the government announced as a major new direction the change in the mandate of the Department of the Environment. Previously the mandate was referred to as a balance between resource development and environmental protection. In 1987 the words were changed to reflect "the protection, improvement and wise use of our environment" words that were referred to by the Minister of the Environment.

Now, I think there are some problems with that as a description of the mandate. First of all, who is to say what's an improvement to the environment? Some of the time people who are engineers think they have improvements to make on the environment. So say the technocrats when it comes to improvements. I'm not so sure that this government has a better idea than Mother Nature when it comes to the environment but I'm particularly struck by the use of the words "wise use." It emerged on the weekend that the minister of forestry's officials are going around organizing seminars to teach them how to deal with the environmental movement. They invite speakers like

Ron Arnold, who's the executive director of the U.S. Centre for Defense of Free Enterprise, who describes environmentalists as "bigoted and prejudiced . . . the new pagans who worship trees and sacrifice people." In any event, this all goes under what's called shared use or wise use. I think it's particularly significant that one of the minister's officials contacted about this particular seminar said he didn't attend, but he's familiar with wise use, so he didn't have to attend. It seems to me that perhaps wise use in that connotation may be lacking in terms of an overall sense of direction for the department.

There's no question in my mind that the overwhelming direction that the minister needs to move the Department of the Environment is in promoting sustainable development. In that context I was struck by the minister referring to sustainable economic . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Could you keep the conversations down a little bit to allow the hon. member to be heard.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your protecting me.

I was struck by the minister referring to sustainable economic development as a buzzword. Now, a buzzword to me is something, a term that somebody uses that doesn't have a lot of meaning. It's a word that gets somebody through a situation rather than being a guiding philosophy or an overall approach for the Department of the Environment. Now, I hope to disabuse the minister of that notion, if that's the way he feels, because it seems to me that at the very core of environmentalism is a commitment to sustainable economic growth, and there's been an awful lot of research on this particular concept, what it means, how it might be applied to not just environmental policy in the traditional sense we understand it, but to all of economic policy.

And I want to refer the minister, if he ever gets time off the aircraft, to perhaps read a little bit and think about a few things. Perhaps on the aircraft he might stock a copy of *Our Common Future*, the World Commission on Environment and Development report, which defines sustainable economic development as

a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs.

An important concept, one that implies that our future is every bit as important as the present. The report goes on to say at page 46:

In essence, sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations.

These are substantial concepts, Mr. Chairman, and I think they have an awful lot to do with the way this department fits into the rest of the provincial government. Because it seems to me that when you have a Minister of the Environment who's not a key economic player in the government, it's very unlikely that sustainability is going to be evaluated when economic decisions take place. I appreciate that the minister has been appointed to some cabinet committees, but the federal government now has a committee on environmental policy in the cabinet. I'm kind of concerned that this minister doesn't have a seat on the priorities committee of cabinet, where we all know the decisions are actu-

ally made. The minister laughs.

It seems to me, just carrying this a little bit further, that in the National Task Force on Environment and Economy in 1987, provincial resource development ministers also tried to assess sustainable development as being a critical concept, which they define as

development which ensures that the utilization of resources and the environment today does not damage prospects for their use by future generations.

At the core of the concept of sustainable development is the requirement that current practices should not diminish the possibility of maintaining or improving living standards in the future. This means that our economic systems should be managed to maintain or improve our resource and environmental base so that the generations that follow will be able to live equally well or better.

That's from the report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, September of 1987. So, far from being a buzzword, Mr. Chairman, sustainable development is something that a lot of people have given serious thought to as an operating philosophy, or an approach around which can be organized decision-making systems in government.

I'm pleased to learn that by this fall the minister is going to get around to appointing a provincial round table on issues of sustainability. This was a commitment that this government made back in September of '87, so I suppose if they get there by the fall of '89, that's not too bad. But I think a provincial roundtable is only halfway there. If you look at the way the roundtable concept is developed in the Brundtland commission report, the idea is that on every development issue that comes along, there's a process whereby people who have very strong views and disagree with each other can sit down and come to terms with usually two-thirds, or 70 percent, of the issues that are in dispute. I've heard the minister's speech a half a dozen times, if I've heard it once, about not yelling at each other, about getting together and sitting down in a co-operative fashion -- that's what the technology of the roundtable is supposed to do -- but not one time on a provincial basis. If roundtables are to be effective, they have to be in place on a project-by-project basis. I think that concept shouldn't be allowed to pass when we talk about having a provincial roundtable. We should think about roundtables in a much broader context than that.

The idea of sustainable economic development has to apply to new project proposals -- there's no question about that -- but at some level it has to apply to existing activities as well. There's no point in saying, "Well, we approved of something 10 or 20 or 30 years ago, and therefore it's not worth looking at again." Somehow the question of sustainability has to be there with respect to our existing activities as well. That includes standards for environmental protection and pollution; it includes standards for pulp mills, about which I'll have more to say later on. Somehow we have to apply those concepts to existing activities as well as new activities.

The minister referred to environmental impact assessments. What I think he said was that the environmental impact assessment process is improving on a daily basis and that we look forward to some changes in that area. I'm struck, looking at the environmental impact assessment guidelines that all industry in the province works with, that you can't find reference to sustainability in these documents anywhere. It just doesn't exist. I think a process for assessing the environmental impact of the projects which doesn't refer to sustainability at any level is overdue for reform. I think most of the problems probably stem

from that fact alone. How can you have a proper environmental impact assessment if you don't even know exactly what it is you're looking for? There are scoping documents, there are letters that are drawn up, which run into the dozens of pages, outlining tables of contents for documents, and never once are the proponents asked to evaluate the sustainability of their project.

I also want to refer to some of the specific problems of environmental impact assessments. I don't think it's fair to subject everyone to the speech I gave last week, or two weeks ago. There are some specific problems with the EIA process as it exists in Alberta. The first is the question of authority and accountability. The authority for commissioning the environmental impact assessments rests with the Minister of the Environment. It's not necessary that any kind of an EIA be proposed on any particular project. Essentially, what is done is an aspect of guidelines, and the decision to have an EIA is in the hands of the minister, as well as the scope of it. The minister referred to Alberta-Pacific. I think that's as good a case as any to point out that in the scope of environmental impact assessments at no point is the proponent required in an EIA document to assess how this project fits into other projects in the provincial scheme of things. At no point is the proponent required to assess the environmental impact of forestry operations. I know the debate we get into in this House between the two ministers of forestry and Environment over whose responsibility it is.

I merely want to point out at this juncture that the province of Ontario has commenced a massive environmental impact assessment on the forestry resource. It's a project which by their admission has been delayed far too long. They have a budget of \$30 million to look into environmental questions related to forest management in the province. In May of 1988 the first of the public hearings on the environmental impact assessment of Crown timber management took place in Thunder Bay, Ontario. They are looking at environmental impacts over 465,000 square kilometres of forest, an area approximately twice the size of the area that's affected by the current forestry projects. Prior to these hearings the Minister of Natural Resources in Ontario set up a \$300,000 fund for intervenors, which was distributed to a variety of public interest and nongovernmental groups. They're using those funds to retain experts, to review statements, to question witnesses, and this thing is going to go on for a long period of time.

I think it's a bit of a mockery to say that you can't have an environmental impact assessment of forestry operations, and I'm curious to know why the Environment department is content to remain a bystander on issues related to forest management. The literature on forest management describes the process as one that takes place between the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife in terms of making assessments on an ongoing basis of logging practices. It doesn't refer to the Environment department, it doesn't refer to Tourism, and it doesn't refer in any specific detail to the public. These forestry impacts are, I would wager, more important than the impact of pulp mills on the local area and, therefore, issues that the Minister of the Environment ought to be concerned with.

I go on on problems with the current EIA process. Scientific studies have very little predictive value, and the people who do them are not required to justify the findings in any type of open forum. Public access is restricted to those few occasions when the minister or the companies choose to involve the public in a forum where they set the rules. Now, the minister once said to me: you can't have public hearings on projects like this because

you'll want to turn them into another Code investigation or something like that, costing millions of dollars and taking years to carry out. The reality is that the ERCB, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, is able to hold hearings on energy projects. Their guidelines are well established, well understood, and appear to be working. It includes intervenor funding paid by the companies and not by the government, as is the case here. The Federal Environmental Review Office has a publication on rules and procedures for public hearings. It's not as if we don't have models for holding public hearings. What we have instead is an ever changing model which changes every time the minister makes a statement with regard to what the process is going to be in the future.

Then we come to what I think is the most serious problem with the environmental assessment process: what comes out of it at the end? It seems to me that you can have all the environmental assessments in the world, but if they don't have an effect on the decision-making, then what's the point in doing it? Somehow in this context I'd like to draw on a paper prepared by Professor Phil Elder of the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary and his colleague W. A. Ross called "How to Ensure that Developments are Environmentally Sustainable." Professors Elder and Ross argue that it makes sense to include sustainability as a criterion for the decision-making in the end, because there's no assurance that "the proposals will be free of environmental problems," only that we can study it and we can make some kind of a forecast about what it's going to be. But

if EIA is to be used as a tool to ensure sustainability, there needs to be imposed [somehow] upon the EIA process the requirement that the proposal would not be approved unless it were consistent with the principles of sustainable development and the corollary that environment is as important as economics.

Mr. Chairman, we don't have that in the public policy of the province. We don't even have at this point a commitment that I can see in public policy to sustainable economic development, let alone in legislation. We have correspondence that the minister has written proclaiming that to be public policy, but I can't find it in the throne speech, and lo and behold, I can't find it in his speech today.

So I think we're overdue for reform of the environmental impact assessment process. The problems are there. They're clearly documented, and they're clearly understood by people that have concerns about the projects. The only people who, as I said in an earlier statement in question period, are happy with the process are the Minister of the Environment and his employees, who appear to be paid to be happy about them. So, EIA overdue for reform. I don't know the point of allowing every one of these projects to be approved before we even look at reforming the system. That seems to be the position that we're in.

Pollution standards: another very important issue. I was shocked, as I think were most Albertans, by the minister's statement early in May that Daishowa would not have to meet the pollution control standards announced by his predecessor on December 2, 1988. What he said at the time was that Daishowa would be given permission to operate at a level of 2.5 kilograms per air-dried tonne of organo-chlorides as opposed to 1.5, which is the new standard. A few days later there issued from the Department of the Environment a rather lengthy and convoluted news release, which was essentially all over the map in terms of

whether the new standards would be in place, whether they'd be conditional or unconditional, whether they would be written into the permits or not, to which the Department of the Environment appended a lead saying:

[The] Hon. Ralph Klein today reaffirmed that environmental standards for kraft pulp mills have not changed and that the Daishowa Canada Peace River Kraft Mill will have to meet Alberta's new technological standards before a Licence to Operate will be issued.

When that statement emerged in a news conference, it appeared that the minister came out and said something exactly opposite to that, for which the minister chose to blame his officials for putting the wrong lead on the news release. I defy anybody to read the chronology that follows and come to a conclusion other than that. It seems like, you know, if you put up enough facts and enough quotes from correspondence and so forth, the issues are being obscured. Well, here we are more than a month later, and Daishowa still hasn't announced the new plan that's going to result in reduction of emissions or, for that matter, what their level of emissions will be. I sort of wait patiently day by day for that announcement to be made so that we can have some basis for evaluating a decision. A decision, Mr. Chairman, because being a minister of the Crown involves more than having meetings with people, more than talking, and yes, even more than listening. It involves, from time to time, making decisions. We'll be looking very carefully to see whether Daishowa is going to be allowed to operate above the 1.5 level suggested by the announcement last December or whether it will be restricted to operating below that level.

Along these lines, the second predecessor to the minister -- and I note that they go through Environment ministers at a rather rapid pace over there -- in December of '87, less than two years ago, announced at the Environment Council of Alberta that the provincial government

have already begun a new program to test for dioxins in the river downstream of Alberta's two kraft mills, and in plant effluent and sludges.

The results of that research would be of interest to a large number of people in the province of Alberta. I note that that research was also referred to in a letter written by the minister of forests to Canadians for Responsible Northern Development. That was more recently, I think in January 31 of this year. The same research was referred to. I would like to know from the minister: where is it? The people who live in the vicinity of existing pulp mills would like to know what they have already done to the environment.

I'd also like to point out that existing permits under the Clean Water Act for those mills contain no standards for dioxins. In fact, Procter & Gamble is probably emanating dioxins, or at least chlorinated hydrocarbons, in the vicinity of five, six, seven kilograms per tonne. Nobody knows for sure because the research isn't public. But we do know that there are no standards in existing permits for those particular mills, and that's a matter of pretty great concern to the people who live in those areas. I think it's one thing to announce plans to develop standards for new pulp mills, but it's quite another to allow those kind of activities to carry on.

Other provinces, other jurisdictions have found it necessary to develop standards, and long-term standards, for emissions of especially dioxins and furans. You've got to keep in mind that dioxins and furans aren't the whole story. Scientists have so far identified some 300 compounds that are contained within pulp mill effluent. Chlorinated phenols are among them. PCBs have

been banned from production in most of Canada. There are also chlorinated solvents like chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, among a very large list of what's known as dioxins and furans. I don't think there's very much doubt at this point in time that these chemicals are very toxic and very hazardous to the health of all living things. The only parameters currently regulated by the Department of the Environment are biological oxygen demand, which measures easily degradable compounds, and total suspended solids, which are essentially fibres and other wood particles that are in the effluent. I appreciate that some work is under way in that area, but there are a lot of people who want to know what those standards are going to be.

In the province of British Columbia recently there was an announcement made by their minister of the environment, who says they're moving very quickly to a standard of 2.5 kilograms per air-dried tonne and they're going to work their way down to zero eventually. Now, where this minister in this government sits in that process is anybody's guess, because we don't have objective standards for emissions of pollutants in our province. The reality is that the standards are whatever is written into those permits.

I challenge the minister to put those public policies into law, into regulation, so that people who live in those communities will have some idea at what point the industry will be required to reduce its emissions of effluents down to an acceptable level, and an acceptable level is pretty well zero. In Sweden they've set 2002 as the date for achieving zero emission of dioxins and furans. They've simply said to their industry, "Well, that's what we want to achieve as public policy, and it's up to you to go and find out how you can do it." Well, we don't have any type of long-term goal. The minister stood up and said that our standards are the Swedish standards. Well, if they are, then why aren't they there in regulations, legislation, or some type of public policy document which you can rely on? What they're in is a news release dated December 2, 1988, and the minister indicated in early May that those requirements may not in fact be requirements, that this is something that can be negotiated. If you're considered by the minister to be an old mill even though you're not built yet, then the standards aren't going to apply to you. That clearly is not a standard at all. What it is is a process of negotiation. And a process of negotiation is by definition one that's indeterminate as far as outcome is concerned; you don't negotiate things if the positions are set down. And environmental protection, it seems to me, is not something that we ought to be negotiating about. We either have standards or we don't have standards. As long as we're negotiating things, I suggest that we probably don't have standards.

There is on the issue of dioxins a growing movement around the world toward brown paper products. You have to wonder why it is that this province is rushing headlong into production of bleached kraft type of pulp products with public subsidies, with loan guarantees, with direct loans, with every instrument of financial support that there is available.

AN HON. MEMBER: Corporate welfare.

MR. McINNIS: Corporate welfare, my colleague says.

I think it's a pretty good question to ask: why would the province want to move so heavily into the bleached kraft area at this point in time, given the brown paper movement, given that alternatives not only exist but are being developed on a daily basis? We already have experience with chemithermomechanical

cal pulp mills under construction here. Repap Enterprises Corp. is working with an alcohol-based pulping process, which produces very high quality papers, including coated papers, which are among those that the industry says we have to have bleached kraft for.

I've been trying to find out why it is we're so heavily into the bleached kraft industry. I suppose one answer comes in a letter from the hon. Premier to Canadians for Responsible Northern Development, March 17, 1989, which says in part: "the type of mill proposed to the government is at the discretion of the private sector." So here we are committing all of our northern forest, or a very large part of it, towards bleached kraft development, committing taxpayers' money, committing the Department of the Environment to negotiate with these companies on standards and so forth, simply because that's what the industry put forward. Well, isn't there anybody else who has any ideas? Isn't there anybody in the government who has any ideas about how to develop these forest resources? Why limit the search to bleached kraft pulp mills? I'm told that in the case of Daishowa that was the only company that was even looked at.

I'm running out of time here, and that's too bad. Recycling initiatives: one hand doesn't know what the other is doing. This province promotes the use of aluminum cans, dioxin-leaching paper cartons for milk, and Tetra Paks for juice, and it allows the glass industry to go down the toilet in southern Alberta. Why we would be attempting to shovel taxpayers' money to keep this thing in operation when we actively promote the use of these competing products, most of which aren't produced in Alberta, is beyond me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin by thanking the minister for a very quick response that he made to a request of mine several weeks ago. As a result of my request that an entrepreneur with products with environmental implications be treated and approached quickly and effectively by his department, that in fact occurred. I would also like to thank the minister's deputy minister, Vance MacNichol, and several of his staff for the response they have demonstrated to that request. I'm very, very encouraged by the professional manner in which they responded and by the manner in which they have followed up our initial meeting. I think it augurs well for the quality and professionalism of that department.

I agree with the comments of my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place that in fact the minister should be congratulated for assuming the portfolio and for wanting to assume that portfolio that he currently has. As Minister of the Environment, I believe that he has perhaps one of the most important portfolios of this government, of any government in this country, North America -- the world, as he would say. In fact, I think it is a testimony to his proven political track record that he would be chosen for that particular role.

I would also like to say that in spite of some of the exchanges that we have had in the Legislature, I am encouraged by some of the things I hear this minister saying. He has said that we need new environmental impact assessment legislation. I agree. I hope he delivers on that. He has said that he will act to hire a CEO, a chief executive officer, for the Environment Council of Alberta. He has said, at one point, that he personally

would like to delay the Alberta-Pacific public hearings on the Athabasca pulp mill project. All these things are very encouraging. We have a minister who, in his heart of hearts, is expressing that he wants to do many things that have to be done properly -- he wants to do those things properly.

The real rub comes, the problem comes, and certainly the challenge for this minister comes, in determining whether or not he can turn what he is saying into action. All of us know what has to be said. Any politician who is listening at all to the population, who is assessing the environmental issues today in this province, knows what has to be said. The critical jump is whether this minister can in fact do it. I believe that raises a challenge that goes beyond just a challenge to this minister but is a challenge to this minister's cabinet and to his caucus. Because without the political will and the political backing that he must receive from his caucus and his cabinet colleagues, he cannot begin to act on those things that he has said he would like to do and on many more things that I am certain, in his heart of hearts, he would like to do.

The problem is this: it comes down to how politicians, how this government, views the relationship between economic development and environmental protection. Clearly, we have to find a balance between those two very, very important initiatives. Instead, what we see is a government that has made a very determined decision that economic development will, must, take precedence over environmental protection. We see it so many ways. We see it in a minister who does make a commitment to delay public hearings for Alberta-Pacific and who then cannot deliver. We see it in a minister who does express a desire to bring in legislation to improve environmental impact assessments and then determines to go ahead with a range of pulp mill projects before that environmental impact assessment process is in and is in properly. We see it from a minister who states that, yes, we have the highest standards in the world in any number of areas that you choose but cannot find the political will, the political backing, to make Daishowa meet those standards now, before they go into production in the next several years.

The irony, the great political irony, is that we have had a number of pulp mill projects of a huge magnitude announced over the last number of months, the last year, preceding an election which we didn't even need. Those mills, I believe and many Albertans believe, were announced at the time they were announced to do one thing and one thing alone: to buy votes. The great irony is that in fact they probably lost this government votes, and the way to have achieved votes would have been to have brought in an enlightened environmental policy, a policy that addressed environmental impact assessments, and properly; a policy that addressed recycling initiatives, and properly; a policy that talked not about sustainable economic development as some buzzword but that talked about it with the discretion and the emphasis that notion deserves in our society, in our debate over economic development and environmental protection today.

The minister says the right things. He has tried to say many of the right things. The critical challenge is: can he achieve the influence within his cabinet, within his caucus, in order to meet the real challenge? And that is to act on initiatives that need to be acted on.

Conservation strategy should be the heart of this government's environmental protection initiative. That should be the heart of an environmental minister's vision of where he will take

this province with respect to environmental policy, and the core of that particular initiative, conservation strategy, is sustainable economic growth. It disheartens me to hear the minister refer to sustainable economic growth as nothing more than a buzzword, because I believe it is that notion that brings together those two important initiatives in our society for governments: one, economic development, and two, environmental protection.

Another great irony, a second great irony, is that if you hear the discussion that has evolved around the federal government's recent roundtable on the environment, you see corporate leaders, industrial leaders in our society, nationally talking about the need to sustain economic growth, talking about the need to look long-term and make short-term sacrifices in order to sustain economic growth long-term. You do not see this government and this minister talking about sustainable economic growth in any way, shape, or form with the kind of respect that concept, that notion, should hold for him and, in fact, the kind of opportunity it should hold for him as a public relations politician, which he is so proud to talk about, a public relations politician who has a notion, who has an idea, that can bring those two very important competing -- to this point -- initiatives together: economic development and environmental protection.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of elements of a conservation strategy that must be incorporated in this government's policy. One is how they treat the Environment Council of Alberta. That council is an enlightened idea. It has contributed significantly to the discussion and the development of environmental policy in this province, despite being hampered in recent years in its ability to do that. More important than that, it is the logical choice for a board to promote a conservation strategy for Alberta. Alberta signed the federal Task Force on the Environment and the Economy. It should be congratulated for having done that. That task force laid out a series of recommendations to be acted upon. The structure of the Environment Council of Alberta is suited perfectly to act upon Alberta's role in developing a conservation strategy. However, since April of 1988 the Environment Council of Alberta has not had a chief executive officer. Two months ago the minister stated publicly that he would be working on hiring a chief executive officer. Right thing to say, Mr. Minister. Still no action, no results. We need results. That body cannot function properly in developing a conservation strategy or any other kind of initiative without having a properly appointed chief executive officer.

Secondly, to the minister: since 1986-87 the funding for this body has dropped nearly 30 percent from \$1.2 million; now it is at \$864,000. That has severely hampered its ability to develop a conservation strategy. The public advisory committees have not been able to meet as frequently as they should because they simply do not have the funds which would allow them to convene, having their membership coming from all across this province. That body has not been allowed to conduct public hearings. Critical to the development of the conservation strategy called for by the federal task force is the holding of properly constituted public hearings. This Environment Council of Alberta has not been given the authority by the Minister of the Environment to conduct such public hearings.

We are encouraged to see the minister talking about a roundtable. It's a good idea. It's called for by the task force. We made a commitment to have that roundtable set up by September of 1988. Almost a year later we're getting around to talking about it. At least it is progress. Again, that roundtable should be related to the development of a conservation strategy.

I believe it should be structured around the Environment Council of Alberta. I disagree with my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place that somehow it should review each project. It shouldn't. That body would exist to develop new initiatives, to encourage debate in our society about creative and innovative ways of approaching environmental protection policy for this province, for this country, in fact for the world, through the Brundtland commission in its relationship to that, in the future.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

The second area that needs to be addressed with respect to developing a conservation strategy is the need for research. And yes, the minister is right; his department does undertake some important, some significant research.

MR. FOX: In Vegreville.

MR. MITCHELL: In Vegreville, no less.

However, one area of research that requires attention, that is called for by the federal task force, is the research into methodologies for defining toxic levels one and two, and perhaps even more elusive, methodologies for valuing environmental inputs into the investment equation. Traditionally, companies look at a stack of money. They spend it. They call it an investment. They do not look at a stack of the environment which they expend as in any way, shape, or form an investment. We need to develop ideas, methodologies, to define and value environmental inputs into our investment processes.

We also need to develop through research -- and again this is called for in the federal task force -- more creative ways to develop incentives; not just restrictions, not just the negative, but incentives for companies to pursue and achieve high environmental standards. And so you could, for example, consider tax incentives for those companies which exceed specified, already rigorous standards.

A third area that is critical to conservation strategy and to our fulfilling our responsibility in that regard under the federal task force's recommendations is proper environmental impact assessment processes. We have heard so much about this; we have seen so little from this government. To be proper, an environmental impact assessment process must be these things: it must be geographically comprehensive; it must consider cumulative effects with respect to those projects where that would be appropriate; it must determine that environmental approvals be in place before construction starts, before expectations are raised, so that a government is not launched upon an irreversible course of approving certain projects. We saw in Daishowa that they were clearing land before they got their environmental approvals. We hear from Alberta-Pacific that they still want to proceed in July with site preparation. What site preparation is, by any other word: construction. The way environmental impact assessments have been structured for that project, there is no way that environmental approvals will be in place before site preparation begins.

Environmental impact assessments must be objective, and that means they can't be done by the company. I'm not saying that any company is intentionally biased, but inherently they are biased, and therefore the responsibility for conducting an environmental impact assessment should be in that body that is most accountable and that has the potential for being most objective, which would be the government. That's not to say that

the government should pay for it. It should undertake it, and the proponent should be charged back the cost of that assessment.

Public hearings must be open. They must be funded. They must be set up and structured in a way that everybody knows how they will operate. They must be paid for by the proponent, and public intervenors must receive funding so that they can structure input that is adequate to the task of balancing against the well-funded input of proponents.

Environmental impact assessments should go beyond simply the environment to a study and an evaluation of the trade-offs that the environmental impact of one project will have on other potential economic uses for an area. I'm thinking of the north. I'm thinking of the fact that if we undertake pulp projects that are detrimental to the environment there, they will erode the possibility of pursuing longer term, more balanced economic growth through tourism initiatives. I ask myself how many times: if we had put half the money into developing tourism initiatives in the north as we have put even into Al-Pac, let alone Daishowa, let alone any number of other projects, what could we have done; what creative and innovative leadership policies could we have implemented to sustain and support tourism development in the north, development that may well be lost for the future because of the impact these projects will have?

Environmental impact assessments should assess opportunity costs. You look at Alberta-Pacific. How many jobs is it going to create? It's going to create 440 in the plant and 660 of some of the worst, most unsafe jobs known in this province in the bush. That is not quality economic development nor is it guaranteed that that kind of job creation and economic development will be sustained beyond 15 or 20 or 25 years, the way that those projects have been structured today.

Most important of all is that this public hearings process and the environmental impact assessment process -- the review of that assessment of an assessment -- should be done by an independent board of experts. It is not acceptable, after the fact, as an afterthought, three days into an election which the Minister of Environment is very concerned about winning, and rightly so, and which this government was becoming very concerned about, to call for -- what's it called? -- a community review board to begin to assess the environmental impact assessment of the Alberta-Pacific project. For one thing, three of those people will be laypeople from the community. They may be very good people. It will be difficult to find experts with a depth of knowledge to assess the kinds of submissions they will receive. More than that, they will be co-opted, because this government will stand up and say: "We've got the community. They were on the board." Rather, that process, to be proper, should be an independent board of experts with their own research staff that hears well-funded community groups with their input side by side with business input, and then that board can make an assessment from an objective point of view, without having its objectivity called into question. The results of their decision can therefore be trustworthy.

All of these things must be outlined in legislation. It is not enough for this minister, at his discretion -- for any minister, at his or her discretion -- to conjure up an environmental impact assessment process when public pressure is so great that it can no longer be resisted; to have one process for one project that is different from another process for another project, from which nobody can assess. The company can't assess it. The public can't assess -- God knows, probably the department itself, the members of the department, can't assess what to expect. It

works for nobody. This process, the guidelines under which environmental impact assessments should be undertaken, the manner in which the independent board would operate and so on, must be laid out in clearly defined legislation, debated in this Legislature for all to know, so that there will be no surprises.

The minister keeps talking about a review of the environmental impact assessment process in this province. Again, he's saying the right things. We do need a review. But to be effective and to be meaningful, two things have to be addressed: one, the minister has to admit that if he needs a review, maybe what he's got isn't right, and maybe -- just maybe -- he shouldn't proceed with these huge megaprojects until he gets it right; let's stop them until we review that process, until we know we've got one that is proper and that works.

AN HON. MEMBER: LeRoy won't let him.

MR. MITCHELL: LeRoy won't let him.

Secondly, let's see how that review's going to work. Is this something that's going to be done behind closed doors? Are we going to see terms of reference? Are we going to know who it is, those reasonable people that the minister has spoken about speaking to? Are we going to see how we're going to choose who's reasonable and who's not reasonable? Are we going to choose the reasonable ones because they're pro-development or they're not pro-development? How do we do that? Can we see the terms of reference for his review, the budget for his review, the people who've been charged with the responsibility of doing that review? Can we see those in a public document laid out so we can debate it, so we can be sure that review of the review process in fact has been done properly?

It is not enough, Mr. Minister, to throw out this idea that you are sitting back and reviewing it. Because if you believe it needs to be reviewed, one, you'd better stop right now and get it in place before you proceed with these megaprojects, and two, let's define it. It's not a public relations exercise. Let's define specifically how you are going to review it, when we're going to see legislation, what's going to be in that legislation, and how we're going to get from where we are here to that legislation, because, believe me, it is an awfully long way.

Another element of implementation of a proper conservation strategy, the development of an attitude that allows a conservation strategy to work in this province, is an advocacy role for the Minister of the Environment in this government. There may be times in the future where an advocacy role is less required, is less of an emphasis. There may have been times in the past, although I doubt it; we just didn't understand. In this government I see that an effectively operating Environment minister must understand that he or she is pitched against a back bench and a cabinet that places economic development ahead of environmental protection, and therefore somebody in that cabinet has to be making the case, and making the case effectively, for promoting environmental interests at least to an equivalent level of economic development interests: an advocacy role. Therefore -- and I know this isn't the minister's fault, but certainly I hope he would pass this along to the Premier -- he should sit on the cabinet priorities and planning committee. There is no more powerful or important committee. Decisions are made there that affect the environment because they affect economic development. The federal government has provided a leadership role: their federal Conservative counterparts have placed the Environment minister on the priorities and planning committee, or their

counterpart to it. That should occur here, so this minister has at least some advantage in making his case in the inner circles of power where decisions are made.

Secondly, I think the minister must understand that there are plenty of points in his cabinet advocating economic development, and it is their job to advocate economic development. Economic Development and Trade: certainly that minister must do it. Forestry: there may a role for the forestry department in advocating forestry development. Certainly if they take that role, somebody's got to take the balancing role. Thirdly, maybe it's agriculture, and certainly agriculture does advocate development of our water resources in a way that is geared for economic development. However, there is therefore all that much more urgency for the Minister of the Environment not to be co-opted, not to have his and his department's objectives coloured, marred, clouded by trying to balance. He is an advocate, and he must be an advocate. I point out in his own estimates where it is extremely clear there is in fact a conflict of interest for him and for his department.

The minister has made the point on occasion, as have some of his colleagues, that this government spends more money per capita on environmental protection than any other province in the country. If you exclude water resources management, which is dams, which is irrigation projects which shouldn't be in the Environment department because they erode the minister's ability to take an advocacy role -- if you exclude that -- no longer can we say that this province is the highest per capita spender on environment policy. In fact most other provinces place water resource management in departments of energy and natural resources, where it more appropriately should be. Forty percent of this minister's budget goes into water resource management and that is not environmental protection. That is not conservation strategy. That is not advocacy of sustainable economic development. That is dams and every last ounce of their impact on the environment of this province. Somebody should be fighting against that to provide balance. Certainly the department that builds them, that operates them, that plans them cannot do that.

Secondly, the minister has talked about a 9.2 percent increase, or whatever, in this year's budget for the Environment. What's the total? Nine point one percent. I would like to point out to the minister, to clarify for the members of this Legislature, that in fact that is a \$10 million increase. Do you know how much of that increase comes from water resource management? Eight million dollars. There is no significant increase in this department's budget and in fact this department's budget is down from \$130 million in total to \$119 million three years later. Let's not hear that we're solving the problems by spending money, because we're not solving the problems by spending money. A third great irony is that many of the problems we don't have to solve by spending money anyway. Environmental impact assessment processes don't cost this province very much money.

A second place where I believe there is a serious problem in the minister's advocacy role is with respect to forestry management agreements. The minister has said the forestry management agreement or the environmental impact that is related to those agreements with respect to several pulp mill projects will be dealt with later. Two things. One, maybe too much later; we have site preparation in July; certainly forestry management agreements for the Al-Pac project won't be signed by then. Secondly, the Environment department plays a very limited role,

I'm told, under the forestry management agreements, in the environmental compliance regulation after that agreement is in operation. The minister, to be an advocate, should ensure that his department plays a very high-profile role in that particular process.

I'm also concerned with the minister's advocacy role to the extent that the Department of the Environment plays a very secondary role under the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Yes, in some respects that board has gone beyond where the minister is with respect to pulp mill projects. At least they have public hearings and at least they get the proponent to pay for it and at least they do fund public intervenors. However, they have taken over the environmental impact assessment role, and again they're not sufficiently objective. The Minister of the Environment should be the final word on those energy projects, and that board and those proponents should come to the Ministry of the Environment in order to get the approvals necessary to proceed.

The question of dangerous goods, toxic wastes. Yes, to some extent this government is to be congratulated for what it's done with Swan Hills, for the leadership and the initiative it took: credit where credit's due. However, you can get too much of a good thing. One, I think there is a place in our province for mobile technology, toxic waste incineration technology. I think that given the number of spills we have seen, there may be cases where mobile units can go to the site, can reduce the risk of transportation. The minister is already now considering putting in I think it's another \$9 million to develop another kiln. He talked about it tonight. Perhaps we don't need it; perhaps we can deal with some of this excess or some of this increased demand with mobile technology.

With respect to Swan Hills: yes, the concept -- the government was right in many respects. Implementation leaves much to be desired. The new minister should review the contract that his department his government, has with the company involved in operating, having built that plant. If you look at that contract there are probably \$4 million to \$5 million of savings a year for this province if that contract were structured in a way that didn't do these things, that didn't guarantee to pay every last single cost incurred by the company, including the interest on the money they borrowed to buy their share of the equity in that plant. Why wouldn't they borrow all their "deemed equity"? Because they get the interest paid for us.

Two, it shouldn't guarantee them a return of prime plus, at this level about 3 percent, which would be in the order of 14 or 15 percent. Three, it shouldn't guarantee to pay -- and believe it or not, it does -- the taxes on the guaranteed earnings. This is the most extreme of cost-plus contracts that should have gone out with the Alaska Highway pipeline. They learned. We should learn it's costing us an awful lot of money that it need not cost us. This minister has a chance to do something right by that by re-evaluating that contract and cutting some of that \$4 million or \$5 million a year out of his budget that doesn't have to be spent the way it's being spent.

Dangerous goods, toxic waste management, transportation: we've seen many spills. We've debated it; we've discussed it. I simply want to reiterate several points. It should be an offence in the legislation: a spill. That would provide prosecutors a broader ability to develop their case. It will put a greater onus on the transporter of dangerous goods or toxic wastes to ensure that that is done properly. Secondly, training should be enhanced. Right now the company has the responsibility for fill-

ing out the Alberta Public Safety Services certificate. I have a case I've referred to the minister of public works through the Minister of the Environment, where the employer just signed it. The courses weren't taken; checked off the courses that were supposed to have been taken that weren't taken. And we have seen another case in this Legislature where that has occurred.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Smoky River, followed by the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to add my congratulations to the minister. This comes with great difficulty, Mr. Minister. For a true Oilers fan, I hate to congratulate any Flames fan, but I will indulge myself tonight. I will wish you well and I will wish you continued success.

I have a concern, Mr. Minister, and I think I want to basically voice that concern. We've focused environment on one issue and one issue alone. We've listened for almost an hour tonight, and about 58 minutes of that was focused on the one issue, and that's the pulp mill. The entire environmental issue has become a pulp mill issue, and that to me is a very grave concern, because environment is not pulp mills. It seems to me that we have a tremendous opportunity with our forestry developments and we are doing our very best to handicap ourselves. And that's very unfortunate. The construction and development of this particular industry have to be done in a very careful and a very logical way. But there are trade-offs, just as there were in the development of the west. When we developed agriculture in western Canada, we traded off. Things were not the same. Progress came, and we accepted it. And we have to accept the development of our forestry industry as well. I find it very unfortunate that I hear a constant reference to the rain forest in Brazil. Indeed, what we're talking of here is entirely different; we're actually enhancing the opportunities that pulp mill developments will create.

I think one of the major items we very seldom address is that of human waste. It seems to me that if we're going to spend any time concerned about environment and environmental issues, we should be spending a lot more in terms of human waste and how we treat that and how we handle it. To my mind it has to be a far greater issue, and a nonproductive issue at that. We look at our sewers; the mineralization level of our liquid effluent is very high. I'm not sure if there is much that can be done with it, but there is very little mention made of it. In fact, I haven't heard any in this House, none at all. The baby diapers: I haven't heard a word mentioned of that, and yet that's one of the worst pollutants we have. Yet we go on and on and on, trying to kick ourselves down, trying to be nonproductive, trying to kill the very fruit we live off, and that's the development of industry and the development of the resources that will help take our poor people off the welfare lists. We talk in split tongues. We're concerned about the poor, but we don't allow the poor to have an opportunity. That's a concern to me, because we have poor in our constituency too and we have some opportunities that could be developing from these industries. But we seem to be focusing on the industry itself rather than the true issue of environment.

I have some concern in the area of water management, Mr. Minister. To my mind, I think we need more water resource management; I think we have to focus more in the water resource management. I find it strange that anyone would even suggest that we're overfocusing in that area; I find it totally in-

credible. In a day and age, in a world that is becoming water deficient, where water is increasingly more important, for anyone to suggest that we need less money spent on water resource management is totally incomprehensible.

The whole issue of environment is a very difficult issue, one we can't measure, one there are no guidelines for measurement for, and then one we can dwell on at great length. I think what we really have to do is come together and work together to try and resolve the issues of the environmental problems. And there are problems worldwide, for any of you that have traveled, particularly to the Orient, where at 2 o'clock in the day you can't see the sun; you're flying 30,000 feet in the air, there isn't a cloud in the sky, and you can't see the ground. The situation in eastern Canada where we have acid rain problems; for \$1.20 a tonne the additional cost of coal that is free of sulphur: we've set a price on what we want to spend on environment, in that case very specifically. The alternatives are there. We have to come together as a nation and not just try and do it alone as Alberta.

I hear talk about cumulative effects, and I'd like to know what is meant by that. Does that mean just Alberta? Does that mean all of Canada? Does that mean all of the ocean or all of a river? Just what is meant by that? Because really we're a world; we're not just Alberta. We're not the only ones that are polluting and the only ones that are creating problems. We have to deal with this issue on a lot broader scale than just in this House.

That's all I have to say now, Mr. Minister. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, I'm really quite pleased to see my Member of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Alberta in such an expansive mood this evening, because I have two concerns that arise in my own constituency that could use his beneficence and his help. Although these are really local issues, I do think they have provincewide implications.

The first has to do with an oil recycling plant, the Hub Oil plant, that is located on the east side of my constituency. It's been located there for some long period of time. In fact, it was there well in advance of any housing developments that encroached upon it. It was through the city planning department and the authority they have under the provincial government that housing was allowed to develop in close proximity to this plant. I might point out that this plant provides an invaluable environmental service. It probably recycles about 10 percent of the waste oil produced in this province on an annual basis. There's no one that would challenge that plant's right to exist no one that really takes exception to what the owners of that plant are doing; they're doing the best they can with an older plant. Nevertheless, there are some problems associated with that plant. The first is that it exudes odours at all times of day and night on an intermittent basis admittedly. The province did place an order on this plant to, in effect clean up its act, and I believe the plant complied with all the provincial regulations that were imposed upon it. Nevertheless, the plant still emits odours that are offensive to the residents in that residential area.

The plant is also the ugliest looking plant I've ever seen, and it's on one of the two major roads that bring people from the east into the city of Calgary. It doesn't have the traffic that the Trans-Canada does, but nevertheless a lot of people take the

shortcut through Chestermere Lake, as I'm sure the former mayor of the city of Calgary well knows. The plant could even be doing a better job of recycling waste oil. There's no reason why it couldn't be recycling 50 or 60 percent of the waste oil. And this is an important issue, because if that oil isn't recycled, it either gets into the storm sewer system and then winds up in the Bow River or it's dropped into back alleys and winds up in the underground water system of the province. So it does an incredible amount of environmental damage. There's also another possible problem with respect to that plant. Years ago the plant received oil from old transformers and capacitors, and as we all know, in years gone by that oil was laced with PCBs. There's never been a soil analysis done of that plant site, so we don't know what has spilled out of trucks and spilled out of old leaky tanks that are on that site and what's gone into the ground. So as a very minimum, I would like the minister to agree to at least conduct a soil analysis of that site and even conduct an examination of the tanks on that site to see if there are PCBs in any of the tanks on the property.

It's pretty clear from every point of view that the plant should be relocated. I've talked to the two aldermen who represent that part of the city. They've agreed that they would help to find an alternative site in the Foothills industrial area. The plant has no objection to moving there. I think if there is a case where the government should make a one-time grant to assist in some measure that would contribute immeasurably to an improvement of the environment and an improvement of the residential problems that exist in a large area of an urban city, this is one case. I would hope the Minister of the Environment would make this his concern as well.

A second issue that is of great concern to my constituents, and again, I think, affects the entire province, has to do with the irrigation canal that begins in the northeast part of my constituency. It leaves a weir at the Bow River there, and it flows basically along the west side of my constituency before it makes a sharp turn to the east and winds up in the Chestermere reservoir. This site is ideal for a park development. As a matter of fact, the Western Irrigation District is widening the canal at this very moment, and they've announced plans to put picnic benches on the east side of the canal.

Now, I think to understand the importance of this, you have to understand that Calgary in a way is really two cities. I'm not sure that the former mayor might agree with me in this, but I think we're both native Calgarians; we both have an appreciation and an understanding of the city of Calgary. Calgary seems to be divided on a line that runs roughly from north to south and separates the east side from the west side of the city. On the west side you have the wealthier homes, the wealthier residential districts. You also have more schools, more high schools. There's really only one public high school that services the basic east side of the city of Calgary, where there are more than a dozen such schools on the west side. There's no postsecondary educational facility on the east side of the city of Calgary. And when it comes to parks, which is our real concern here, and what we might do along the irrigation canal to change this situation, there's a park the Member for Calgary-Millican helped get off the ground in the very southern part of the east side of the city, Carburn Park. There's a park planned for the very northeast. But there's nothing that exists for about 100,000 people who live on the east side of the city between those two extremes. There's no major recreational park, nor is there a major athletic facility. So here is a real opportunity. The Dover com-

munity, which is on the east side of my constituency . . .

DR. WEST: Point of order. The estimates of Recreation and Parks will come up later in the session. I think the hon. member is addressing those estimates tonight rather than those of Environment.

MR. PASHAK: Quite to the contrary, Mr. Chairman. The land . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One moment, please. One moment. [interjections] Order please. Order. Now, does the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn wish to speak to the point of order?

MR. PASHAK: The point of order? The point of order, in fact, is that the land that is currently before us in question is land that is owned and controlled by the Western Irrigation District, which is part of the Department of the Environment.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Pardon me, hon. member. Order. Neither of the people on this alleged point of order has quoted any citation or reference. I think with the very mild admonishment that perhaps the speaker may address the estimates a little more exactly, please proceed.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you very much.

Well, the problem with the park is that the Department of the Environment is prepared and is putting money into developing the irrigation canal -- as a matter of fact, right at this point in time. There was a rather elaborate plan developed for the whole irrigation canal from the point where the water leaves the weir down to Chestermere Lake back in 1978. The province at that time, in co-operation with the city and in co-operation with an awful lot of community associations and hiking clubs and canoe clubs from the area, did develop a rather farsighted plan. But the city, as I understand it, refused to take up the Department of the Environment's offer to maintain a park once it was put into place, so nothing ever occurred. Now we have that opportunity presenting itself again, where the Department of the Environment is prepared to do some work along there, put in picnic benches, and it would tie nicely into a development that the city itself is proposing for the Dover community.

But there is a holdup, and it's this. The province is refusing to make a commitment unless the city will take over responsibility for maintaining that operation, and the city, on the other hand, is saying, "No, if we're going to take this over, we're going to need some ongoing commitment from the province in terms of help in maintaining this stretch of land and this park development." It seems to me it's ludicrous that we have a high-need situation, we have taxpayers that are really concerned about what happens there -- they don't care whether their tax dollars go to the city or the province, because the dollars come out of the same pocket in any event -- and here we have the city and the province haggling about who's going to maintain the park. All the residents really want is something to happen. They want that park development to take place. They need it, and they need it desperately.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Banff-Cochrane.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to begin my comments by congratulating the minister on his appointment to this very important portfolio. This minister has shown by both his actions and his words in this House in the past three weeks that he's a man committed to the environment and a man committed to the people of Alberta. The two are not separate and distinct; they must be taken together. This minister has the foresight to ensure that both the environment and the people of this province will be well served.

Mr. Chairman, the people of Banff-Cochrane constituency are particularly concerned with the issue of the environment and how we as responsible Albertans will ensure that that environment is available to our children and our grandchildren. Because of that, I'm particularly pleased to have been appointed the chairman of the caucus environment committee.

I've had the opportunity to sit in this House and listen to the comments that have been made by the members opposite -- criticisms from beginning to end, Mr. Chairman; very few constructive thoughts but merely destructive thoughts: criticism of the department, criticism of this minister without any basis in fact. It amazes me that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place would take the time to criticize the minister for taking time to make decisions. This minister has had the integrity and the honesty to indicate to the House that he doesn't know all the answers. He's prepared to take the time to keep developments waiting until such time as he has reviewed processes and has made decisions about reviews, further reviews, and amendments to those processes. That doesn't seem to be good enough for the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, and I just can't understand that, Mr. Chairman.

We have heard incessantly over the last three weeks that the environmental impact assessment process is currently being reviewed and will be amended if required. The questions keep coming, Mr. Chairman, and the answer is the same. It was the same on June 1, it was the same on June 2, and no doubt it will be the same on June 30. We have to keep listening to it because the members opposite refuse to hear the answer.

We continually hear from the members opposite that this government has no commitment to the environment. The budget increase proves that that commitment is there. The fact that we have created the first environment caucus committee proves that the commitment is there. The appointment of this minister to this important portfolio proves that that commitment is there. I'm concerned, Mr. Chairman, that we hear nothing from those across the floor except negative . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Doom and gloom.

MR. EVANS: . . . doom and gloom, if you wish, hon. member. We don't hear that Alberta's environmental standards are the kinds of standards that are being implemented in Europe and, in fact, Sweden, which is always referred to by the members opposite as being the Holy Grail. These environmental standards are being implemented in Europe from 1991 to the turn of the century. They are here in Alberta now, Mr. Chairman, and I'm proud to be part of a government that recognizes that need.

We've heard from the members opposite that the Rafferty-Alameda decision has caught the province of Alberta; now we're going to have the federal environment people overseeing our strategy in the province of Alberta. What nonsense, Mr. Chairman. Alberta is the only province that has had an ongoing agreement with the federal government, an agreement that

showed that the federal government had so much confidence in the province of Alberta and our standards that they were prepared to delegate the authority for review of processes to this province. To consider otherwise is just not being conscious of the facts, not caring to hear the facts, Mr. Chairman.

We've heard this minister indicate that not only are we concerned about the individual processes of the mills up in northern Alberta and environmental impact assessment on those processes, but also a review will be made of the cumulative process. Even that doesn't seem to satisfy the members opposite. If we are going to review the cumulative assessments, the cumulative effect of the pulp mills proposed for northern Alberta, we are going far and above the kinds of requirements in the other provinces in this dominion, and again, I'm proud to be part of a government that has that kind of foresight.

The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark has indicated, if I heard him correctly, that he favours only one type of review process regardless of the size of the project, the type of project, and yet in the same phrase he's talking about sustainable economic development. Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't see how you can have one review process for every type of development that could occur in this province and state that you are concerned about sustainable economic development. There are different types of developments, and we have to be flexible enough to recognize that some are more environmentally sensitive than others. This government has taken that step and is prepared to be the leader. We're not going to take a back seat in it.

We've also heard from the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark that this province is concerned about economics and, at best, secondly the environment. That is nonsense again, Mr. Chairman. This government has stated in the budget has stated through the minister throughout question period in these past three weeks, that the environment will not be compromised. I firmly believe that commitment is a true commitment. I would not feel comfortable being a part of this government if that commitment were not there. I'm pleased we have this forum, that we can make sure that commitment is carried out, and I'm confident it will be.

I'd like to conclude, Mr. Chairman, by asking a couple of questions. Firstly, I would like to hear some comments from the minister about when the appointment of a chairman of the Environment Council of Alberta will be likely. We've heard that the commitment is there. The people of Alberta do want to have a chairman of that committee. It's an important committee -- I think the department recognizes that -- and I'd like to hear when that appointment is going to be made.

[Mr. Schumacher in the Chair]

Secondly, I'd like to hear some comments from the minister regarding the environmental impact assessment review panel. This is another important step, an initiative by our government, to have experts and community members in areas affected, making presentations through the people of the areas affected and to the people of the rest of the province through to this government. I think it's an important process, and I'd like to hear comments from the minister as to implementation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to say very quickly in response to the comments made by my hon. colleague the Member for Banff-Cochrane that it's unfortunate he didn't hear some

of the positive, supportive comments that came from members opposite. He seems to have so quickly fallen into the mold of a typical Tory member opposite, never recognizing the encouragement and support that comes from the opposition benches for the occasional positive initiative of the government. I have on so frequent occasion heard members on this side give credit when credit's due, comment in a positive way on some of the initiatives of the government, but it's never acknowledged by the doom and gloomers on the government side who want to be negative and carp and name-call members of the opposition. It's unfortunate he'd use his 15 minutes to involve himself in shameless boosterism rather than debating the estimates for the minister, which is what we're here to do. I mean, he's anxious to hear our comments, and that's what we're here to do. So I'm going to get down to work and ask the minister some questions about his estimates.

I would like to comment about some changes that I think are positive and indicate some positive direction in the Department of the Environment. I note last year when the cabinet shuffle of, I believe, September was announced, the responsibility for dam building was taken away from the Department of the Environment and put into the department of public works, and I think that's a positive step. Although there's some considerable overlap between the jurisdiction of the Department of the Environment and the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and the Department of Agriculture when it comes to water resource projects and water management projects, irrigation, et cetera, et cetera, I think we have to take a serious look at moving the Department of the Environment further away from irrigation projects and water transmission projects. In some ways those are more properly the domain of the Department of Agriculture, and what would provide the basis for healthy debate in the Legislature and in the cabinet meetings and government caucus is a Minister of Agriculture who's there fighting on behalf of important irrigation projects and a Minister of the Environment who's there making sure the best interests of all Albertans are taken into consideration when those projects are debated.

So that's the sort of healthy debate I envision in the future, and I think moving the responsibility for dam building from the former Minister of the Environment to the current minister of public works . . . He's still got the dams under his thumb, but he's got lotteries now and he can maybe boost the funding for them. Anyway, I think it's a positive initiative. It frees the Department of the Environment from some of that responsibility, and they're there hopefully to advocate on behalf of the environment to make sure the best interests of Albertans are protected.

I'd like to thank the minister for his comments on the Environmental Research Centre in Vegreville. It is indeed a facility we can all be proud of. I think it's safe to say it's a jewel in the crown of the Alberta government. That facility is unique in North America. Certainly it's had a significant impact on the Vegreville community, brought in a large number of dedicated, committed professional people and their families, who have taken a very active part in the community. It's provided employment for people in the smaller communities around. So it's had an enormous positive impact on the community. As the centre itself is a facility that's perhaps without peer, without equal, in North America, the opportunity for doing some top-rate, first-class, world-class research is there I think.

I have some concerns that the full potential of the centre has not been realized, and I'm encouraged to see that the current minister is taking an interest in the centre, that he's been out to

visit the centre, and I would do everything I possibly can to encourage him to maintain that interest in the work that's being done out in Vegreville. Let the people out there know that he's behind them, he supports what they're doing, and he's going to put a renewed emphasis on the work that's being done out at the environment centre. Because we need to make that commitment not just in terms of dollars but in terms of policy support and just a kind of enthusiastic support from within the Department of the Environment so a clear signal is sent to the many scientists that work at that facility that the government's going to stand behind its commitment, that there is indeed a future for the people who want to make a commitment to that facility. I look forward to perhaps talking about this very topic with the minister in meetings in the future.

I'd like to comment on the Help End Landfill Pollution program that's operated through the minister's department. This program, as members know, was established to identify potential hazardous waste dump sites throughout the province that had been abandoned and more or less forgotten about at a time when they weren't a major part of people's awareness. There were, I think, hundreds of sites identified throughout the province and some investigation is going on, and I think that's a positive thing.

The specific site of interest to me and my constituents is the abandoned chemical plant site, the old Two Hills site operated at one time by Chemcell and, I think, Celanese, right along the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. Members here tonight that were here a year ago will remember that the people in the hamlet of Duvernay discovered their water was no longer fit for consumption and, in fact, not fit for use because of contamination. The then Minister of the Environment launched an immediate investigation and I think got some answers in short order. The water supply of the people in the hamlet of Duvernay had been jeopardized by the operations of that chemical plant. There was some concern that there was infiltration from some abandoned dump sites within the chemical plant grounds, but it's believed the contamination was caused by something that was done when the chemical plant was abandoned. The enormous salt caverns underneath the site where the salt brine was extracted for the manufacture of calcium chloride and caustic soda, et cetera, et cetera, were pressurized by the operators of the facility, I think in hopes that if the caverns held pressure, sometime in the future they could be used for storage of liquefied natural gas or propane or whatever. I think over time the pressure in there caused the cavern to rupture somewhat, and there has been substantial infiltration of salt-laden underground water with the groundwater. Thus the water supply is rendered unfit for human consumption.

The Minister of Transportation and Utilities, through some programs in his department, made a very quick response and allocated, I think, some \$278,000 to a project that would provide a safe and reliable supply of water to the hamlet of Duvernay. The project didn't go ahead right away, though, because they were short about \$32,000 in total funding. I made representations on behalf of the community to the former Minister of the Environment, Dr. Reid, and to his credit, although he explained there weren't any particular programs through which he could deliver \$32,000 for the establishment of a water system, we talked about it a little more and I suggested he may want to look at expanding the mandate of the Help End Landfill Pollution program. If this program's going to identify sites around the province and target the cleanup of these sites and maybe try

and bill the persons responsible, there's going to be an increasing number of cases where water supplies are jeopardized by these sites that are identified, and perhaps there'd be some role for the Department of the Environment to play in terms of helping people identify and develop a safe source of water. To his credit Dr. Reid came forward and made a commitment of \$32,000 and some change to fund the balance of that program, and the people in Duvernay and the county of Two Hills are most appreciative of that initiative by the Department of the Environment. There is a problem, however, and I believe it's been brought to the minister's attention by the county: that when the tender was finally issued on the project, the costs came in substantially higher than what the engineers had predicted. The project again is in jeopardy, I guess, unless there can be some additional funds committed through the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities and the Minister of the Environment. I know he's taken a serious look at that, and I just wanted to bring that to his attention.

Additionally, in terms of the Help End Landfill Pollution program people have asked me what other studies have been done on this Two Hills chemical plant site. There were three dumps, I believe, that had been identified, as well as some surface contamination from things that were just dumped there. I wonder if the minister's department has had any opportunity to complete an inventory or analysis of what's there and what's posing a potential problem or, in addition to that, what needs to be done in order to assure everyone that that plant site is safe. That's important not just for the general concerns of the residents in the area regarding their own safety, but we in the district, especially the county of Two Hills and the town of Two Hills, would like to see that site made use of in the future, attract some business to the area, develop the site, and provide some employment in the area. So if the minister has any information that he's able to share with me about the status of that report, I'd sure be interested in hearing it.

I'd like to ask the minister a question about the reclamation programs that are operated through his department. I think I can say with some assurance that the program is much appreciated by communities that are reclaiming landfill sites, reservoir sites. The town of Vegreville, for example, is getting a lot of help from the Department of the Environment, and appreciates it very much, to reclaim and make use of their old water reservoir. It's no longer useful to them in that regard because there's a water pipeline coming from the North Saskatchewan River out of Edmonton. The Vegreville water corridor or northeast water corridor -- I'm not sure of the exact name. Anyway, the Department of the Environment is helping them to clean up that site, and it's being developed into a beautiful fish pond and recreation area. The Department of the Environment is involved in that, but I would like to ask the minister if the department ever gets involved in reclamation projects on land that is privately owned. If an individual were to present a case to the department asking for some help to reclaim some land that had some previous industrial use unrelated to the landowner, would there be some opportunity for funding through the Department of the Environment?

Another issue I'd like to raise with the Minister of the Environment -- and I do so because I think there's an opportunity, he being some fresh new blood in the government caucus and especially at the cabinet table -- concerns the potential development of an ethanol industry in Alberta. I think it's an issue that should be of interest to the Minister of Agriculture because of its

potential to create value-added processing for the agricultural industry, to provide a stable domestic market for grain, et cetera. But it's something that should also be of interest to the Minister of the Environment, and I'd like to make a few suggestions to him.

Ethanol, as he knows, is a renewable source of energy, which is certainly a trend that is to come. Ethanol, I think, is an idea whose time has come. We need to be moving towards renewable sources of energy so that we can secure our energy supply not just in the short term but also in the long term. So ethanol has benefits that way. But there's been a substantial amount of work done in the last few years about the benefits of grain-based alcohol fuel in terms of air pollution. The most obvious one that members will be aware of is that ethanol is a replacement for lead in gasoline, as we move towards the complete removal of lead from gasoline. And the sooner we do it the better, hon. members, because it is a very serious pollutant, much more harmful than previously understood, especially in terms of children and the normal healthy development of children. So we've got to move away from lead additives in fuel. Ethanol, being a substantial octane booster in gasoline, is the ideal replacement for lead. Admittedly it causes some minor difficulties in terms of the refining industry, blending ethanol with gasoline, but it's done successfully around the world. I would hope that this government wouldn't be so closely tied to the oil industry that they can't look beyond their blinders and see the benefits of ethanol as a replacement for lead in gasoline.

Additionally, there's been a lot of work that the minister will be aware of, I think, about the impact of the greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is a concern of scientists around the world. There is some concern that the atmospheric burden or load of carbon dioxide is increasing and that this is the cause of some global warming that has some very dire consequences should it continue unabated, both in terms of agriculture -- something that would turn a good part of the prairies into a veritable dustbowl year after year -- but also for civilization generally. If we get some melting of the polar icecap, for example, the major population centres in the world that border the major oceans are jeopardized. If there is, indeed, a discernible greenhouse effect, it's a concern to all of us.

One way that we can clearly move to reduce the buildup of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is by advocating the use of ethanol in fuel. Ten percent ethanol blend fuel, for example, would reduce in part the carbon dioxide that we're adding to the environment by burning these fossil fuels. Grain when you grow it takes carbon out of the atmosphere, and when you burn the ethanol, it adds it back. So it recycles atmospheric carbon without adding to the load. I'm sure members will want to think about that and seriously consider the overall environmental benefits of ethanol, an industry that really offers a lot to Alberta. I'm hoping that with the new Minister of the Environment, someone who brings a fresh new approach, perhaps we can find an advocate in that oil industry government who's prepared to stand up and say, "We're going to fight for ethanol because it makes sense agriculturally, because it makes sense economically, and because it makes sense environmentally," and he's going to be the advocate. I look forward to working with him in that regard. Go at 'em, hon. minister.

MR. DAY: Just some quick comments in terms of an overview. I think it needs to be applied. I won't get into the actual estimates themselves because nobody else has tonight, so I'll stick

with the pattern that's been set.

MRS. OSTERMAN: The minister did.

MR. DAY: Other than the minister, who did it in very fine fashion, I might say.

There are two extremes in the whole discussion on environmental issues. The one extreme is the person, individual, or group, who is sometimes rudely referred to as the tree hugger, that person who says: "All development is bad. We shouldn't have anything. We should all live out in the bush in little lean-tos and not develop anything." Then there's the other extreme, which is the developer on the bulldozer who would just as soon bulldoze everything in sight, massacre it all, pave the whole world, and set up an amusement park. So there are those two extremes. But somewhere in the middle, on that middle ground, there's room for discussion.

I think we've got to be willing to look at a concept or two used, let's say, by the extreme environmentalist side, if I can use that. That is this question -- you apply this thinking to an Oldman dam or to any development at all. That's this thinking that Mother Nature knows best. Mother knows best, as it were. That everything that happens in nature is best and, therefore, man should not try and improve on it at all. If we take that kind of thinking, then you would applaud Mother Nature for the tornado that wreaked havoc upon Edmonton. You would applaud Mother Nature for the earthquake that killed thousands in Mexico City. You would applaud Mother Nature for the Hope-Princeton slide, as we look in our past, that killed all kinds of people. And you wouldn't come into Edmonton after the tornado and clean up and improve it at all, because Mother Nature did it. I think there's an extreme of thought that has to be looked at there, and it begs the question . . .

MRS. OSTERMAN: Father Nature.

MR. DAY: Father Nature, Person Nature. Okay, Person Nature, so we don't get sexist.

But it begs the question. The question is this, and I suggest this to the minister as he considers the projects before him: can man in fact improve in certain situations on what nature has allowed for up to that point in time? Can man, in fact, improve on something?

AN HON. MEMBER: What about women?

MR. DAY: I'm using that in a generic sense, and I would have thought that people had the maturity not to be so sensitively jarred by that.

I would recommend for the members opposite or anybody else reading *Hansard* -- of course, it's the number one best-seller across the province, I know -- an editorial by Jack Gonnar in the *Pincher Creek Echo* of June 13, 1989. He addresses this very subject in a very commonsense kind of way. He remarks on the festival or the music thing with the Tysons that was held down there and talks about how they sang 'about the shortage of wild rivers in Canada and the need to preserve the Oldman in its wild river state but points out very clearly that if you've been to the Oldman anytime after June 25 or certainly into August, there's no wild river. There's a little trickle there that you can, in some places, walk across with your shoes on and not get your shoelaces wet. The fact is that 80 percent of the people of Al-

berta live where 20 percent of the water is. Water management, contrary to what the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark said, is crucial to conservation. Building a dam can be a discussion about conservation and improving on what Mother Nature apparently had put in place.

Some people say that the dam's going to destroy fish habitat, but you look at the Bow River, which was dammed at several points at least half a century ago. That river is rated by wildlife magazines around the world as the number one trout stream in North America. The fish habitat improved after man intervened. Now, if you ever in the summertime cross from Fort Macleod to Hanna, you'll cross the Oldman, the Bow, and the Red Deer rivers. The Bow and the Red Deer rivers, where dams and water management systems have been placed, are in a full and healthy flow because the water that is saved in the reservoirs from the spring runoff can be released when it's needed to control the flow. On the other side, the Oldman is, as this article quotes, "a pathetic trickle by comparison": an example of what intervention by man can do to improve a situation, improve conservation of soil and species and agriculture, and improve the quality of life for the people living there.

If the line of thinking of the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place were accepted down through history, we would not have the Panama canal today; we certainly would not have a Rogers Pass. If this member opposite and some of these others had been around when the Rogers Pass was being explored, they would have said: "What? Explosions in the Rockies, upsetting all those beetles and bugs and scaring the sheep and doing these other things?" We wouldn't be able to drive to B.C., to Lotusland, anymore: or them to us. You know, the extremes of thinking.

Mr. Chairman, I say to my colleagues here to encourage us to get the political motivation out of the environmental discussion, to be human beings who can think clearly and logically and look at the reality that man really can, in some situations, improve on what Mother Nature has already put there. I leave those thoughts for the minister.

Thank you, sir.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to try something quite revolutionary. I wonder if the minister would agree to have a series of questions put to him in sequence and have the answers given by him and then allow me to proceed to the next question. Would you agree to do that, sir? No, don't look to the Chairman. Would you just agree to do it, Mr. Minister? Are you able to provide that information. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. It's up to the person who wants to intervene to intervene in his way. I think that you're just going to have to take your chances.

MR. DECORE: Well, does that mean the minister will stand up and answer the question? Will you answer the questions in sequence?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hon. member will have to take his chances on that too, because there's no obligation on anybody to answer any questions here.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Chairman, the member two to the right of the hon. minister gave us a long speech the other day about how forthcoming the government was in giving information. I hope

this is true; I hope this process allows that to be seen.

I'd like to pose these following questions to the minister. In vote 2, Mr. Minister, the issue with respect to the recycling of solid waste in Alberta: \$1,390,209 has been allocated for that. Are you prepared, Mr. Minister, and will you give us the breakdown of how these moneys are allocated? Who gets what? One of the things you took pride in telling us about was the fact that Edmonton is very much involved in a recycling program, and you're quite correct. I think it's a model now for Alberta. How much has the government, how much has your ministry provided for that recycling program before this budget, and how much do you intend to give, to grant to the city of Edmonton in its recycling program forthcoming? Are you involved in the new products, the new materials that are going to be recycled other than glass and newsprint and tin, which are now being recycled? Mr. Minister, I'd like you to answer and tell us what municipalities get what money in terms of that \$1,390,209.

I would like your answer, sir, on the policy that exists in your ministry as it applies to all towns and communities in Alberta. Is there a policy, or is there a policy in the development stage that says that communities over a certain number will have the recycling of materials in their respective communities? If there is such a policy, when will that policy be announced by you?

With respect to the recycling that is allocated \$1,390,209, could you give us some idea as to how we compare with other provinces? In terms of the comparison to Quebec, I know that Quebec allocates some \$100 million to municipalities by way of grants to help them set up their recycling programs. How do we compare with provinces other than that one? Because that's the only one that I'm aware of.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder what products the minister can advise this Assembly of that are now being recycled in the province of Alberta. I've spoken about the city of Edmonton, where recycling of tin, newsprint, and glass is taking place. What other products, what other materials are being recycled, and what assistance are you giving municipalities to bring other materials into a recycling mode?

With respect to vote 2, item 2.2.3, the Environmental Impact Assessment Review . . .

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I cite *Beauchesne* 953:

The whole management of a department may be discussed in a general way when the committee is considering the first item of the Estimates of that department, which reads as follows: "Vote 1 -- Administration"; but the discussion must not be extended to any particular item mentioned in the Estimates of that department.

It seems that at this point we're getting into details vote by vote, and we're still just discussing the general administration under vote 1 of the Minister's Office. So I think the questions are now getting into a later stage in terms of the discussion of estimates and not following according to *Beauchesne* 953.

MR. MITCHELL: It is very clear that the leader of the Liberal Party is perhaps being more precise in his questions about these estimates than any other speaker who has preceded him tonight, and if anybody is doing a responsible job in questioning the minister, it is certainly the leader of the Liberal Party at this time. I think that this point by the member is merely so much an indication of the preciseness and the rigour of this questioning

that he would have to jump in and assist his minister. It's just an unnecessary delay, and I would ask that you allow the member to proceed.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm here to have the minister explain to us how he intends to spend and why he intends to spend taxpayers' money in a certain way. I'm not here to give a speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, I don't think you have to argue this point of order. If you'll just carry on with your questioning, we'll get through these estimates.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Chairman, I would like the minister to look at 2.2.3, in vote 2, the Environmental Impact Assessment Review provision. I'd like to know specifically how he's going to allocate these moneys. Even more particularly, Mr. Minister, how are you going to allocate them as to the various projects that are now in the mill, as it were? How much is going to be allocated to the Athabasca-Lac La Biche project? How much to this project, how much to that project? I'd like you to break those down even further in terms of how much is going to be allocated to intervenors, how much is going to information processing, or whatever. I want a very specific allocation of those moneys.

MR. KLEIN: In the next four minutes?

MR. DECORE: Well, I'm relying on you, Mr. Minister, to follow the lead your colleague two to the right has talked about in coming forward with information.

The last request I have, Mr. Chairman, is 2.2.5, Community Affairs. You've made much of the fact that you are a PR individual, and I agree with that: you are a PR individual. I hope we can see action instead of PR. I would like you to break down, sir, the \$459,958 allocation. Who's going to get this money? Is this money that you're going to be using for PR? Is it money that the environmental impact process will be using? How does this money get used up?

Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to have the minister answer these questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of the Environment

MR. KLEIN: Well, thank you very much. To answer, as briefly as possible in the very short time remaining, the questions posed to me by the leader of the Liberal Party, I would be glad to take them under notice, and he'll get an answer just as detailed and just as straightforward as his questions were. Just be patient.

MR. DECORE: Why can't you answer them now?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I've only got about three and a half minutes, and I think I owe the courtesy, Mr. Chairman, of answering the questions of those people who first posed the questions, not the latter-day leader of the Liberal Party, who gets up at the last moment to pose a lot of detailed questions, and he knows darn well I don't have the detailed answers at this particular point. He ought to have the courtesy of giving me notice, Mr. Chairman, but he's never been noted for his courtesy, under any circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place made quite a bit relative to . . . [interjection]

MR. FOX: Point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I have a point of order.

MR. FOX: Perhaps the former mayor of St. Albert might intervene in this dispute between the former mayor of Calgary and the former mayor of Edmonton. I'm sure you can find it in there some place.

MR. KLEIN: The former mayor of Edmonton will get his answers in as much detail as the questions were asked.

MR. DECORE: When?

MR. KLEIN: Soon. I think.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to address, first of all, the comments of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, who took exception to my comment that the buzzword nowadays is sustainable economic development, perhaps in the same way as we now refer to glasnost, bringing people together, and that has become a common word. Sustainable economic development will become a common phrase, and I hope that it becomes a common phrase. I hope that people will understand what sustainable economic development is: economic development that is sustained by environmental protection. And if I used the word "buzzword," I didn't mean it to be frivolous. I meant it to be something that should be on everyone's mind: a common word, a word or phrase that will be used constantly and consistently.

To try and answer some of the questions that have been raised -- and I'll try to do it very quickly -- I would like to first of all introduce in a more formal way the first-ever chairman of an environmental caucus committee, the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane. I think that is a step in the right direction, Mr. Chairman, because for the first time in a long time we will have a caucus meeting, for the first time we will have a caucus committee to hear delegations who have concerns about many aspects of the environment, including all the questions that were raised this evening.

With reference to the pulp mill question -- God knows, we've heard about pulp mills in this House. We've heard about pulp mills and the environmental assessment process to determine whether the standards for those pulp mills are strong enough. I think we have moved a long way in terms of putting in place an environmental impact assessment that will serve us well and perhaps will create a model for the rest of this country, relative to non energy related projects. But I have to think of another publication, in that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place referred to a document. I don't have the document in front of me, but it's interesting reading too. It's called the 1220 days of Davey Barrett. The hon. member should know Davey Barrett; I think he worked for him at one time. It talks about that government's commitment to the cleaning up of pulp mills in the province of British Columbia, but it also alludes to the absolute lack of action by that particular government. [interjection] *The 1200 Days* . . . I'm sorry; I stand corrected. It's good reading, too, hon. member.

MR. McINNIS: If you like fiction, it is.

MR. KLEIN: It's very good reading, and it demonstrates really how not to address the question of pulp mills. How not to address the question of pulp mills.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place talked about bleached kraft mills and what's happening relative to technology that surrounds bleached kraft mills. We've stated time and time again it will be leading edge technology; it will be whatever is the best in the world at that particular time. And the hon. member, along with the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, will be invited to participate with me soon enough -- again soon; be patient -- with respect to Daishowa. Hopefully, it will be a good announcement, because we're working with that company in a co-operative way to make sure that whatever is put in will be, in fact, leading edge technology and the best in the world.

With respect to bleached kraft mills, I think there's something that should be known. People say, "Use the CTMP, the chemithermomechanical pulp process, to create all paper." Well, you can't create all paper. I note with great interest that the great magazines of the world -- the *National Geographic* magazine talks about matters of ecology and the environment. What kind of paper do they use? They use bleached kraft paper, because it's paper that stands up. They want people to keep those books for a long, long time. We see the great environmental book in Canada, *Equinox*. It's produced on bleached kraft paper. Right? Yet it talks about the hazards and the dangers of bleached kraft mills.

We see all the law books that talk about environmental law, and I had this argument with a lawyer. I said: "Well, why don't you throw them all away? Because they're produced through the bleached kraft process." They're produced that way because the bleached kraft process creates a product that lasts a long, long time. The secret is to create a process whereby the dioxins and the furans and the other toxics are less of a danger to the public and the public good. That's what we have tried to do by imposing world standards and leading edge technology and by putting into place an environmental impact assessment process to prove those standards.

Tell the *National Geographics* of the world and tell the *Equinoxes* of the world, and tell all the lawyers of the world to get rid of their law books and their fine books and their fine pieces of paper and so on. Then maybe you will have completely eliminated a market for bleach kraft pulp and paper.

There's been some comment relative to the Environment Council of Alberta, the ECA. Well, we have a selection committee in place. That selection committee will be starting its work within the next week or so to advertise for a new executive director of the Environment Council of Alberta. Once the new executive director is in place, he'll have a chance to assess the operations of that particular agency, and hopefully we can get it rejuvenated and back to work and doing some meaningful work in this community. I agree with the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark: perhaps it can serve as a vehicle for the roundtable on the environment. I agree with the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, who says that the roundtable on the environment should set the policy, should set the agenda. Perhaps the ECA could be the agency that conducts the public hearings, that gathers the input from the public to put that agenda into place.

I don't agree with the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark's comments that relative to the environmental impact assessment process there should be a panel of experts. That's not the way it works in this country. You know, some-

times a jury of just ordinary people is convened to adjudicate the most complicated matters in society, matters of life and death. In most cases these issues come down to one thing: common sense, what's right and what's wrong. Ordinary people through the course of history have been able to decide that better than anyone else, and that's why I think ordinary people who are going to be affected directly should be key members of any review panel that is set up to assess the environmental worthiness of any particular project.

You know, it's been said that if you take out water management, I probably wouldn't have the kind of budget or the kind of estimate that has been presented here today. Well, I guess if you take out water and give me forestry, it would be a wash. However, I don't mind having water management in the estimates, because it indeed is an environmental matter. My department doesn't build the dams; that's the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services. But we do operate the dams after they're built, and we make sure that those dams are environmentally pleasing. We do the landscaping around the headworks; we do the landscaping around the irrigation canals. We participate in the enhancement of the fisheries and other environmental matters with respect to the dams after they are built. We make sure that the headworks and the canals and the delivery systems are operated in such a way as to sustain economic agricultural development in an environmentally safe way. That's what we do, and that's why those water management projects are under the Department of the Environment.

The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark talked about transportable toxic waste technology. Well, if he'd been perhaps listening and paying attention, he would have found out that this government approved some two weeks ago, on behalf of the federal minister, a program at Swan Hills to test transportable toxic waste technology. They came to Alberta to test that technology because we have the only facility in place, the only place where it could be tested.

The question was raised relative to polluted sites, and I think it was the hon. Member for Vegreville. There is a program being worked on now in concert with other ministers of the environment. This is a protocol to look at polluted sites throughout the country, whereby a fund of some \$250 million would be established, 60 percent to be funded by the provinces and 40 percent by the federal government. Very basically, the mechanics of that fund have not yet been put in place. We're working on it right now. But it is to address precisely the kind of question you raise, how we get at those heavily polluted sites, espe-

cially those sites that have some dangerous chemicals and other materials on them and in them.

I can't get through all these questions. With respect to the environmental impact assessment review panel, I think that I've answered that relative to the question that was presented by the Member for Banff-Cochrane.

With respect to the Two Hills situation, the chemical plant, I would be glad to forward the most updated report. I have it right here. It's about four pages long, if you want me to read it I'll be glad to send that report to you tomorrow. I don't know if I can get as quickly the answers to the questions posed by the hon. leader of Liberal Party in that they're somewhat more detailed.

So, Mr. Chairman, I see that time has expired. I mean, I could go on and on and on. I have in front of me something like 69 different programs that I could talk about, you know, at length, but I'm sure that we've all heard enough. If there are any other questions from any members, I would be glad to take them under notice and answer them in full, honest, complete detail.

Thank you.

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

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

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard the motion of the hon. Member for Ponoka-Rimbey, all those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no. Carried.

[At 10:41 p.m. the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]

