

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Thursday, May 24, 1990 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 90/05/24

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

### Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, we confidently ask for Your strength and encouragement in our service of You through our service of others.

We ask for Your gift of wisdom to guide us in making good laws and good decisions for the present and the future of Alberta.

Amen.

### head: Introduction of Visitors

MR. HORSMAN: It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly His Excellency Jean-François de Liedekerke, ambassador of Belgium, Countess Elizabeth de Liedekerke, and Bill Henning, the honorary consul of Belgium, who are seated in your gallery. His Excellency is on his farewell visit. Albertans have appreciated his efforts made in developing closer ties between Alberta and Belgium, in particular with regard to technological co-operation. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

### head: Introduction of Special Guests

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Calgary-West, the Minister of Labour, I'm very pleased to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 82 students, parents, and teachers from A.E. Cross school in Calgary. They're visiting us today. The teachers are Mrs. Kacsmar, Mr. Eady, Mrs. Arbuckle, Miss Hughes, Mr. Mailandt, and the parents are Mrs. McAmmond, Mrs. Buchanan, and Mrs. Kendrick. They're in both galleries, and I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through to members of the Assembly three executive members from the Feeders Association of Alberta. Present in the members' gallery are Mr. Bob O'Brien from Barrhead, Alberta, who serves as president; Mr. Allan Fraser, vice-president, from Botha, Alberta; and Vernon Batke, director, from Bonnyville, Alberta. I'd ask that they stand and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, as our Premier is in Ottawa on some very important discussions about the future of our country, I have the honour of making a representation and introduction on his behalf today. It's a group of students from the Gus Wetter school. There are 24 of them sitting in the members' gallery with their teacher Wendy Dunkle and parents David Holloway, Sandra Perreault, Arlene Goring and their bus driver Walter Turnbull. I'd like them to know that the Premier sends his special regards. I would like them to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Lacombe, followed by Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Legislature 25 members of the Mount Elizabeth secondary school band all the way from Kitimat, B.C. They're accompanied by teacher Albert Townsend, parents Louise West, Carolyn O'Neill, and also Chris Engen. Mr. Speaker, they played yesterday at the provincial music festival in Red Deer, are presently at the University of Alberta, and will do some training there for the balance of the week. So we send a welcome to them. They're seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly nine students from Cardinal Léger junior high school, a school in my constituency, and their teacher Mr. Bartoshewski. These nine students are the executive members of the students' union of Cardinal Léger. I would ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by Red Deer-North.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly two participants under the Quebec/Alberta exchange program through the department of career development, who are with us: Nathalie Pion and Julie Carrier. They're in the public gallery, I believe, and I'd ask them to rise and be welcomed by the House.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you four representatives of a group of seniors I met with just two nights ago in Red Deer, discussing Meech Lake and other things. They're here in the Assembly today to see democracy at work in Alberta. They are Richard and Muriel Schmalz, Lora and Lyle Preston, representing that particular group. I'd ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

### head: Oral Question Period

### Environmental Round Table

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of the Environment. The Environment minister is at it again, Mr. Speaker. He's just bound and determined to give away the store when it comes to Alberta's environment. I want you to figure this one out. The government announces that it's going to put together a high-powered group of advisers on the environment and the economy of Alberta. Okay; but it's probably nothing more than a public relations exercise, knowing this government's record on the environment. But, Mr. Speaker, hope springs eternal. It may have also had the potential to make a viable contribution to policy-making in the province, and it's painfully obvious that this government needs some help. But the announcement yesterday proves that this government is completely out to lunch when it comes to dealing with the environment. My question to the minister is this: can the Minister of the Environment explain why only one out of the 22 people on the advisory board is an environmental activist?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, indeed all 25 members of the Round Table on Environment and Economy are environmentalists. They have an appreciation for clean water, clean air, and clean land. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? They aren't politically motivated, like these people over there.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the buffoon act is wearing thin. Albertans want some decent environmental laws.

If I go through these people, at least eight of them represent the corporate sector – eight of them – one the environmental group. What type of fairness is that? I want to say, then, to give the Minister of the Environment one more chance – there's still time to make some changes – will the Minister of the Environment admit that this is a farce and make sure that at least two more environmentalists are added to this group?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the only buffoon in this Assembly has just spoken.

Again, Mr. Speaker, all the people on the environmental round table are environmentalists: citizens who are concerned, deeply and sincerely concerned, about the environment.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we know at least two that aren't: the two ministers in this government. Their record speaks for itself. But some advocate; Albertans are sick and tired of having to badger this minister into doing his job. The one environmentalist on the board has to call a press conference to try to get some action. That's how fair he thinks it is. My question to the minister: doesn't the Environment minister see something wrong with appointing one environmentalist? Does he honestly believe that this is right, just appointing one environmentalist to this advisory group, or is this just another case of knuckling under to the Neanderthals in the cabinet?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, like yesterday I'm going to tell the hon. member a story. I'm going to tell him a story about Rosemary Brown. Rosemary Brown has been appointed to the Round Table on Environment and Economy. She's worked closely with industry and environmental groups in the proposed development of the Caroline gas field. I'm going to tell him about Del Harbourne. She was a member of the North Peace Foundation for 17 years. David Simpson operates Timbermountain Packtrain and is a member of several wildlife foundations. Sherrold Moore is the first corporate vice-president of the environment for a major oil company. Wanda Prather has taught in Alberta's public schools for 18 years and has specialized in environmental studies. Judy Weninger is chairman of the Medicine Hat culture and recreation board and has been very, very active in various naturalist activities in that particular city. Doug Cattran has a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering and is a well-known environmentalist in the city of Calgary. Robin C. Mayor was instrumental in successfully instituting a comprehensive recycling program at the Alberta College of Art. Stan Wilson has been involved in beef cattle . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yeah. About the press release: we're all capable of reading. The point the minister admits is that these environmentalists are advocates. None of these people you mentioned are, Mr. Speaker, other than the one.

My second question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Deputy Premier. I'm sure that the Deputy Premier . . .

MR. KLEIN: Let me finish.

MR. MARTIN: I don't like picking on the defenceless, Minister of the Environment.

### Labour Legislation

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier, I'm sure, along with all other people will be tempted to breathe a huge sigh of relief now that the social workers and the correctional workers are back at the negotiating table and back to work. However, it remains to be seen what lessons the minister and the government have learned as a result of these strikes. Every observer of these two disputes, except the government and, the ministers involved, has pointed to the regressive, backward labour laws that force public employees to use so-called illegal means to back up their demands. The history is clear, Mr. Speaker. In 1977 Bill 41 took away the rights of public employees; the guards struck in 1980. In 1983 Bill 44 took away the nurses' right; they struck, anyhow, after that, and of course the latest. Now, my question to the Deputy Premier: will the government now, recognizing the folly of their ways, move to restore full collective bargaining rights to the people affected in the Public Service Employee Relations Act and the Labour Relations Act?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, as is usual, is wrong. The public sector employed by the people of Alberta through the government have never had the right to strike in this province. That's a fact, and that was improved upon, obviously, in the legislation which was brought forward in 1977, at which time a compulsory arbitration procedure was introduced and made very clear that compulsory arbitration would be binding on both sides to any labour negotiation or dispute which ensued from it within this province. That collective bargaining process has worked effectively over the years and, in fact, is working well now in regard to the negotiations under way between the public service administration and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. Several settlements have been achieved. The master agreement has been signed. Two groups, unfortunately, decided to take illegal action. That's regrettable, but nonetheless the procedure has worked in this province. It is not the intention of the government to change those laws when they have, in fact, worked effectively.

I know what the Leader of the Opposition and the NDP want. They want to place the right to strike in the hands of public servants. But the fact of the matter is that public servants are relied upon by the people of this province to provide services throughout this province, and it is not the intention of the government to introduce the right to strike, which, I repeat, has never been the case . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
Supplementary.

MR. MARTIN: It was the case with the nurses, Mr. Speaker. You know full well; you were here in '83, when we took that right away.

Mr. Speaker, surely this minister, after what's happened in this province – and I went through a history of it – can't cling to the

outdated theory that these laws work. You can't take people's rights away and not get them to react, and that should be proven to this government right now. My question to the Deputy Premier is simply this. The laws are not fair; everybody recognizes they're not working. Why isn't that enough for this government to move towards some fairness in the labour laws?

MR. HORSMAN: The labour laws with respect to the public service and the government of Alberta are fair. There is a fair collective bargaining process which has worked effectively over the years. There have been very few disturbances and illegal strikes undertaken. I don't know who the Leader of the Opposition has been talking to when he says that every . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Dave Werlin.

MR. HORSMAN: Dave Werlin, yes. That's his big . . .

MR. SIGURDSON: The United Nations.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. This is not a shouting match back and forth. If other members want into question period, stick up your hand. In the meantime, let's listen to the answers, please, as well as the questions.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, just to continue with my . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Perhaps now we can continue. Is that okay? Thanks a bunch.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, if I can be allowed to continue. The fact of the matter is that, as I've indicated, there has never been the right to strike in the public service in this province. Never. I don't know who the hon. Leader of the Opposition has been talking to when he says that every person he's talked to, every commentator and so on, has said that we have unfair and regressive laws. The people I've spoken to, quite the contrary, have said that they want the laws to work, and that is in fact what has taken place. I regret that people took illegal action. The fact of the matter is that suitable discussions are now under way, and I'm sure the record will show in the end that a suitable collective bargaining result will appertain to this particular dispute. In the event that it does not, a compulsory arbitration procedure which is binding on both sides, including the government, will be the ultimate decider in this particular case.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the arbitration process is rigged, and the minister knows it. I know who he's talking to if he thinks these laws are fair: Peter Pocklington. We were talking about the ILO from the United Nations, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. They're the ones that said these laws are wrong. Both parties in a labour dispute have to have some clout, and that's not the case now.

My question to the minister: does the minister realize that by refusing to rewrite labour laws and refusing public employees and health care workers basic labour rights, this government is virtually ensuring and guaranteeing that there will be more illegal strikes in the future?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, certainly I know that the New Democratic Party has encouraged illegal strike action.

MS BARRETT: A point of order.

MR. HORSMAN: They have done so on the steps of this Legislature within recent days. And I categorically deny the accusation made by the Leader of the Opposition that I have spoken to one Peter Pocklington. That is an absolute, total falsehood. I can assure the hon. Leader of the Opposition that he'd better get his facts straight before he comes into this Assembly and starts making accusations. That is entirely false, Mr. Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition should be ashamed of making entirely false statements to this Assembly. [interjections] Well, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway chatters away in the back like a bird on a rail, and that's obviously to be expected from that particular member because he never listens. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order.

The leader of the Liberal Party, Edmonton-Glenarry.

### Environmental Round Table

(continued)

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the hon. Minister of the Environment. Yesterday I met with about a hundred high school students and we talked environmental matters at length. Today I introduced the Assembly to nine students who are the executive of the students' union of a junior high school. All expressed a certain cynicism towards politicians and the environment, believing that politicians are behind the people in terms of getting things done. Mr. Speaker, they want fairness, they want openness, and they want a lot more speed in terms of issues on the environment. My first question to the minister is this: given that the reporting mechanism of this special round table on the environment is to report to cabinet, and presumably that's done in secret, would the minister commit to changing that reporting mechanism, rather than reporting in secret, to reporting to a special select committee of this Legislature on the environment?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, that legislation is about to come before this Assembly, and I think that's the time to debate it, not during question period. Why waste the hon. leader of the Liberal Party's valuable time? I'm not about to do that.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, maybe I should be asking the neutral Minister of Energy, because we can't seem to get anything out of the Minister of the Environment anytime.

Let me try again. Mr. Speaker, one of the commitments that came out of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy, a document that was signed by the previous Minister of the Environment, calls for the release to the public of reports done by round tables: the reports are given to a minister or to cabinet or to select standing committees, but they are released also to the public. Will the minister commit to the commitment his predecessor made on the signature to the report that these reports will simultaneously be released to the public in total – not some condensed version but in total – at the same time?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the round table has yet to hold its first meeting, and I think that the hon. leader of the Liberal Party has a valid point, one that I will bring to the Round Table on Environment and Economy for consideration.

I think it's valid, and I think it deserves considerable thought. Thank you.

MR. DECORE: I don't believe this. That's great. I mean, I'm delighted, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has made a decision finally.

MR. SPEAKER: Let's have the question.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, according to this report that the previous minister signed, round tables are to be committees that balance environmental matters and opportunity in the economy. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't make one an environmentalist if one goes and buys tissue . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order. The paragraphs are getting longer. Let's have the question, please.

MR. DECORE: There are eight people representing corporate Alberta. Will the minister agree, now that this has surfaced as a problem, to simply add some extra expertise, additional expertise from environmentalists who know and understand the environment, so as to give this balance?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is an exact replica of what occurred earlier.

MR. KLEIN: Fine. And I will continue my answer, Mr. Speaker: Donald R. Stanley, World Health Organization's expert advisory panel on environmental health; Doug Baldwin, president and chief executive officer of Esso Resources Canada Limited, chairman of the Canadian Petroleum Association for the 1990-91 term, and chairman of their environmental advisory committee; Brian Staszewski. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Perhaps you'd be good enough to file a copy of the panel makeup with the Table and the Chair.

The Member for Drumheller.

#### **Meech Lake Accord**

MR. SCHUMACHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. the Deputy Premier. I was wondering if the hon. Deputy Premier could advise the House as to the nature of the meeting in Ottawa today between our Premier and the Prime Minister.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, our Premier, who was en route back from Toronto, where he had held meetings yesterday with the Premier of Ontario, has been asked to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister this evening for the purpose of discussing a method by which a resolution of the impasse we are in with respect to the Constitutional Accord of 1987 might be resolved. During the course of that discussion we expect that he will be exploring with the Prime Minister the opportunities for calling a First Ministers' Conference to deal with that subject. It is, of course, and all hon. members will be aware, a matter of great concern to Canadians that we have reached the stage where there appears to be a deadlock in these constitutional talks. Our Premier will be making every effort to persuade the Prime Minister at the First Ministers' Conference, at which time all people involved at that level can have the opportunity of putting

all the issues on the table and trying to resolve them, to come to an amicable solution to make sure that our country retains its strength so that we can grow and develop and put behind us the acrimony and dispute which is now blocking constitutional change.

MR. SCHUMACHER: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Can the hon. Deputy Premier advise us as to the nature of the message our Premier will be taking to the Prime Minister as a method of getting out of this impasse?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, I think there are really three important points to be made. First of all, we can't overload the agenda. Our Premier has made that clear here in Alberta and again in the discussions with Premier Peterson yesterday in Toronto: we cannot overload the agenda.

Secondly, we cannot isolate Quebec or any other province and put them aside or away from the process. All parties, all provinces and the federal government, must be participating in this process if we are to have meaningful constitutional change. That's the second point: we cannot isolate Quebec. We do not want to see that happen.

Finally, I think the key to unlocking the dilemma is a question of finding a way to achieve meaningful Senate reform so that the federal Parliament operates effectively to represent the interests of the partners in Confederation in the second Chamber. That Senate reform, which Alberta has led, will be the key, as I've said before, to unlock the dilemma, and that, of course, will be a very major factor in determining whether or not it will be possible to achieve meaningful Senate reform and meaningful constitutional change.

So I think really those are the three key elements of the message our Premier will be bringing to the Prime Minister today.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place, followed by Calgary-North West.

#### **Daishowa Pulp Mill**

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a letter signed by Jerry Lack, who's the director of standards and approvals in the Environment department. I won't read it; I'll table copies for all hon. members. But the key phrase is: "Alberta Environment is committed to providing the public with the opportunity to have input into the licencing process," written to a resident of Peace River with regard to the Daishowa project. The Minister of the Environment has stated that he issued the licence to dump 490 tonnes of organic chloride pollution without that community input because the province would be in a vulnerable legal position if he did not. Now, if the minister was honest about it, he would have to admit that he is talking about a potential lawsuit from Daishowa. Who else would sue for not getting a permit? Can you imagine very many Albertans downstream who would do that? The question in the minds of Albertans is: how did the government get itself into a box where it has to allow dioxin pollution because it's vulnerable to court action by a corporate polluter if it doesn't do that? I wonder if the minister would be specific today about what contracts and what agreements oblige him to break a written commitment to Albertans on threat of legal action.

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, there was no threat of legal action. I said that there was no reason legally or morally not to issue the permit. So there was no breach of anything, as a matter of fact. The licence was issued in the normal course of doing business. I would repeat once again: what would you do with a pulp mill once it's built? Stand there and look at it like the socialists would, or dismantle it to create employment like the socialists would?

MR. McINNIS: Well, I'm going to call him Two-story Ralph, because he says one thing in here; he goes outside and says that the government is in a vulnerable legal position if they don't issue the permit. The Minister of the Environment I think probably has very little idea of the hurt and the anger Albertans are feeling as a result of his decision to deny them any right to be involved in decisions about licensing organic chloride pollution. I say that a government that puts the rights of polluters ahead of the rights of Albertans is a government which has lost its moral authority to govern in this province.

Yesterday the minister said that he was willing to look at biological testing of this pulp mill effluent. I want to put it to him quite simply: if the studies show that this material causes chromosome damage, will he do the right thing and put public health ahead of the big companies that pollute?

MR. KLEIN: Well, to answer his direct question first, Mr. Speaker, and then address the very, very silly prelude to the question: we're going to put in place – and I explained that yesterday – a review process, legislated if necessary, to monitor precisely the kinds of things the hon. member referred to.

Relative to the public consultation process and this minister's allegations that there was no public consultation . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He's not a minister.

MR. MARTIN: He's not the minister; you are. [interjections]

MR. KLEIN: Or this member's – thank God he's not a minister – allegations that there was no public consultation, Mr. Speaker, I would like to table . . . Well, no, I don't want to table it, because I don't want to produce more paper for the library and so on. I'll just present it, Mr. Speaker. These represent the environmental impact assessment documents relative to the Daishowa pulp mill project. This document alone represents the public consultation process relative to that particular project. Now, he says that there was no public consultation process. I want to simply demonstrate how this member operates and knows nothing about what he speaks of. This document outlines the public consultation that was done. It outlines the preface to the public consultation, the preliminary information report, the public information brochure, the public call for briefings and presentations, notices for public meetings, all the meeting coverage of the public meetings, copies of all the minutes of the public meetings from Peace River to Vermilion to High Level to Weberville to Manning and so on. And he wasn't there.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West, if there's time.

#### **Connie Ranch Sale**

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, I have been watching with cautious optimism the proposals being put forward regarding the possible – and I emphasize the word "possible" – development

of the Cormie ranch. On May 18, which was just last week, there was an agreement made between the lawyers representing Don Cormie and Cormie ranch and the lawyers representing the Principal Group investors that would expedite the sale and allow this development to go ahead. Recently there's been a court injunction granted to the government regarding this particular sale, and that puts the whole sale in jeopardy. My question today is to the Minister of Tourism, because ultimately, of course, we want to see the tourism development here. Does the minister not agree that the potential tax revenue, just the tax revenue, of a \$1 billion tourism development far, far outweighs the possible recovery – I emphasize "possible recovery" – of \$400,000 should the government win in its injunction in the courts?

MR. SPARROW: Yes, Mr. Speaker, very definitely the project that's being proposed would be a very positive project for Alberta. Our department has had quite a number of meetings with them. We're looking forward to the finalization and a solution to the problems, and I hope that the lawyers can solve them.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I'm pleased to hear that there have been meetings occurring.

My supplementary, then, to the minister: has the minister or his department done any economic impact studies, as opposed to environmental, to assess possible tax revenues and economic benefits that would result from this project, and has that information then been relayed to the tourism committee of cabinet, to the Provincial Treasurer, and to the Treasury Board?

MR. SPARROW: No, Mr. Speaker, a specific study on this project has not been done, but the rules that do apply to most projects are well known amongst my colleagues, and the economic benefits for a project like this are known to cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer-North, followed by Vegreville.

#### **Interest Rate Policy**

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Provincial Treasurer. The Canadian bank rate has leapt to 14.05, that represents the biggest spread between Canadian and U.S. rates that we've seen in our history. As we all know, this central Canadian policy is having a devastating effect on our economy. As we are the only province that has done anything to alleviate the pressure for taxpayers within our province through the interest shielding program and as we know this program has not resulted in runaway inflation, it has not resulted in rampant price indexes but has resulted in growth and stability, will the minister please communicate to the federal Minister of Finance the fact that this experiment works, that lower interest rates do not devastate the economy, and hopefully that communication will knock the federal minister off this destructive path that he's on?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Red Deer-North is accurate in his report to the Assembly this afternoon. It is with some fear that we watched the bank rate raised by one-quarter of a percentage point today, following the short-term money market up. I must say that the member is accurate when he says that the province of Alberta has put in place a significant number of programs which have sheltered certain

sectors of our economy from this devastating impact, to quote the member, and that's in the farming community, small business community, and as well on the home ownership side. Those programs have worked very effectively. Were it not for the inflationary impact caused by taxation by the federal government on the consumption side our inflation in Alberta would be very reasonable. We must report that investment is still being driven by the natural economic forces that are at work in Alberta. How long this can continue under the high interest rate is questionable.

I should note as well, Mr. Speaker, that the current Canadian capital market is suffering some uncertainty essentially driven by the Meech Lake concern, and I would expect that once Meech Lake has settled down, you may well see some softening interest rates. I think that's been the general view of the market so far. I think all politicians and all those people involved share this concern, but if the member wants me to express my view directly to the Minister of Finance on the matters he raised, I'll be glad to do that.

MR. DAY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I think that communication will help.

My supplementary is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. We understand that he's been doing a review in terms of extension of the interest shielding program. I'd like to ask him: involved in that review would he also consider that the program not just be given a one-year extension but in fact a two-year extension, which allows for the type of planning that has to go on in the economic sector?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member. Yes, the program is under review. The program has been very acceptable to this point in time by Albertans. Some 64,000 Albertans made application and were accepted, and we paid out some \$13 million. In the current fiscal year we have some \$20 million budgeted, but with the high interest rate policy of the federal government, our cost of that program may increase by \$40 million to \$70 million, which is a concern to us in terms of balancing the budget. Yes, in terms of the current situation and maybe the need in the marketplace, we are considering the extension.

MR. SPEAKER: Vegreville.

### Game Ranching

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's fair to say that thousands of Albertans felt betrayed yesterday when they learned that this government is clearly intending to move towards the privatization of our wildlife resource by allowing the sale of elk meat, this in spite of firm statements to the contrary by the Premier a year ago in the Stettler by-election and firm statements by the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife in the same regard. Now, one of the things the government's using in their glossy little package to sell this to Albertans is a statement giving firm assurance that "game animal production will be prohibited on Provincial Crown Land," and paid hunting "of game production animals will continue to be forbidden." Now, given that the words uttered by prominent Conservatives within the last year have proved to be nothing more than hollow promises, what reasons do Albertans have to believe any of the assurances given in this document about the future of paid hunting and commercialization of wildlife in the province?

AN HON. MEMBER: Who are you asking?

MR. FOX: The Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, we're not privatizing the wildlife in this province. We've had game farms in this province for many, many years. What is said in the press release and in the document is absolutely accurate: there will be no game ranching on Crown land and there will be no paid hunting. The proof of that is that it's brought forward to this House and will be debated here in a Bill, and that is part of that legislation.

MR. FOX: In other words, it's not going to happen until you bring forward another Bill next year and make the changes.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture a question. Given the fact that this is good news for the 120 people that raise elk for profit in the province of Alberta but that there are thousands of Albertans who are very concerned about the commercialization of wildlife and who want to have their views heard, will the minister agree to suspend debate of this Bill in the Legislature until we've had full opportunity for a legitimate environmental impact assessment of game ranching in the province of Alberta that allows legitimate public hearings on this important issue?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the introduction of Bill 31 is good news for anyone that believes in diversification of agriculture, our number one industry. I'm very disappointed that the ag critic with the ND Party is not supportive of diversification. I think it's plain that what we're talking about here is an industry that has been around for some time, as the hon. Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife explained. The natural evolution of that industry, the raising of livestock that is very environmentally friendly to the province of Alberta and native to the province of Alberta, native to the environment, is going to be carried out on deeded land and is not going to build its numbers up from the wild.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

### Daishowa Pulp Mill

(continued)

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [interjections] For some time now it's become increasingly clear . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. member. Vegreville and Minister of Agriculture, perhaps you could continue your discussion outside. You've already had your chance here in the last few minutes.

Edmonton-Meadowlark. [interjections] Members, we can wait; count light bulbs that have burned out if you want.

Edmonton-Meadowlark, please begin.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For some time now it's become increasingly clear that the Minister of the Environment has been rendered powerless to fulfill his mandate. If ever there was any doubt about this, he dispelled it himself earlier this week when he stated that he simply didn't have the power to set up a public review process of the Daishowa licensing application even though it had been his intention to do

such a process exactly as he had done it with Procter & Gamble. To the newly admitted minister without portfolio: will the minister admit, yes or no, that he failed to set up a public review of the Daishowa application because he was afraid that he would be sued by Daishowa if he did, and he didn't have the support within cabinet, the support from his Premier to withstand that possibility?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, that question is so dumb it's impossible to answer.

MR. MITCHELL: But it's certainly not impossible to evade it, is it Ralph?

Does this minister not understand that he has an obligation to exercise his responsibility under the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act regardless of whether or not mistaken promises made in the past by this government may mean that he will be sued if he does?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the Procter & Gamble situation was an experiment, and there was concurrence on the part of the company. The fact is that we do not now have legislative authority to set in place a formalized review process for the renewal of licences. What I've tried to explain to this hon. member is that in the new environmental protection and enhancement Act we propose to bring in legislation which will allow for that kind of formalized review to take place. I would simply ask the hon. member to be patient.

#### Calgary Annexation

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question this afternoon to the Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding the Local Authorities Board denial of the city of Calgary's Springbank annexation application earlier this year. I'm wondering if the minister has been advised as to whether or not the city of Calgary will be, in fact, appealing the LAB decision or possibly considering a new application.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, at present I haven't had any indication from the city of Calgary. I have a meeting set up with the city of Calgary and the MD of Rocky View on June 14 at 10 a.m., at which time we'll be discussing the various options with regards to the annexation. The matter would not be appealed. The city would have the right to set up a new application to the Local Authorities Board.

MR. PAYNE: Well, Mr. Speaker, given the intensity of feelings on both sides of the annexation question, can the minister indicate to the Assembly this afternoon what steps he'd be prepared to take to ensure that a renewed application would in fact be given a fair and balanced hearing?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I have contacted the various parties that are involved in this set of circumstances re the annexation of part of Springbank, and my intent is to meet with the city, with the municipal district, and as well with two of the interest groups – the Western Hills landowners group and the Springbank Residents and Landowners Association – and discuss what the options are so that prior to the hearings taking place, we will have a better understanding, and if an application can be approved or disapproved, we can do it with a more responsible and mature approach.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

#### Highwood River

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Highwood River's role as a spawning stream is absolutely essential: the world famous trout fishery on the Bow River downstream from Calgary. In recent years fish kills in the Highwood caused by excessive withdrawals of water have become common occurrence. The government is aware that both Trout Unlimited and the Fish & Game Association want minimum flows of 150 cubic feet per second to be maintained for the 1990 operating year; that is, downstream from the town of High River. My question to the Minister of the Environment is quite straightforward: given the need to protect the Highwood River as a trout spawning stream, will the minister agree to increase minimum allowable in-stream flows from 70 cubic feet per second to 150 cubic feet per second for this operating season?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, this is a real difficult situation and involves a supply of water to those people involved in agricultural endeavours on the Little Bow, and it involves the sustainability of the lower Highwood River. The problem we're trying to come to grips with is: how do we capture the flush so that we can fill the Little Bow reservoir and not have a constant drain on the Highwood River? Basically I've said that the 1989 guidelines will apply until there are signs that the river is becoming stressed. Then we will take measures to reduce that stress. What we've done is install at Aldersyde and just outside High River some of the most sophisticated monitoring equipment available, which will give the citizens of that region immediate access to the flow of the river and will tell our officials also whether or not that river is becoming stressed. If it is stressed and we feel that wildlife and fish are in danger, then we will take whatever measures are necessary to alleviate the problem.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, at a so-called stockholders meeting – pardon me, stakeholders meeting last night in High River, officials . . . [interjections] They were mostly stockholders; that was true. Officials from the minister's department refused to commit themselves to maintaining minimum flows in the Highwood River during this operating season. Instead, they proposed some vague corrective measures should oxygen levels fall too low, and I think that's essentially what the minister's saying to us today. My question to the minister is: given that there have been all these documented fish kills in the Highwood in five of the last 10 years, will the minister not now put a halt to withdrawals of water when the flow drops below this suggested 150 cubic feet per second, which is needed to protect the stream?

MS BARRETT: Good idea.

MR. KLEIN: And it is a good idea in the minds of some. In the minds of others, it's not a good idea. The whole idea is to assess what is an appropriate inflow requirement for the lower Highwood. What we're trying to do now is bring together all the parties, all the stakeholders as the hon. member suggests, to decide what a proper inflow level is. That consensus has been a bit of a nightmare. I mean, there's been a bit of a war down there. It's like the Hatfields and the McCoys. Basically, I've had to say that we'll use common sense until we can come to

some consensus relative to an inflow requirement, and until that consensus is reached, we will have to use our best judgment as the Department of the Environment to determine when indeed the river becomes stressed.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired; however the Minister of the Environment has supplementary information to give to the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. TAYLOR: My God, that's all we've done: listen to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me?

MR. KLEIN: Well, this time you don't have to ask. You get it for free this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Order please, hon. minister.

With respect to a question raised by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, the Minister of the Environment, please.

### **Pulp Mill Emissions**

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place put this question:

I wonder if the minister would now care to stand up and name one, just one, environment minister anywhere else in the world who has licensed a new source of dioxin pollution this year. Name one.

Well, Mr. Speaker, no minister, technically speaking, issues the permit. But if he's talking about government authorities that have issued permits this year, I would like to name them: Weyerhaeuser company, Columbus, Mississippi, 325,000 air-dried tonnes a year, a brand-new mill, all bleached kraft; Bowater Inc., Calhoun, Tennessee, 1990, 285,000 air-dried tonnes per year, a new mill which replaces a semibleached kraft plant; Parsons & Whittemore Inc., Claiborne, Alabama, 445,000 air-dried tonnes per year, new mill; Stone Container, Port Wentworth, Georgia, 240,000 air-dried tonnes per year; Union Camp Corp., Eastover, South Carolina, 95,000 air-dried tonnes per year; Repap, The Pas, Manitoba, 180,000 air-dried tonnes per year; Howe Sound, Port Mellon . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Order please, hon. minister. Five examples seem to be sufficient for the moment.

Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: The minister is delighted to place himself in the apparent company of Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, The Pas, Manitoba. My question is a simple one: why is he not prepared to allow Albertans to have their say in this matter before he issues those licences?

MR. KLEIN: He can have this, Mr. Speaker. It's a document that outlines in full detail the public consultation that took place relative to the Daishowa pulp mill.

AN HON. MEMBER: Good reading.

MR. KLEIN: It's good reading, good public comment, good public involvement. The kind of thing the hon. member likes and appreciates. He should read it. [interjection] And he missed it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Before we get on to a point of order, first might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

In this order: Drumheller, Calgary-Millican, Three Hills.

### **head: Introduction of Special Guests (reversion)**

MR. SCHUMACHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my very great pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 32 bright, enthusiastic, and inquiring students from St. Anthonys school in Drumheller. They are accompanied by their teacher Gerry Hamilton; parents Bob Repas, Pearl Pugh, Debbie Schinnour, Louise Lynch, and Pinky Molyneux; and their bus driver Tim Harasym. They're seated in the members' and public galleries, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Millican.

MR. SHRAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm really delighted today to introduce to you and through you to the Legislature 46 young people who arrived just a few minutes ago from Calgary to catch the tail end of this question period. This is the concert band from one of Alberta's finest community schools, Sherwood community school. They're accompanied by a couple of their teachers, Sarah Drew and Sherrill Bakke, and one of the parents came along, Gordie Berberich, and Ray Raymond; it doesn't say but he's the bus driver. They're sitting in the public gallery, and I'd like to see them rise and receive a warm welcome from the Legislature.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to introduce a group of 28 grade 10 students from the Beiseker community school. They are going to have, I think, a lot of fun because they're spending two days in this area. They are accompanied by teachers Debbie Anderson and Doug McCulloch, parents Val Tudor and Norm Medley. I'd like them all to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Highlands, point of order.

MS BARRETT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I heard the hon. Deputy Premier say earlier today in question period in response to questions posed by the Leader of the Official Opposition that either – and I do not have the Blues – he, the Leader of the Official Opposition, or members of the Official Opposition were in his opinion encouraging illegal strikes or strike action. I believe he would acknowledge that he said words to that effect.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out two citations that I think are vitally important in this context: one being Standing Order 23(i) and (j) and the other being *Beauchesne* citation 484(3), all of which deal with generally imputing "false or



unavowed motives" or using "abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder."

It's an unfortunate assignment of the hon. member's assumptions, I think, to the Leader of the Official Opposition, and I'd like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in your ruling on pages 1112 and 1113, dated May 9, 1990, with respect to a point of order called on a similar issue related to comments made in question period, you acknowledged that the type of complaint fell within what you agreed to be legitimate criticism and advised all members that language should be "temperate and worthy of this institution." You went on to say a number of other things in the context, Mr. Speaker.

The point is basically that you pointed out that "allegations against another member" and "abusive and insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder" are cause for concern and a ruling. In this context I would expect that the Deputy Premier would of course know full well what it was he was saying and that you, Mr. Speaker, would make a ruling on whether or not the comments should be withdrawn.

Thank you.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I may briefly speak to the point of order. All I did was cite the facts. The facts were that during the course of the illegal strike members of the New Democratic Party spoke to the strikers, encouraged them in their action to continue doing what they were doing, carried signs, came into the Assembly in the course of question period . . .

MS BARRETT: Did we tell them?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, the hon. House leader for the New Democratic Party should go back into *Hansard* and reflect upon the nature of questions that were asked during the course of that illegal strike.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Deputy Premier knows full well that he made an allegation that is unsubstantiated and assigned unavowed motives, and I ask the hon. Deputy Premier to withdraw.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Read *Hansard*.

MS BARRETT: I've read the *Hansard*.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

AN HON. MEMBER: Read it again.

MR. SPEAKER: Order in the whole House.

The exact statement from *Hansard* was this. Deputy Premier: "Well, certainly I know that the New Democratic Party has encouraged illegal strike action."

REV. ROBERTS: That's false.

MS BARRETT: That is false, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, this has got to stop. When the Chair is standing, let's have a chance to at least hear what's going on without being harassed by members in this House.

The Chair invites all hon. members to examine the Blues themselves, and the matter will be dealt with tomorrow.

## Orders of the Day

### head: Written Questions

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that all written questions appearing on the Order Paper, except 251, stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

251. Mr. McInnis asked the government the following question:

- (1) With respect to fish samples taken from the Wapiti River in 1986 for mercury analysis, where are these samples located?
- (2) Why were none of the funds voted by the Legislative Assembly for protection of the environment, fish, and wildlife available for testing these samples since they were gathered?
- (3) Will these samples be analyzed for mercury content? If so, when?

MR. SPEAKER: The Deputy Government House Leader has indicated acceptance of the question. Thank you.

### head: Motions for Returns

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that all motions for returns appearing on today's Order Paper – except for the following: 166, 167, 168, 291, and 298 – stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

166. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all reports prepared by or on behalf of the government and its emanations on studies of zero-effluent pulp mills pursuant to recommendation 57 of the Environment Council of Alberta February 1979 report, the Environmental Effects of Forestry Operations in Alberta.

MR. McINNIS: It's been so long since I submitted this I've almost – oh, I remember. Yes, this was the key recommendation from the Environment Council of Alberta. The last time we had anything that might resemble an environmental impact assessment on forestry timber harvesting operations in Alberta was way back in actually 1978; '79 was when the report was published, a very important report, which made recommendations to the government regarding how they should proceed with forestry development in northern Alberta. The critical recommendation, of course, was number 57, which suggested that there was promising technology available to produce pulp without having to pollute our rivers with dioxin, furan, other chlorinated organic substances, biological oxygen demand, heavy metals, and all the other things that are licensed by the province. So the request is simply that the government indicate what work it did in response to this very important recommendation.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the motion for a return, obviously the government is opposed to releasing this information.

MR. McINNIS: Why?

MR. GOGO: Well, if the hon. member would care to listen a moment, perhaps he'll be made aware, Mr. Speaker.

It's not the first time that copies of market reports and studies prepared for corporations owned by the private sector, even though it's in conjunction with a department of government, have been kept confidential. They are competing in the real world out there, and that information I think traditionally has been classified as confidential. [interjection] Well, I know the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway has heard it before. Why, then, doesn't he advise his colleague not to bother putting it on the Order Paper?

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister of the Environment has made it amply clear on many previous occasions why information of this nature simply can't be disclosed, and I don't think it should come as any new news to the hon. member that the department and the minister are not prepared to release it on this occasion.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Special Waste Management Corporation is unique to Alberta and unique to Canada . . .

MR. McINNIS: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe that perhaps the minister is speaking to the wrong motion. We're on 166. I believe you're speaking to 167, the special waste management.

MR. SPEAKER: It would appear to be so. We are on 166, Deputy Government House Leader.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ralph's here. He'll give it to them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. members; we don't need that. [interjection] We don't need that either.

Motion for a Return 166. The Deputy Government House Leader is in the course of making remarks.

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have responded to the point of order, except that the hon. member didn't quote the authority. Therefore, I recognize and concede to the House that I was dealing with the wrong motion for a return and would surrender the floor to the hon. Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and my apologies for being late and out of breath.

For 166, we propose to reject this motion for a return, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FOX: That's not what he said.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members . . . Thank you, Minister of the Environment.

Would you be good enough to turn to your Standing Orders, 13(4)(b). We're going to stop this interruption of members, except to raise a point of order, which is what our own Standing Orders direct.

The Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place proposed the following motion: "that an order of

the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all reports prepared by . . ."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Please, let's not reread it. Let's just comment on it.

MR. KLEIN: I thought we had all the time in the world. My apologies.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't think so, hon. minister.

MR. KLEIN: Good.

Basically it refers to a recommendation of the Environment Council of Alberta made in February of 1979. Well, that report does not recommend that the government undertake any studies on zero-effluent pulp mills. Although the government has undertaken a considerable amount of research on pulp mill waste treatment processes, there are no formal studies undertaken by the province on zero-effluent pulp mills, and we recommend that this motion be rejected because that information simply is not available.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, in summation.

MR. McINNIS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm tempted to say that I'm shocked and appalled by the minister's comments on this motion. What I thought I heard him say was the government was rejecting the motion because they hadn't done any studies. If that's the case, if I'm hearing him correctly, I don't believe that's grounds for rejecting a motion. Just because you're embarrassed by the fact that the government has wasted the last 11 years in relation to this very important recommendation of the Environment Council of Alberta – I find that a shocking admission, but I don't find it grounds to reject a motion. If the minister feels that he doesn't want to have to submit an answer that says he or the department or the government hasn't done anything for the last 11 years, that's his problem, but it's certainly not the problem of the Assembly. We have a legitimate right to know what the government does in response to the recommendations of the Environment Council of Alberta because, as I said before the minister arrived, this is the last time there was anything close to an environmental impact assessment done on timber harvesting operations in Alberta.

In fact, I'm a little bit surprised that the Minister of the Environment is dealing with this rather than the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, who normally deals with matters coming out of this report. However, it does fall within his area. I simply want to observe that we have a zero-effluent pulp mill proposed in the province of Saskatchewan at Meadow Lake by Millar Western Ltd., a company which has most of its operations in the province of Alberta, or has up to now. They propose to construct a zero-effluent pulp mill in the province of Saskatchewan. There is a zero-effluent pulp mill proposed in Chetwynd, British Columbia. In fact, every sane jurisdiction and every competent environment minister that I know of are doing what they can in order to try to bring zero-effluent technology to a commercial state as quickly as possible, because what we now know about some of the chemical pollutants that come out of kraft/sulphate pulp mills is enough to cause most people to want to get their act in order and get that done.

MR. KLEIN: We're looking at it.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I'm delighted that the minister now indicates by way of a heckle across the floor that we're working on it. I'm delighted to hear that. I'm glad we're working on zero-effluent pulp mills, but what good is it going to do you if you've already given away all of the province to polluting pulp mills?

I mean, you've got forest management agreements, Mr. Minister of the Environment. I know you probably don't read very much, but if you did, you would find that these contracts are binding contracts between the Crown in the right of the province of Alberta and a pulp company. It gives them the right to manage and utilize wood resources from those forest management agreements. The point I've been trying to get this government to understand is that when you sign away those agreements, when you sign away the forest management agreements in support of a pulp mill, what you do is cut off the options of future ministers of the environment, future governments, future generations of Albertans who may very well want to have a nonpolluting pulp mill but can't because the wood resource is already assigned to someone else. You have to have wood fibre to run a pulp mill. I know this is not your area, but I think you should understand that without the wood fibre, what are you going to run through the pulp mill?

MR. KLEIN: I understand that.

MR. McINNIS: Okay.

Now, we do have a company in the province of Alberta named Tigney Technology, which has been attempting to do research largely with their own resources on a nonpolluting pulp technology for a good part of the 11-year period that is referred to in Motion for a Return 166. They have actually done some research in co-operation with the Alberta Research Council, from which I would think there should be some type of report or study available. In fact, I know of some reports that were done on that particular technology, so I'm a little puzzled by the comment from the Minister of the Environment that no study exists. I think he perhaps is mistaken about that point, in which case it would be a good idea for the Assembly to pass the motion, and then a proper search can be done to see whether any such studies and reports do exist. Because it seems to me that I have seen at least two reports dealing with the Tigney Technology process, which is a zero-effluent type of process. Now, unfortunately that story does not have a happy ending from the point of view of Albertans because the company has found its way blocked in the province of Alberta and has now entered commercial arrangements with the Soviet Union to conduct the research and do the development, commercialize the technology, and presumably create the jobs there. But sooner or later we will have zero-effluent technology, and we may not have the option to support it because the wood resources have been given away.

So I would like to urge members to reconsider the advice given them by the minister and approve this motion.

[Motion lost]

167. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all reports and studies for the Special Waste Management Corporation or the Depart-

ment of the Environment evaluating the Von Roll rocking kilns at the Swan Hills facility.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, this motion was also filed prior to the commencement of the current legislative session way back in March. Unfortunately I have this advance warning, courtesy of the Deputy Government House Leader, that the government is going to reject this motion also, which is very unfortunate because the story of the Swan Hills facility is a story which is yet to be told, in my opinion, and certainly yet to be understood by a lot of Albertans.

I had, courtesy of the Special Waste Management Corporation, the opportunity to tour the facility. I looked at the Von Roll rocking kilns, which were down at the time. They've been down quite a lot over the period since they've been in operation. It's my understanding that they simply have not functioned for the purpose for which they were designed. That is to say, they were to incinerate both solid and liquid waste material at the Swan Hills facility. Well, they've been able to incinerate the liquid material quite easily because that's not a technically difficult process. The difficulty is with the solid material which is not itself combustible. You have to agitate it in such a way that every surface is exposed to the flame and a complete job is done of incinerating the toxic material, in most cases PCBs. That's what they do up there.

Well, you have to wonder about technology which was never employed anywhere else before it was brought into the province of Alberta and which has not functioned for its intended purpose. I think the Assembly, which gets the bill for this every 12 months, the bill for covering the operating losses and the bills for capital expansion, does have a right to have a look in on what kind of evaluation of this facility is being done. Because, as I understand it, the Special Waste Management Corporation, the joint venture, has already installed one rotating kiln to try to make up for the fact that these rocking kilns don't do the job, and they are now at work on a feasibility study for a much larger kiln, which is actually the subject of a different motion. So I don't know how the government can come here year after year with these monstrous bills for the operation of the Special Waste Management Corporation and not enlighten the Assembly as to what evaluation is being done, has been done, of the Von Roll rocking kilns, because that's the key to understanding the future of that operation.

I don't think the minister would choose to deny that some of the musing he's done publicly about bringing in special wastes, hazardous waste, into the province of Alberta is because of the financial problems faced by the special waste management facility up there. In fact, there is an absolutely monstrous deficit, and he wants to try to reduce it. Fair enough, but I think that sooner or later this Assembly and the government are going to have to grasp the nettle as far as the Von Roll rocking kilns are concerned. I think we start that process by making these evaluation reports available.

MR. KLEIN: The hon. member is quite correct, Mr. Speaker. I plan to reject this motion on the basis that the information is considered proprietary.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
Summation, Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Well, I just can't believe he would say absolutely nothing in defence of the decision to reject it, that he

would come here and present these bills time and again and expect them to be paid by the taxpayers and not be willing to let the taxpayers know about the screwup. I have to describe this as a screwup when you have technology purchased by this government, on whose authority I don't know. All I know is that when I went up there, I couldn't find anybody who'd admit to being involved in the decision. They were all either not on staff at the time or didn't go to the meeting or that sort of thing. But somebody somewhere made the decision to purchase these Von Roll kilns, which were engineered in Switzerland and manufactured in the city of Calgary, and I can't believe there would be not one word in defence of the decision to withhold this information from the taxpayers who have to pay these bills year upon year upon year, and it's going to get worse, according to the testimony of the Minister of the Environment. So I just can't believe there is not one word in defence of that decision from this minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Before the question is called, the Chair would like to admonish the whole House that the phrase "screwup" is not going to be allowed in this Legislature.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. SPEAKER: It isn't going to be allowed in this Legislature.

[Motion lost]

REV. ROBERTS: What about "balls in the air," Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, are you rising on a point of order, or do you just have a rumbling in your tummy?

REV. ROBERTS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, with respect to your ruling. I would like some explanation in terms of your ruling on that point of order, particularly with respect to the Minister of the Environment's use of the language "balls in the air" last week. We wonder whether that, too, is going to be considered unparliamentary and not to be used in the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. The phrase that was used has indeed been ruled out of order in other Legislatures in this country, and it's going to be the matter for the two words used by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. It's not going to be allowed in this Legislature.

Now, with respect to your comment about the phrase "balls in the air," you know as well as I that that's part of the nomenclature of everyday English in terms of a juggling act.

REV. ROBERTS: Well, so is "screwup."

MR. SPEAKER: In terms of a juggling act. "Screwup" has entirely different ramifications than juggling "balls in the air." That's your . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame.

MR. SPEAKER: Order in the whole House.

The other thing is that this purported point of order is indeed not being raised at the earliest opportunity. Thank you.

Next issue.

168. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all market reports and studies prepared for the Special Waste Management Corporation or the Department of the Environment on the installation of new rotating kilns at the Swan Hills facility.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just trying to leaf through *Beauchesne* here to make sure that the words I use are not offensive to the Chair and to the institution of Parliament. We'll have to think of a new term to describe the kind of business adventures that this government gets involved in with the Cormies and the Pocklingtons and the Special Waste Management Corporations, where all kinds of taxpayers' money gets wasted, and then after the fact they cover up and hide all the information. We'll certainly come up with something.

Motion for a Return 168 is the flip side of 167. We have the unfortunate circumstance, the shocking waste of taxpayers' money at the special waste management facility on a technology which has not functioned for its intended purpose and nobody willing to take responsibility. Now, we have the corporation trying to find a way out, and the way out is the installation of one or more rotating kilns, a more established technology. But of course they do have the problem of instead of two kilns that were supposed to do the job, they now have three, but bringing in the third, as I understand it, does nothing more than keep the backlog at a steady pace where it is. I mean, the backlog is such that the warehouse up there at Swan Hills for solid waste material is literally jammed to the rafters. The transfer stations are literally jammed to the rafters with solid waste material.

Then you have solid waste material improperly stored all kinds of places around the province, in places like the former Canada Creosoting plant on the banks of the Bow River, where it leaches toxic wood preservatives into the river. The other day a federal scientist revealed that they had found contamination of fish population in the Bow River with wood preservative material that very likely originated from the Canada Creosoting plant. So we've got a problem, and the measures taken to date appear to do nothing more than hold the line even, keep the backlog where it is.

So the corporation is obviously interested in dealing with the problem, and they've got an idea that if they put a much larger rotating kiln in place, which will do the job that was supposed to be done by the rocking kilns, they'll be able to dent the backlog. But the problem, again as I understand it, is that we're talking about another \$40 million-plus capital hit, 60 percent of which would be paid by the taxpayers under this incredible sweetheart arrangement, which is also a form of unparliamentary language.

I think the evaluation of this new technology is a very important issue because it may very well mean that in order to make it pay, to make the whole rotten mess pay, they will have to bring in hazardous waste material from other jurisdictions. I received a telephone call from somebody the other day who said they saw vehicles at Swan Hills with Montana licence plates, apparently dropping off material. I don't know how that would come to be. But for sure this is a debate that Albertans want to be involved in before this government decides to start bringing in all kinds of hazardous waste materials in order to pay the bills on the Swan Hills facility. We want to be involved in it. I mean, this is not another operating licence for dioxin and furan; hopefully this will be something that Albertans will be involved in. But if we're going to be involved in it, I think we have to have the information and we have to have the information in a timely fashion.

So the intent of this motion is quite clearly to bring Albertans into the debate about the future of that facility. Do we go for the \$40 million fix, the large rotating kiln? That's throwing money on top of – what do we have in there now? – another \$60 million or more already invested in that facility. If so, what does that mean? Does that mean we have to bring in more hazardous wastes, that Alberta has to become the dustbin of western Canada or the northwestern United States? These are the things that would be answered by the market reports and studies referred to in this motion. And I'm certain that the Special Waste Management Corporation, which is prudently managed by capable people, would be doing such a study, and therefore it's simply a matter of bringing Albertans into the picture.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place leaves out one very, very important point, that point being that this is the only province in the country with a facility of its kind to handle hazardous waste. In other words, we've been able to overcome in this province what other provinces are grappling with, and that is the situation of siting a location. Admittedly there have been some technical defaults with respect to the rocking kilns, and we're trying to remedy this particular situation. We're not only the first in the business; we're new in the business.

I think some credit should go to this government; a lot of credit should go to this government for having the foresight to proceed with a special waste management facility. A lot of credit should go to the people of Swan Hills for overcoming the fear of having hazardous wastes in their backyard, so to speak. Basically what we're trying to do is refine this process and bring it up to world standards and maintain a leading edge in special waste management technology.

Notwithstanding that already said, Mr. Speaker, I plan to reject this motion for a return because the information that is being demanded by the hon. member is considered proprietary.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support my colleague from Edmonton-Jasper Place in his effort to secure from the government the documents requested in this motion for a return. If for no other reason than simply a matter of courtesy, it seems to me this government and this minister should be prepared to reveal this information. But there are even greater reasons.

Nobody is denying that there was a time when the government should have been congratulated for having undertaken to build this plant, and it may still be that this kind of facility is a worthwhile facility. It may well be that this is the most appropriate manner in which to dispose of wastes in a province like Alberta. However, there certainly are questions that are sustained, that have not been answered. We see, for example, year after year the government subsidizing this plant in the order, I think, of about \$25 million last year. We have never had an adequate explanation of why it is that the government structured the kind of arrangements it did with the company that operates that plant, a sweetheart deal, to put it simply, a deal where we not only guarantee to cover their costs; we also guarantee to provide a certain return, a prime plus some percentage return depending on what the level of prime is. Not

only that; we actually guarantee to pay them enough to pay the tax on the guaranteed return. It may well be that now that we are beginning to make huge additional investments in this facility, it would be more appropriate to look to other forms of technology – maybe mobile burn technology, for example – that would reduce the need to transport dangerous goods and hazardous wastes across this province to the Swan Hills facility. That would be a more cost-effective investment than building upon an in situ arrangement that the Swan Hills waste management plant is.

All that is being requested in this motion for a return is sufficient information to assist in making that evaluation, to direct the government's attention to making that kind of evaluation, a cost/benefit analysis. Is this the best way to do away with dangerous goods, hazardous wastes, or is there a better way to do that? Any government that is afraid to reveal information that would assist in making that kind of assessment is a government that does not want to be held accountable, that is too tired to begin to ask questions, to even ask the kinds of questions that need to be asked if you are to manage an issue and a project of this nature properly.

While obviously we will not get the documents that are embodied in this motion for a return, we do have a very interesting answer, I might say, to this motion for a return, Mr. Speaker. The answer is that this government simply does not want to ask appropriate questions about difficult issues, issues that may in fact determine that they are not doing something as well as they think they are and it could be done in a better way.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place, in summation.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark for his support for the motion. I agree with what he said, except for one small point: the \$25 million annual loss figure was the correct figure for the first two years of operation, but this year it's jumped to \$37.1 million. So the costs to the taxpayer are on a very high, upward incline. A \$10 million jump in one year indicates that perhaps not everything is worthy of congratulations. It's one thing to make a decision to build a facility and to obtain the support of the local community to do it – and that's to be congratulated – but that doesn't mean that every activity and every dollar spent in the name of that decision is a good dollar spent and a good activity. You have to take some of the good with the bad.

I will congratulate the government for building the facility and for getting it sited, but I do feel that when we have costs of \$25 million a year, which now have jumped almost 50 percent up to \$37.1 million a year, it's a very good idea for somebody to be asking some questions. If we can't ask questions here in the Legislature, who can? It does appear that some decisions have to be made about the future of this corporation, and we simply ask that the government share some of the information at its disposal with the people who pay this \$37.1 million bill. I know the minister himself has publicly declared his concern about the increases in cost, and he has stated that he does not want to see these costs continue to escalate and this facility continue to be a drain of this magnitude on the shoulders of taxpayers. I congratulate him for taking that position, and I simply want him to go another step further and share some of the information at his disposal so a number of parties can become involved in the debate.

[Motion lost]

291. Mr. Mitchell moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a list of the companies which the government reviewed before selecting Jaakko Pöyry Consulting Inc. to make an assessment of the scientific data submitted to the Alberta-Pacific review board.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I believe that this relates to a very important issue, and that would be: why was it that of all the scientists in the world, even in Canada, who could have undertaken the study or the review that is now being done by Jaakko Pöyry, if in fact the government had a legitimate concern about the data that was reviewed by the Al-Pac review panel – it becomes very, very critical to know why it was that out of all these possibilities they happened to pick Jaakko Pöyry. There are certain questions about Jaakko Pöyry's objectivity, its potential bias in assessing a pulp mill proposal of the order of Al-Pac. It would assist us in knowing whether this is, in fact, an appropriate company to be doing the kind of review the government wants to undertake, if we knew how it was selected and over which other possible companies it was selected. I would greatly appreciate the minister taking this request in that light and providing to us the information that's requested of him in this motion for a return.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of the Environment.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As members are no doubt aware, we considered a number of international-calibre companies and/or institutions, and a number of them were personally interviewed. I think we shortlisted about seven companies for consideration. But we don't believe it would be fair to list for the public all the unsuccessful companies considered for this review. I don't think it would reflect well on their corporate image, and we would therefore recommend that this motion be rejected.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, if I may speak on that. That is one of the most unusual statements I've ever heard from a person in authority. I've been in consulting engineering a good deal of my life – much more successful than I was in politics, if I do say so – and I think one of the things every bidder would like to know from a client is that there were other companies bidding or what the group was that you were bidding with. I don't think the minister understands what a black eye he gives to this government by saying that he will not release any other . . . Were there any others? Did you just go to one? Is there a pet somewhere? Is there a brother-in-law of a brother-in-law who has a sister that's in the firm? Is that the only reason they know about it? In other words, I think he's making a colossally bad move. It's absolutely shocking. That's the first.

The second: why any company would worry about being in the group that bid. I can recall being very proud of missing a bid one time, just to be able to say that my bid was in amongst the group that was considered, that my firm had got big enough so it could at least get turned down by a big contract. So these things are all pluses. I think the hon. Member for Clover Bar, who's been in the consulting engineering business some years too, would certainly support me that any time an engineering contract . . . I would hasten to bet nearly all the money our Minister of the Environment will probably make for the next

number of years that Jaakko Pöyry would be very pleased to see that there were other lists, because it shows who you beat, who was in competition. What has this minister got to hide? Where is he getting his advice? It's got to one of the smelliest things I've ever heard of, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

I realize he knows a little about engineering, a little about environment, but to come out and hide on major engineering contracts other bidders is something I think the professional engineers of Alberta would be very interested in hearing about too. I think the minister is out to lunch. I heard one other word that was banned here a while ago, but if there's another word for "sexual up," I'd like to know how the minister's doing it, because it is certainly not a very nice message to be transmitting to the consulting engineers of this province, that they will not release the list of people he has contacted to bid on the job.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair wants to make mention of the fact that while it's pretty funny from time to time to try to play games with parliamentary language and so forth, no matter which direction you want to indulge in, hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, I have here about 10 pages of terms that have been ruled unparliamentary in this particular House, even without getting around to the House of Commons. I'm not here to be your babysitter, but I'm here to have you be encouraged in things parliamentary. For the most part this House is that way, but we don't need to play games about as inconsequential a matter as a particular term.

Now, the Chair would also like to make mention with respect to a matter raised by some comments by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, that, indeed, in this House on December 9, 1987, and again on June 16, 1989, and June 27, 1989, the previous terms were ruled unparliamentary and out of order. Perhaps the hon. member would be good enough to withdraw the comments as made earlier. Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I indicated I was not aware. I wonder if that list might be circulated for the benefit of members.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Now, at last report we were on Motion for a Return 291. The Chair was about to recognize Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The matter of the selection process for Jaakko Pöyry Consulting Inc. is a matter of great curiosity, because the Minister of the Environment told this Assembly before the selection was made that he wanted a truly independent review. He said he meant that the firm selected had to be independent not simply of the project proponent but also of the pulp industry. Those were the minister's words in this Legislative Assembly. Now, it turns out, of course, that Jaakko Pöyry is not only associated with the project proponent Mitsubishi but also has links that run as deep as they possibly can in the pulp industry, being by its nature a firm that primarily engineers the construction of pulp mills. Their involvement in the pulp industry is sort of the equivalent of Imperial Oil's involvement in the petroleum industry. That's the type of firm they are. So it came as a surprise to quite a few people, myself included, when Jaakko Pöyry was selected. Now, outside this Assembly the minister has given indication that he

was not aware of the background of Jaakko Pöyry before he made the announcement of the decision, in which case we want to know not just who else was considered but who in the world made the selection. But I think perhaps an appropriate point to start with would be the fairly modest request of the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, who simply wants to know who else was in the running.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, in summation.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I had high hopes, as I think many people in the province did, when this minister took the portfolio that he formally was able to operate within. In the past he was somebody who had been forthcoming about information, who tried to answer obvious and easy questions, who was expressing intentions to do some things that were right for the environment. This is such a fundamentally easy request that it is impossible to comprehend that a minister who at least a year ago had a track record of openness and accountability would not be prepared to release information of this nature. In his own public works department tenders, there is a public tendering process where the bids of companies involved in tenders have to be released. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we can only come to one conclusion, and that is that yes, indeed, this minister, this government did not consider any company other than Jaakko Pöyry; they went directly to request Jaakko Pöyry to do this study because they had a certain degree of confidence in the nature of the approach Jaakko Pöyry would likely take. I believe the minister's refusal to respond to this motion for a return is a clear indication, an answer in and of itself. He did not get a list of firms; he did not assess that there may be firms that could do it better or less better. He did not try to get a decent price. He simply went and got a firm that his government felt they could rely upon to tell them what they've been wanting to hear for as much as a year and a half on the Al-Pac project issue.

MR. TAYLOR: The fix was on.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The speeches are over, Westlock-Sturgeon. [interjection] Order. Order please. Perhaps, hon. member, you were not in the House when the Chair invited members to refer to Standing Order 13(4)(b), no right to "interrupt that member, except to raise a point of order" and certainly not with respect to the Chair.

[Motion lost]

298. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the terms of reference for the Jaakko Pöyry study on the Alberta-Pacific pulp mill proposal and any government instructions which materially affect the terms.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to sound picayune, but 13(4) says:

When a member is speaking, no person shall

(a) pass between that member and the Chair, or

(b) interrupt that member, except to raise a point of order.

There was a silence after he'd sat down. Am I correct, or did I mishear the referral that you gave?

MR. SPEAKER: The citation was correct, hon. member: 13(4)(b). The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon was busy, engaged in yelling across the Chamber. The standing order clearly states that that's out of order and you will be called to order when you "interrupt that member, except to raise a point of order."

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, this motion simply asks for the terms of reference of the Jaakko Pöyry study into the Alberta-Pacific project or the review they're doing of the review report. The review of the review, I guess, is the way this study has been described. My memory is that the time frame given on this study is that it would be close to completion now. I expect sometime within a matter of days we will be seeing that report. Perhaps the minister might indicate in his response to the motion what his time frame is for tabling or otherwise making available this document. But it does seem to me logical, among other things, to evaluate the Jaakko Pöyry report when it comes. Hopefully we won't have to hire somebody to do a review of the review of the review. To evaluate the Jaakko Pöyry report when it comes in, we will need to know the terms of reference. I think it would be very helpful if the minister could make that available, because surely he would not be spending those hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars on this study without giving clear and unambiguous terms of reference.

So perhaps the minister would indicate when he expects the report to be available in the context of his reply to this motion.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, this whole situation involving Jaakko Pöyry has raised some very serious allegations. I don't know in this House you say that someone hasn't been telling the truth without calling him a liar, because indeed there were a number of companies interviewed and asked to submit proposals.

Notwithstanding that and getting to Motion for a Return 298, Mr. Speaker, the information that has been requested by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is available. It has been published. It's public information. The news releases of March 2, 1990, and April 6, 1990, were quite clear on the requirements and the terms of reference for the Jaakko Pöyry scientific review of some information contained in the Al-Pac report.

With respect to the specific question asked by the hon. member, I think the review started about two and a half weeks ago. They suspected the process would take about 40 days. So what are we looking at? Three weeks? [interjection] Pardon me?

MR. McINNIS: Forty days and 40 nights.

MR. KLEIN: Forty days and 40 nights. Right.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could be less biblical and speak through the Chair.

MR. KLEIN: Right. Well, I'm just trying to do my arithmetic here. But soon.

So on the basis, Mr. Speaker, that the information is available, in the interests of conserving paper and trees, I would recommend that this motion for a return be rejected.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Additional.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place in his request for this information. There is a fundamental difference between what's attached to a press release, which can be interpreted, shall we say, by the public relations people who issue that press release . . . What is being requested here isn't a press release, isn't some document that may be altered or, let's say, synthesized for public consumption. Instead, what is requested here is the letter that was written to Jaakko Pöyry or appended to a contract with Jaakko Pöyry or was part of the contract with Jaakko Pöyry saying, "This is what we want you to do." Why it is that this government is so reluctant to release that kind of information is absolutely beyond me. I cannot understand that, unless this government has something to hide in the Jaakko Pöyry process.

One of the things we're all concerned about them hiding may be that Jaakko Pöyry was hired perhaps in the initial instance to review the first Al-Pac proposal and data related to it but may well have been detoured to now assess the second Al-Pac proposal behind closed doors without the benefit of the kind of public review that was undertaken for the first proposal. In fact, it would seem there's logic to that conclusion. Why would the government continue to spend \$400,000 to study a proposal and data related to a proposal that is no longer on the table? One would expect that even this government would have the good sense to at least begin to study the second proposal. If that is the case – and Jaakko Pöyry, logically, would be a vehicle for doing that study or be a candidate for having done that study – then it's very, very important that we know.

So it isn't enough for us to get some synthesized or possibly synthesized appendage to a news release. What we need to see are the official terms of reference that were sent to and signed by Jaakko Pöyry and this government so we can make an assessment as to whether or not Jaakko Pöyry is doing the job it was apparently established to do, asked to do, and whether in fact that job is appropriate to be done at all.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place, summation.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister replies that he doesn't want to table terms of reference because he's issued a news release. Well, the news release is what he told us, what he told members of the public about the Jaakko Pöyry study. What we want to know is what he told Jaakko Pöyry about the terms of the study. I don't believe for 30 seconds that he would say to Jaakko Pöyry, "Here's a press release; here's a cheque for \$400,000; come back when you're done." I don't think even he operates that way. I think somewhere along the line there's not only a contract but written terms of reference for the study. If you're going to evaluate any study, you have to know what instructions were given to the authors. There are no two ways around that. It's one thing to know what the minister told the news media and, through the news media, the public. We know that; that's on the public record. What we want to know is what he told Jaakko Pöyry before they went ahead and spent the \$400,000. I think that's pretty clear.

Now, I don't want to be the one to have to stand up in this Chamber and say you can't always rely on information that's in government releases, but I guess it falls upon me to do just that. Is what's in the news release as reliable as the policy statement that was tabled in this Assembly by the minister? That said

Public involvement is a fundamental principle of the Government of Alberta's commitment to the protection, improvement and wise use of the environment now and into the future. Is it as reliable as that statement? Or is it as reliable as this one?

Alberta Environment is committed to providing the public with the opportunity to have input into the licensing process. That's referring to clean water permits for the Daishowa pulp company at Peace River. So I think the point needs to be made – if by no one else, it will have to be by this member – that what you get in a government news release isn't always what happens in the final analysis.

If I followed the minister's mathematics through, he started this study 17 days ago and there are 40 days in the process, so we've got another three weeks to go. But I think during that three weeks perhaps he would find it in his heart to . . . I mean, I thought this was as minimal a request as I could possibly make dealing with Jaakko Pöyry. I thought if I came in here and asked for the contract and a bunch of details like that, there's no way they're going to give it to me, so I'll just ask for what I know is safe. Nobody's going to spend \$400,000 on a study and not tell the people who have to finance the study what's being studied. Nobody's that secret. Right? Well, wrong again, I guess.

So perhaps today, in the moments remaining, the minister might at least let Albertans know what instructions he's given to Jaakko Pöyry on how that \$400,000 is to be spent. It would be a reasonable thing for him to do. I don't believe there's an awful lot of paper involved in tabling three copies of the instructions. I can't imagine that the instructions or the terms of reference to the study run very many pages, so the tired and threadbare argument about conserving trees and saving paper as an excuse for withholding information from this Assembly and from the taxpayers who pay the bills around here and the voters who elect us I really don't think can be applied in this particular case. I don't think any trees and, the truth be known, Mother Nature would really mind the sacrifice involved in letting Albertans know what you told Jaakko Pöyry to do with the \$400,000, given that you didn't give them the cheque in the press release.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Those members in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter fails.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Ewasiuk	McInnis	Roberts
Hewes	Mitchell	Sigurdson
Laing, M.	Mjolsness	Taylor
Martin	Pashak	Woloshyn
McEachern		



Against the motion:

Adair	Fischer	Musgrove
Ady	Fjordbotten	Nelson
Anderson	Fowler	Oldring
Betkowski	Gogo	Orman
Black	Horsman	Osterman
Bogle	Hyland	Paszkowski
Bradley	Isley	Payne
Brassard	Jonson	Rostad
Calahasen	Klein	Schumacher
Cardinal	Kowalski	Severtson
Clegg	Laing, B.	Shrake
Day	Lund	Sparrow
Dinning	Main	Speaker, R.
Drobot	McClellan	Tannas
Elliott	Mirosh	Thurber
Elzinga	Moore	West
Evans		

Totals:                   Ayes     —     13     Noes — 49

[Motion lost]

head:   **Public   Bills   and   Orders**  
           **Other than**  
           **Government Bills and Orders**  
           **Second Reading**

**Bill 209**  
           **An Act to Provide for Equal Pay**  
           **for Work of Equal Value**

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege today to rise and introduce Bill 209, An Act to Provide for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value.

This Bill provides for the implementation of pay equity legislation in the civil service, boards, commissions, and businesses doing business with the government and throughout the province of Alberta. While this initiative is limited in addressing the economic inequities and injustices visited upon Alberta women, it is a beginning step, and it is a step that we must take to address the well-documented fact that women do not earn as much money as men do. Because of that fact women and their children are more likely to be poor, they are more likely to be trapped in abusive relationships, and they do not have the kinds of choices accorded men. In addition, all too often we as women are held responsible for the pay inequities we experience, the wage discrimination that limits us, and indeed we are told that if women would be paid equitably and justly, they would be harmed.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I would put this debate in context. Canada in 1972 signed Convention 100 of the International Labour Organisation of the United Nations, which endorsed pay equity and spells out how each member nation shall uphold the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value. The Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues has endorsed the legislation of pay equity, and the Alberta Human Rights Commission endorses the principle of pay equity.

As to the reason why we need pay equity legislation, the data is clear and irrefutable. In 1989 women made up 44 percent of

the Canadian work force. Overall, women in the Canadian work force are better educated than men in the work force. Forty-four percent of women workers as compared to 40 percent of men workers have completed postsecondary education. Thirty-three percent of women workers as compared to 30 percent of men workers have a diploma or a university degree. On average, in 1988 women who worked full-time earned less than two-thirds — that is, 65.3 percent — of what men who worked full-time earned, and in the Alberta civil service women earned 71.5 cents on the dollar. When all earners were included, including part-time workers, the majority of whom are women — many work part-time involuntarily — the average woman worker's income was 57.4 percent of an average man's earnings. On average, a woman working with a university degree earned 723 cents on the dollar of a man with a similar education working full-time. A typical woman with a postsecondary certificate or diploma working full-time in 1988 earned less than a typical man with only a grade 8 or less education.

The Canadian Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service found that the greatest number of leaves for three months or more were reported by women taking maternity or parental leave. But in terms of paid leave, men are far more likely than women to take paid leave due to disabilities. Men are more likely than women to have fully paid paternity child care leave. These are paid leaves.

In terms of promotions, more women than men wanted a promotion in the last three years, and women, 57 percent of them, especially in senior positions, are more likely than men, 53 percent, to seek developmental opportunities such as secondment or high-profile projects. They have found that gender and gender role stereotyping and greater responsibility are seen as barriers to advancement, and I say "family responsibility," as perceived by employers who denied women advancement even though the women had adequate child care in place to ensure that they could fulfill their responsibility. In the face of these facts I believe any rational and logical person would have to ask: what is the justification for the pay inequities experienced by women? Fifty-seven point four cents, 65.3 cents, or at best 72.3 cents on the dollar that men earn: why has this injustice not been corrected?

The basis for pay equity is historic. It comes through the undervaluing throughout time of work done by women, and I would read a quote or two. This is from the Bible: when a man makes a special vow to the Lord which requires evaluation of living persons, a male between 20 and 60 shall be valued at 50 silver shekels; if it is a female, she will be valued at 30 shekels. Sixty-six cents on the dollar.

Margaret Mead in her anthropological studies found that the work done by men and the work done by women varied from culture to culture, but whatever the work was that was done by women, it was valued less as compared to the work done by men. I would also read from a report to the United Nations:

While women represent half the global population and one-third of the labour force, they receive only one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one percent of the world's property.

They are also responsible for two-thirds of all working hours. So they do two-thirds of the world's work for one-tenth of the world's income and own less than 1 percent of the property.

I would tell a story that was reported in the *Economic Journal* in 1918. It talks about John Jones, who earned good wages braiding military tunics. Mr. Jones fell ill, but he was allowed to continue working at home. As he became more ill, his wife started to do his work, and as his illness became more severe and debilitating, his wife did all his work. Subsequently Mr.

Jones died, and it became obvious to the military that Mr. Jones could no longer be doing his work and that in fact Mrs. Jones was doing it. At that point the pay for the work was reduced to two-thirds of what Mr. Jones had received. This inequity is based on the undervaluing of women and the work traditionally done by women.

I think we can see this very clearly when we look at the kinds of research that has been done on the valuing of men's and women's academic work. Essays were passed out in studies, and in some cases they had a man's name on them, and in other cases they had a woman's name on them. When the essays came back, the essay was rated with a lower grade if it had a woman's name on it than it was rated if it had a man's name on it. I think the unfortunate thing is that both men and women did this, but it shows that there is an inability to recognize the value and the competency of women.

Much of the value and the complexity of the work traditionally done by women is invisible. I think here of secretarial support or of the receptionists that make our lives, for us and for many people that work in business, possible. We fail to recognize what would happen if they weren't there to do their work, for one thing. We only notice their work when it's not done, and then the hue and cry is raised. We fail also to recognize the complexity of the skills that they bring to their jobs. We may say that a good secretary knows how to type, but she knows much more than that. She knows how to place a letter on a page. She can spell. She can proofread; that can be a very highly valued skill in some areas. She knows how to communicate and to hear what is being communicated to her. She may demonstrate creativity in that she may be given just a general outline of what to write in a letter. She may be involved in scheduling. She, in fact, is responsible for her own time management and self-direction. But these skills are rarely recognized. Similarly a receptionist; it's easy to answer the telephone – well, not so easy if the person is angry or hostile. She, usually "she," has to have good communication skills, deal with difficult situations and people, and have information.

This tendency to undervalue women's work in this kind of a situation also points out the tendency to overvalue male characteristics. For example, jobs requiring large muscle skills are valued more highly than jobs requiring fine motor skills, yet we know that concentrating on doing some fine work requires more energy than stacking crates. There are a number of reasons we are given that we cannot bring in pay equity legislation. We are told that the government must not interfere in the marketplace, that the market forces must determine what the pay shall be, but the marketplace has a sorry record in terms of justice and human concerns. But, more importantly, we interfere in the marketplace all the time to ensure, among other things, minimum standards of fairness. We have a minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, something that was brought in not that terribly long ago. We have interference to ensure minimum standards of safety, licensing of drivers, workplace safety that requires the wearing of hard hats and steel-toed shoes on construction sites. We have minimum standards of social concern; child labour laws; hours of work; holiday, sick, and parental leave.

The government interferes in the marketplace all the time; they interfere in another way. They interfere with the free forces of the marketplace when they give grants, subsidies, loans, tax and royalty holidays. We have to question: why won't the government interfere in the marketplace to the benefit of women? We hear that you cannot compare apples and oranges,

that you cannot compare different jobs, but in fact nutritionists compare apples and oranges all the time in terms of calories, minerals, vitamins, protein, carbohydrate, and fat content. We do compare jobs and the value of the work, often unfairly in the case of work traditionally done by women. That's why different people doing different jobs in a company or business endeavour, usually in the same gender categories, to have different rates of pay. We know that people are paid differently: social workers, child care workers, psychologists, secretaries, executive secretaries, assistants – those kinds of things. So the evaluation of jobs goes on all the time. What doesn't happen all the time, however, is that we have a cross-gender evaluation of jobs.

In a pay equity scheme we would probably do it much more objectively in that we would look at jobs in terms of certain criteria, in terms of skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions, and we would use a point rating system. When I mention this kind of job evaluation, I think it is important to point out that there is often gender bias and sexism in these rating systems, that we have to work very hard to eliminate those kinds of biases, and that we have to work very hard to recognize the invisible skills inherent in performing the work that is traditionally done by women.

We hear that pay equity doesn't work or that it will harm women or the economy, yet pay equity legislation was introduced in Australia in 1972, nearly two decades ago, and the pay differential was reduced by 15 percent. Women in Australia now earn 82.5 cents on the dollar. That's quite a bit better than the 65.7 cents for women's work. The wage gap has been similarly reduced in other countries, provinces, and states where pay equity legislation has been introduced, in spite of the fact that many of the rating scales have been far from perfect.

We have heard that there will be a loss of jobs available to women. Again the Australian experience teaches us otherwise. Women's participation in the work force has continued to increase since implementation of the pay equity legislation. We have heard that women will lose initiative; I heard that in this Assembly a couple of years ago. We have heard that pay equity legislation would destroy women's initiative by getting them fair pay where they had been underpaid and unfairly paid in the past, that it would mean, through this job evaluation, that they would get something for nothing; that is, they would get more pay for doing the job they had been doing before. I have to say: since when has receiving fair remuneration destroyed initiative? Certainly it isn't held that fair treatment has destroyed men's initiative. Even being overpaid doesn't destroy men's initiative.

AN HON. MEMBER: Now, don't get carried away.

AN HON. MEMBER: Maybe it has.

MS M. LAING: They don't admit to it publicly anyway.

Indeed, in Manitoba pay equity has enhanced women's self-image and self-esteem, so that has meant that they have been more willing to advance, to apply, because they feel like they can do the job. I think we value the work that is done, the work that has been done, the work that we do, in some sense in terms of the pay that we get. The task force on the federal public service indicates that it's the undervaluing of women's labour and the failure to recognize their skills and their potential that have led them to leave their jobs with the public service. They talk about the glass ceiling. Women may be denied opportunities to advance beyond a certain level because of gender

stereotyping and an unwillingness to have women do a job traditionally done by men.

We hear that pay equity will destroy the economic system, that it will force businesses to close. We have to say: are women responsible for ensuring that the economic system flourishes? Are women and their children to be sacrificed on the altar of the free market system and the profit motive? But, more importantly, we have to say: what is the cost to society of women and children living in poverty? We have increased social assistance allowances and the requirement for more day care centres; that's but one part of it. We have a reduced potential for children. Poor children don't learn as well. Poor children may suffer from a less healthy emotional development because they grow up immersed in something that is unfair. They can see that their mothers work very hard, but they are not promoted, are not paid fairly. It may lead to despair and an unwillingness to try.

But there's more to it: there are the health care costs of poverty. Poor people suffer more from illness and early death. Malnourished pregnant mothers have low birth weight infants that require a great deal of care and many dollars to make sure that they survive, and their intellectual, physical, and emotional development may be permanently damaged. There may be irreversible damage to the unborn through malnutrition of the mother. Poor children are ill more than children from upper and middle-income families. These are very great costs to society, but they have a greater cost to the children as individuals, a human cost. We also see that women and children are trapped in abusive relationships and homes because to leave would mean to live in poverty. So we have to say: what are the long-term effects on children and the cost to society to care for and to heal these children? It must be, and it is, a major social concern, as is the pain and suffering of those women and their children.

Pay inequities are unfair and unjust. It is discrimination on the basis of gender, clearly a violation of human rights legislation. We hear that women should enter the nontraditional workplace. Who then, I would ask, will do the work traditionally done by women? This statement and this suggestion reflect very clearly the undervaluing and the invisibility of the work traditionally done by women. We hear that women lack initiative or are not competitive enough, but again the facts that I quoted earlier show the falseness of that premise. Women, we hear, are not as skilled or as trained as men: again, simply untrue. Women are in fact better educated than men, and they are often denied promotion for reasons that are extraneous to their abilities. Sexual harassment is another way that women are limited, and it is documented that 75 percent of women in the paid labour force experience this kind of discrimination.

We hear that women are not committed to be in the work force, that they quit to have babies. I'm not sure who else would have babies if they didn't, but nonetheless . . . In reality, women do quit to have babies, but in a working life of 30 to 40 years, an absence of one to five years to have children cannot be held to be that significant. We have seen that men have a higher rate of absence due to disability leave. In addition, a study with the U.S. Army determined that more days of absence were taken by men due to alcohol and drug abuse than were taken by women for maternity leave. In addition, what we forget is that women gain invaluable skills in the home. They gain skills of communication, problem solving, self-direction, initiative: skills that are very valuable in the paid labour force, although often absent, and they recover very quickly the specific skills in the job that they had previously held.

We hear that women work for pin money or for luxuries, that they want to work part-time. Again, research shows that a significant number of women work on a part-time basis involuntarily, and that means that they and their children live in poverty. In addition, 40 percent of Alberta working women solely support themselves and their families, and 70 percent of two-income families would fall below the poverty line if the second income was absent. Women, like men, work to pay the rent, buy food and clothing, and provide the necessities of life for themselves and their children.

The final argument that we hear is that pay equity will hurt men. This is simply untrue. Men's wages will not be reduced. I think, more unfortunately, it is a ploy to pit men against women instead of acknowledging the economic injustice experienced by women. What man, I would ask, wants his wife, his sister, or his daughter to be discriminated against simply because she is a woman? What kind of society denies fair and just treatment of women? The unfettered free-market system has perpetuated an injustice that has sentenced women to lives of limited possibilities, poverty, and abuse. Surely a government committed to fairness and justice and full development of all its members will enact pay equity legislation. A government committed to healthy families will recognize that the recognition of the equality of women and the need for equitable, fair, and just treatment is fundamental to the creation and continuation of healthy families.

Pay equity is not the complete answer. It does not aid women in female job ghettos. It is but one step on the long road to economic, social, and political equality for women. It is a step that we must take.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must rise today to speak against this Bill 209 that proposes to introduce equal pay for equal value in the public service and to the provincial government contractors through amendments to the Individual's Rights Protection Act. I was actually quite astounded by some of the comments that the member opposite made with regards to women. Of course, I've been a woman all my life. I've raised a family. I've done all the things that she's alluded to, and I have never, never felt that I have been unequal to any man, especially in this room. Of course, I don't want to be misunderstood.

MR. MITCHELL: It doesn't mean you're right.

MRS. MIROSH: Of course it means I'm right.

I would like to be the first to stand in this House to defend equal pay for equal work. I believe that is happening today. Equal pay for equal work has gained widespread acceptance throughout Alberta and certainly throughout Canada. It has certainly been agreed on that when men and women perform the same jobs, they are paid the equal . . .

MR. MITCHELL: You're bragging about being fair.

MRS. MIROSH: I get the same pay as you. I have the same job as an MLA. I probably deserve more.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. The Chair would just like to remind hon. members of the oft quoted Standing Order 13(4)(b). The debate has been going very well this afternoon, and we do not need to have interruptions, so let us proceed, please.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The member sponsoring this Bill has in fact stated that we need to amend certain equal pay provisions in the Individual's Rights Protection Act. This is rather unusual, as the Individual's Rights Protection Act already guarantees that for every Albertan. Equal pay for similar or substantially equal work is already in the Act. I'd like to inform the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore that currently in Alberta there are no legislative barriers which are preventing employers from implementing employment equity programs. In fact, many organizations have done so with a varying degree of success. This is certainly true in my constituency and in Calgary. I'd like to invite the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore to perhaps come to Calgary to see some of the wonderful things we've been doing there in helping women gain jobs of equal value to men.

I believe that the kind of protection in the Individual's Rights Protection Act gives it the necessary and effective legislation that we need. It was enacted in 1972, quite a long time ago. I would like to just remind the member what it says. It's entrenched in legislation that as a matter of policy in Alberta all persons are equal in dignity and rights without regard to race, religious beliefs, colour, sex or gender, physical disability, age, ancestry, or place of birth. I think it's important that I keep reminding members opposite that we do have this policy in place.

Also, the Individual's Rights Protection Act established the Alberta Human Rights Commission. They administrate and enforce provisions under this Act. The commission has the power to investigate complaints from individuals and to arbitrate between individuals to arrive at these mutually acceptable solutions. If no settlement can be achieved, then the commission has the authority to refer this to a formal board for an inquiry. So these checks and balances are already in place.

Women are doing work and are being paid the same. I can state several examples: physicians, pharmacists, lawyers, chartered accountants, and, of course, MLAs. We're all paid the same here. When there are inequities, again, the individual protection Act allows, as I alluded to, the Human Rights Commission to refer the matters to the board for inquiry. I'd also like to relate a case where this Act has been proven to be effective. As a matter of fact, right here in Edmonton in my own school of nursing, the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing, a female nursing aide took her case to the board and stated that the duties performed by a female nursing aide were similar to those performed by male orderlies in the hospitals, and thus the pay should be the same. The nursing aides were successful and were granted the equal pay.

So no one can argue that equal work does not deserve equal pay. However, there are jobs that are deemed to have equal value based on a combination of skills, responsibilities, efforts, and working conditions, and they should be entitled to the same salaries, certainly. Equal pay for equal work means that men and women who perform the same job must be paid the same wage. This concept is often applied even if jobs bear different titles; for example, again, the one I just alluded to.

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order, Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, this MLA is speaking about . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Citation, citation.

MR. MITCHELL: *Beauchesne* . . . [interjections]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member, I'm sure, will soon get to quoting the citation. Let's proceed.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, 459 under *Beauchesne*.

I just want to make this point. What the member is speaking about bears absolutely no relationship whatsoever to the topic that we are discussing today, that is embodied in this Bill. Equal pay for equal work is fundamentally different than equal pay for work of equal value. So she is not talking about the topic that is embodied in this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that you get her back on track or have her sit down and let somebody who wants to talk about this issue talk about it and have her stop belittling it.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, it's commendable indeed when the Liberal caucus comes to the aid of the New Democrats on a matter such as equal pay for work of equal value. I think the hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore was just building a case to refute the argument of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore. I don't think there's a point of order at all.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair views this as a matter of disagreement among members. The Chair has been endeavouring to listen very carefully and finds the remarks to date to be quite relevant to the topic.

MRS. MIROSH: Perhaps the member across would listen. Bill 209 does attempt to enact a policy which allows for gender, and I am trying to build a case. I think that if you listened, perhaps you'd learn something.

The neutral comparisons of occupations – that has been alluded to by the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore – and then the end goal of equal pay for work of equal value is to eliminate the wage gap that men and women have. It's especially difficult with regard to equal pay for work of equal value because the concept was developed recognizing the fact that women have historically worked in different jobs than men. If women traditionally work in different jobs than men, how is it possible to fairly and accurately judge the value of any of their occupations?

Attempts have been made in other jurisdictions to compare different kinds of jobs, and in that process some serious flaws have become apparent. Perhaps I can quote. In the States, for instance, the formula for assigning a numerical value to a job was composed of four factors. There's the knowledge and the skill; the mental demands of the job; accountability; and, of course, the working conditions. It was found that the average point scores given for the first three factors far exceeded the scores given for the fourth, that being the working conditions. This situation caused problems in many, many occupations, and people who worked in jobs where they were paid largely on the

basis of difficult or dangerous working conditions, such as oil rigs, mines, and so forth, were discriminated against because they did not have a job that fit adequately to the job value of the formula, regardless of gender. It is obvious that any type of job evaluation requires the use of the subjective criteria that I just mentioned, which in itself may be discriminatory.

Other than the four criteria provided, Bill 209 makes no provisions whatsoever for the development or selection of a gender-neutral job evaluation system, such as a woman truck driver or a man truck driver. There is no discrimination, but both can have a job of equal value. It is also important to note that nowhere in Bill 209 is there an indication of how the legislation will work, and there's no suggestion of a pay equity commission, of whether the Bill would function on a complaint based model or on a proactive rescaling of wages throughout the public sector. Bill 209 does not spell out the role of the employers, the employees, or bargaining agents in the process of job comparability. Without input from all of those who are involved, it is inevitable that disputes will arise involving the validity and reliability of the job evaluation system. All Bill 209 implies is that sweeping changes must occur within the public sector, but in no way does Bill 209 indicate how all of this will be accomplished.

Bill 209 is poorly conceived and mechanically unsound. The first example of the poor mechanics of Bill 209 can be found in sections 6(8) and 6(9). These sections indicate that Bill 209 could cover only employees of the Alberta public service and employees working for government contractors. This would mean that private-sector employees would no longer be covered by the equal pay and equal work protection presently offered by the Individual's Rights Protection Act. This would be a grave mistake and grave injustice to those people working in the private sector of Alberta. Again I would like to remind the hon. member that perhaps she could come to Calgary, to my constituency, and I could show her some examples.

Bill 209 is also very vague in a technical sense. Section 9(9) regarding contractors with the government of Alberta is very broad. Contractors who have contracts for a single transaction or the supply of a service in a single instance would not be covered under the proposed amendments; however, these contracts could conceivably involve very large amounts of money. Alternatively, a contractor with repeated business dealings with the government may have contracts which are comparatively small in dollar value. This, of course, could have a legal loophole for many businesses which are involved with the provincial government, a loophole which would make implementation of this policy inequitable in itself. In essence, section 9(9) would place contractors involved with the province on an unbalanced playing field.

Other problems. Section 6(7) provides a list of all of the types of remunerations and benefits that would be covered under the pay equity legislation, but it is incomplete. It does not include benefits, none whatsoever. This also could be a legal loophole. Bill 209 contains several technical flaws as well as vague, unidentified terms and would jeopardize the equal pay for substantial similar work protection that women in the private sector now enjoy.

I oppose the adoption of any Bill that would enforce equal pay for work of equal value within our public service. In Alberta we believe in equal pay for equal value of similar work in any given field. There should not be any distinction whatsoever between wages, and no one disputes that. But to judge the worthiness, the intrinsic value of a job, through a subjective mathematical

formula and then to scale the results, to number and compare the value of the dramatically different kinds of work, is bound to be contentious and very unacceptable.

The hon. member also continued to mention that women who have been abused or women who have been at home have no kind of way of getting a high-paid job. I'd like to remind the hon. member that there are a number of women who have got back into the work force. They've stayed home, and they've done that out of choice. They've raised their children. They have been given a great deal of help through our government career employment programs and many other programs that we have in place. Many of the women are back in the work force, and many of them are making more money than men. Even with young people today who are working part-time – I can allude to the young people who are working as waitresses and waiters: quite often the women are chosen over the young boys for these kinds of jobs. As a matter of fact, there is reverse discrimination, and as a mother with three sons I can probably cite several examples. Women's attitudes concerning their roles at home have changed because so many women have chosen to enter back into the work force, and they've done this because housewives have been liberated. I feel that once they're out in the work force and want to achieve their goal and work for that goal, they can adapt, and they can probably adapt at the same level as the men.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say once again that I do not support Bill 209.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIGURDSON: Let's get some sanity back into this place.

AN HON. MEMBER: She might not support it.

MR. DAY: That's scary support, Bettie; that's scary.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're in trouble, Bettie.

MRS. HEWES: Oh, don't hold your breath. Don't hold your breath.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Bill without equivocation. I believe that this Bill is a measure of the maturity of this province and our response to the reality of today in Alberta. The whole business of pay equity has repercussions on how we look at and value the nature of work. The need for this pay equity legislation to me is a manifestation of how we have continuously undervalued and have not given credit to the work of women in the province of Alberta. We like to think of ourselves in this province as fair and just, but what happens here in this House when we discuss this matter is a critical statement about the nature of Alberta, the government of Alberta, and the thinking of this government of Alberta. I wonder to myself: when on earth are we going to get to the point where we treat people honestly and fairly and with justice?

Mr. Speaker, the need for pay equity extends well beyond simple equality. Low wages hurt all of society. They hurt people living in poverty, and those people create a demand for all kinds of subsidies in housing and child care. They have needs in health care and living allowances and education. It's a vicious circle. It's time that we got on with it.

Mr. Speaker, an examination of statistics and information provided by the Canadian Human Rights Commission indicates that Alberta is not keeping pace with other provinces or the federal government in efforts to correct biases against women in the workplace. Alberta has fallen behind eight other jurisdictions which have introduced pay equity legislation to narrow the wage gap between men and women. In Alberta, women's groups, opposition members in this House have called frequently and over many years now for pay equity legislation. However, the Labour minister recently told an audience in Calgary that it's going to be some years before Alberta has pay equity legislation because there is no consensus that such legislation is the right approach. Well, Mr. Speaker, one doesn't like to think that we have to legislate this kind of thing in this day and age, but in fact we do.

The previous speaker from Calgary-Glenmore indicated that we have the legislation in place that creates fairness and equity. If that's the case, then why do we have the kind of statistics that the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore read in great abundance to us? The facts are incontrovertible. They cannot be challenged. There is no way that it can be proved that the present legislation in fact creates a fair environment, a fair playing field, as this government loves to refer to it, a balance for women in this government or in business and industry in Alberta. It does not.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour's own figures speak to the needs of children and families in poverty in Alberta, and we wonder what kind of families, and how this particular circumstance of the absence of pay equity legislation in fact influences that. I have spoken in this House about the nature of poverty in Alberta and the need to address it, some of the short-term moves that we can make today that would ease circumstances for families and in the final analysis would aid the economy of the province. This is one of them. Pay equity is not a complicated piece of legislation, but it is a piece of legislation that would provide balance and equity and fairness to Alberta families.

Mr. Speaker, the problems that have been described in this House regarding job classification and the accompanying wages are, I believe, pure smoke screens. We've had job classifications in place for a century, and I don't think it's an impossible task at all, as the government would have us believe, to write job comparisons and job evaluations. Pay equity evaluates jobs in a systematic and equal fashion according to the four criteria that we all know. This government prides itself frequently on their

tradition of having government mechanisms in place that allow for an equitable playing field. Well, gender wage disparity is going to continue, I submit to you, unless the province takes a proactive position at the place where they should start – that's right here, in the government employees – and allow it to spread. I believe this government should take the leadership, should show the flag, and show how the work can be done.

Mr. Speaker, I submit further that pay equity legislation will change how people really think not just about men's work and women's work but about how all work is valued. I think it will improve our thinking and our capacity to deal equitably and fairly with men as well as with women. Opponents of pay equity say it's going to be the death knell of the free market system, but I ask you: why should we have a system that operates on the backs of women? That's exactly the kind of circumstance we are in now.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore has also dispelled some of the myths about the free market. We don't have a free marketplace now. Government interferes in all manner of places, and I believe that this type of interference, if it could be called that, of providing pay equity legislation will produce a happier, more productive work force than ever before. Studies tell us that workplaces that are equitable, that are fair, that are balanced are more productive workplaces. It is working in other nations, it's working in other parts of Canada, and it's working in the University of Alberta. The myths have been dispelled. Everyone we know outside of this House supports it: women's groups support it; the women's advisory council supports it; the Human Rights Commission speaks to it.

MR. HYLAND: Does CN have it?

MRS. HEWES: CN has it. CN got it when I was there, Mr. Speaker, and I'm proud of that. Right on.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for the government to be proactive in this regard. I am puzzled by their continued resistance. It's time that the government got into this century before it's over. Women are not separate from the system but are consumers and workers, and they're integral to the system. They should be paid. They should be paid fairly as important contributors to the economy and to the quality of all of our lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would love to recognize; however, the time is 5:30. Adjourned debate would be regarded as Edmonton-Meadowlark.

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