

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**

Title: **Friday, June 15, 1990 10:00 a.m.**

Date: 90/06/15

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our divine Father, as we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our thanks and ask that we may continue our work under Your guidance.

Amen.

**head: Introduction of Visitors**

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, seated in my gallery today from the state of Montana, Senator Williams and his wife. I ask that they stand, and I ask the House to recognize them.

**head: Notices of Motions**

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I give oral notice now that after question period I'd like to submit the following resolution under Standing Order 40:

Be it resolved that since June 16 is United Nations day of solidarity with the people of South Africa, commonly known as Soweto Day, and that in light of the fact that Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, is about to make an historic visit to Canada, the Legislative Assembly fully endorse international sanctions against South Africa in order to speed the full liberation of the South African people from the oppression of apartheid.

**head: Introduction of Bills****Bill 38****Loan and Trust Corporations Act**

MR. JOHNSTON: I am pleased today, Mr. Speaker, to introduce Bill 38, the Loan and Trust Corporations Act.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a complete rewrite of the trust company legislation now operating in this province and incorporates a variety of changes which flow from a review of legislation provincially dealing with the response to the problems we have suffered here in Alberta, and is part of a comprehensive review of financial institution legislation which my colleague the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and I have undertaken over the past two years. This Bill and its principles deal with enhanced reporting requirements, new forms of registration of trust companies in the province, and of course, we're very specific about the way in which the activities of a trust company will be governed and controlled in this province. Mr. Speaker, I would note that the government intends to leave this Bill on the Order Paper until the fall.

I move first reading of Bill 38, Loan and Trust Corporations Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 38 read a first time]

**head: Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a school group from my riding. There have been students from this school here each year, and I'm pleased to see that. They're from the lycée Louis Pasteur school, and there are three students and two teachers. The students are Jonathan Lane, Andrew Klug, Leila Ahad, and teachers Alexis Aitken and Bogna Skupinska. I would ask the five of them, who are in the members' gallery, to stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it's also my pleasure today to introduce to you two uncles of one of our pages, Sarah Stempkens. They're both in your gallery. One of them is Mr. Frank Groeneveld from Surrey, B.C., and the other is Mr. Joe Brouns from the Netherlands. I'd ask them both to stand and receive the welcome, the one to our country, the other to our province. We hope they will enjoy their stay here.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a school class. I'm doing this on behalf of the Associate Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Shirley McClellan, and it's a particular pleasure because they're from a school that I served as principal of for nine years. When you see the parents up there stand up, most of them were students of mine; they come from that generation.

MR. TAYLOR: Have they gotten over it yet?

MR. ISLEY: There are 33 grades 5 and 6 students from the Altario school located in the Chinook constituency. They're accompanied by parents Mr. Eddie Ference, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Ference, Mr. Doug Ference, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Kelts, and Mrs. Donna Murphy. I'd ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature, even the welcome of my friend that likes to interrupt, Nick Taylor.

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly some visitors from the green nation, from Ireland: Rev. Dick and Maureen Ross, who are visiting here in our green province for three months. They are accompanied by Anne and Dave Hiebert from the green constituency of Edmonton-Parkallen. They're in the members' gallery. I'd like them to receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder, followed by Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased this morning to be able to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 21 students from the Athlone school located in the constituency of Edmonton-Calder. They are accompanied by their teacher John Bell. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague from Calgary-Mountain View, it's my pleasure this morning to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 17 students from Rundle College in Calgary. They're seated in

the public gallery, and they're accompanied by teachers Mr. Rod Martens and Mrs. Margaret Bland. I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I have some very special guests this morning from the constituency of Edmonton-Jasper Place. They are my father, Milton McInnis, my mother, Tilly McInnis, my wife, Luba Lisun, and my former next-door neighbour, Mr. Bill Lumsden. They're in the public gallery. I wonder if they could rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this morning to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 11 grade 10 students from the John Paul II high school in Fort Saskatchewan. They're accompanied by their teacher Mr. Reg Woelfle. They're visiting the House on a tour, and I will have the opportunity to visit with them in turn on Monday next. I would ask that the students and their teacher rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

#### head: Oral Question Period

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

#### Aboriginal Rights

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier. Yesterday the Premier said, and I quote *Hansard*:

Myself as Premier and our government feel very strongly about working with the aboriginal people in this province and in protecting their rights.

Frankly, I was glad to hear that because I remember back in 1987, when it was time for fairness for aboriginal people in the Constitution, four provincial leaders, including our Premier, scuttled natives' legitimate claims for entrenching the principle of aboriginal self-government in Canada's Constitution, Mr. Speaker. So I say now to the Premier: the position of native people constitutionally is delicate, to say the least; frankly, they don't trust governments, and they haven't forgotten what happened in 1987. My question now: in retrospect, does the Premier now regret his earlier position at the 1987 conference on aboriginal rights?

MR. GETTY: No, not at all, Mr. Speaker, because I'd like to see the entrenchment of aboriginal rights and self-government. But I will always say: you'd better have it defined before you put it in blindly, without knowing what it means. I don't think it's difficult for us to work out with the aboriginal people what it means and define the matter of aboriginal self-government, and then let's put it in the Constitution.

Now, if the hon. member wonders about our commitment to aboriginal people, I'd just tell him to look at the record: the record of the Fort Chip settlement, the record of the Sturgeon Lake Band settlement, the record of the Whitefish Band settlement, the record of the Metis agreement, the record of the Metis framework agreement, and the work we've done to help to try and bring together the federal government and the Lubicon Band over some period of time. We've been working with our aboriginal people. They support us very strongly. That's evidenced by the support for members of the aboriginal people in this very Assembly. So don't talk about scuttling

something. We are working with the aboriginal people, and all we ask is that when we put it in the Constitution, we take the time to define it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, how is it, then, that the Premier in promoting, as he has done, Senate reform, is asking people to say that we will have effective – the Triple E – without knowing what it means in the future, but we can't do the same for aboriginal self-government? That's a double standard.

MR. GETTY: If that's the question, I don't see any comparison whatsoever. In going through the Senate reform discussions, obviously one of the things that's going to take most of the time now for the commission, but even if the commission had not been there, for first ministers and our officials and our ministers, would be working out the effective powers. We would obviously have to do that before we actually have a comprehensive reform of the Senate. That's always been the plan, that you define what those effective powers mean.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's the point: that we can promote the concept of aboriginal self-government and work it out before. I suggest to the Premier that if he's not prepared to do that, we're going to be in a straitjacket Constitution with aboriginal rights for a long period of time.

But my question, flowing from the answer. At the recent talks in Ottawa the Premier insisted that there be a provision for minimal change in the Senate should agreement not be found within five years. Mr. Speaker, it might say so. That's a reasonable thing to do, and it guaranteed certain changes in the Senate. My question to the Premier: would the Premier be prepared to endorse and promote a similar provision for aboriginal rights?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know in what kind of detail the hon. Leader of the Opposition is talking. I don't know whether he means there are some seats or in what context he asks that kind of a question.

But I'll tell you one thing: one of the ironies of what is happening right now, because of concern for aboriginal rights in some people's minds, is that if Meech Lake fails, the aboriginal rights process will, like Senate reform, be canceled. We will not be discussing it around a constitutional table, and it'll be a real tragedy.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to this Premier that there's no trust for the stand these governments have taken. It's perfectly understandable why aboriginal people are doing what they're doing.

#### Conflict of Interest Guidelines

MR. MARTIN: My second question, Mr. Speaker, is also to the Premier. We've been waiting patiently here in the Assembly for the government to bring in long-awaited important legislation in several areas. Instead, what do we get? We get the privatization of a critical money-making public asset so the Treasury can get a quick revenue fix; we get inadequate environment legislation that's too serious to be handled by the Minister of the Environment; we get elk farming; we get a power grab from the universities in terms of legislation. Mr. Speaker, just as importantly we have to look at what's not there, too, just to see how twisted this government's priorities and values are. My question

is this: can the Premier explain why yet another session appears to be slipping away without legislation for effective, tough conflict of interest guidelines for MLAs?

MR. GETTY: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to again remind the Leader of the Opposition that there is conflict of interest legislation now. It's called the Legislative Assembly Act, and it is very strong legislation. It was passed by this Legislature after a great deal of thought and is now in effect. Nevertheless, at the instigation of this government we had a fine group of Albertans do a comprehensive report and provide us some 254 pages of details on what might be done and what could be done in order to have additional strengthening of ethics guidelines. Now, as I've said before in this Assembly, it's a very good report. It has a lot of detail and a lot of new thinking. It's a result of them traveling across North America talking to other jurisdictions. We are going through that process. We will have it brought to our cabinet and our caucus and as quickly as possible brought to the Legislature. Now, I think we have lots of time in the Legislature, and we'll bring it as quickly as we can.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, let me remind this Premier that the Wachowich report came out the second week of March. This Legislature spent most of April debating the alleged conflict of interest of the Member for Redwater-Andrew, and that affair frankly reinforced what Justice Wachowich said in his report and what the Official Opposition has been saying for years in this Assembly: that Alberta needs not watered-down conflict of interest guidelines but tough, effective guidelines. I want to ask the Premier simply this: can we count on the Premier to bring in new conflict legislation before this session ends or not? Can he be specific for a change?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, how would you know when this Assembly is going to adjourn? I don't know. I will say this: we'll bring it as quickly as we can, and we're working on it to bring it as quickly as we can. The members know that sometimes speeches expand to fill all of the available time, and that sometimes delays House business. So I give this commitment as I've given to the House before: we'll work on this important matter; we'll work on it in a comprehensive way; we want to do it right – not just quickly, but right – and that's what we're going to do.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this is such nonsense. The Wachowich report included draft legislation. I have a private member's Bill that includes draft legislation that we could get together on. It's unacceptable that we have such flimsy rules that an MLA could be convicted of influence peddling and still not break our guidelines. My question is this to the Premier. The work's already been done. What's the Premier waiting for? Another scandal?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, you'll have to tell me about the first scandal. All we've had in this Legislature, if you want to talk about that, is one member get up, totally unfounded, and try and . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. [interjections] Thank you, Mr. Premier.

MR. SIGURDSON: If you ran out of tar, there are lots of feathers.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. You're wasting your own time, hon. members.

Mr. Premier, would you like to conclude?

MR. GETTY: I certainly would, because to have one member of this Assembly stand up without any evidence at all and try and . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjection] Order.  
Concluding comment, Mr. Premier.

MR. McINNIS: Say it again, Don.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Would you like to not say it again, Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, maybe the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place's parents will straighten him out now that they've seen that kind of performance.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying and will conclude, we certainly have had a case where a member of this Assembly has had unfounded allegations brought against them, which has been ashamed . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. Premier. There seems to be no interest in this topic continuing. [interjections]

MS BARRETT: We tell the truth, that's why.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order.  
Edmonton-Glengarry.

### Constitutional Reform

MR. DECORE: My questions are to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, many Albertans were disgusted by the role the Prime Minister played in the most recent constitutional discussions. We saw the manipulation, I believe, of the Prime Minister taking a clause that should have been intended to be placed in the most recent accord. It suddenly got lost. Now we see a Prime Minister gloating and admitting that he was part of a plan of manipulating Canadians, of playing brinkmanship with the hearing process of the most recent discussions until the very end. My first question to the Premier is this. A lot of Albertans believe that the Premier of our province was taken into the confidence of the Prime Minister. Did our Premier know of the intended manipulation of Canadians by playing brinkmanship with these most recent constitutional discussions?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, this matter was raised by the Leader of the Official Opposition the other day, and I give the same reply to the leader of the Liberal Party: surely they should not take their information on important matters and then make disparaging comments about the Prime Minister of the country when they don't know the facts. If they're merely going to take something out of a report, a secondhand report, it's hardly the way to make judgments. Nevertheless, obviously we were down there to fulfill the three principles that I outlined to this Assembly and which we were able to not only establish but accomplish, and that was to fight for the unity of our country, have strong, equal provinces, and end up with a meaningful breakthrough on Senate reform. Now, with the successful conclusion of the agreement – and that, of course, has some risks right now – those things will all be accomplished, but I tell

the hon. member it's hardly the way, to cast those kinds of aspersions on the leader of our country.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I saw the manipulation of that last clause, and the Premier explained how he expected that clause to be part of the accord. It wasn't. That was manipulation.

Mr. Speaker, the die seems to be cast now that the time lines for June 23 will not be met in Manitoba and likely Newfoundland. My second question is this: is the Premier prepared to continue taking the route of looking after Quebec's interests and ensuring that those time lines are met, or is he prepared to say to the Prime Minister, "Extend the time lines; make sure that all Canadians have an opportunity to have their say on this most recent accord"?

MR. GETTY: There are two things the hon. member has referred to. One is a clause, and here he goes again having no knowledge of what he's talking about. Now, Mr. Speaker, I was in the room. I saw what happened. I knew that there was a draftsman who apologized directly to Premier Wells, explained it to Premier Wells. He's one of the most respected legal minds, as a matter of fact, a friend of Premier Wells: Mr. Tassé made the apology. Mr. Wells accepted it, and they both sat and said that it happened inadvertently; it was not intended. It was put back in just after a little bit of discussion between the two of them and all the Premiers. They thought it had been handled a different way.

For the leader of the Liberal Party to again stand up and talk about something he has no knowledge of is typical of the way he conducts himself in this Legislature, and it's shameful. Then, secondly, to stand up and do what some people do, and that is to try and create disunity by taking a shot at another part of our country over a sensitive matter such as saying catering to Quebec, I think is the cheapest kind of political opportunism.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I consider the Premier to be helping in covering up the Prime Minister's tracks on this, because it was he that said to me that that clause was supposed to be in that accord. You believed it, and so did the other first ministers, and it was manipulated out by the Prime Minister.

My last question to the Premier is this. It's clear that this accord will fail in Manitoba, and I believe it will fail because of the actions of Newfoundlanders. What contingency plan does our government have, Mr. Premier, in that failing of the accord?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, of course the hon. leader of the Liberal Party again doesn't know what he's talking about. He's being hypothetical. Also, the clause he's referring to is in the accord. It's in the accord. You know, we're not going to take him along anymore if he doesn't learn any more than that.

So, Mr. Speaker, on this issue of the failure of the accord, let's think again that we are putting our country at risk, and let's make sure and hope that all Canadians realize that we are now once again bringing our nation, one of the finest nations in the world, to the brink of disunity and breaking apart. Now, if the hon. member wonders what options you might consider in that case, obviously there are going to be some terrible potentials that could damage Canada for all time. But for my part, I'm not going to dwell on the negative as the leader of the Liberal Party is. I'm going to continue to fight for my country.

MR. SPEAKER: Smoky River.

### Flooding in the Northwest

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I had the opportunity of traveling through northern Alberta, where Mother Nature was fairly unkind to its residents, depositing up to 175 millimetres of rain in a 36-hour period. The concerns are still there. I was appalled at the level of some of the rivers in the southern part of the Peace River country. My understanding is that there are still areas in the northern part of the province that are in danger. A question to the Minister of the Environment: would the minister share with us just what is the status of the rivers? Are there dangers out there, and what is the status, particularly, for the farther part of northern Alberta?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, as of a few moments ago the floodwaters are working their way down the Peace, the Athabasca, and the Pembina rivers. The flood peak at the village of Fort Vermilion is expected to occur at about noon today. The flood wave along the Pembina River is not expected to pass through all potential flood areas until Monday, June 18, and the wave passing down the Athabasca is not expected to cause any significant flooding. I might add that the dikes that were built by the government during the 70s and the '80s to protect the town of Peace River from flooding saved that town from disastrous flood damage, and flood levels for this event were almost a metre higher than during the 1972 flood event, when much of the town was inundated.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, as the acting minister responsible for Public Safety Services today, I'd just like to say that the report at 9:30 this morning said clearly that in the hamlet of Fort Vermilion they feel that the officials have things well in hand. There's been a fair amount of sandbagging under way, and they feel they have it under control. At Rycroft there are a number of mobile homes flooded, and the sewage lift station is in some disrepair, but they feel in those areas that they have things under control. There is extensive road damage, and the minister of transportation may wish to respond to that.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, my second question is to the minister of transportation. Basically, it became apparent yesterday that there were three primary aspects of concern: one was flooding, second was erosion, and third was the status of the roads. There have been entire riverbanks caved in; roads have been removed as a result of that. My question to the minister is: when will the minister be able to provide us with a status and an update of the condition of the roads within that area that was affected?

MR. ADAIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a continuing process at this point. The water is going down behind the wave, so to speak. Last night we were able to get access back into the Grovedale area south of Grande Prairie via 666. They had been completely cut off at that point. Highway 49: we expect the bridge to be opened sometime today with the water going down, and 734, the road south of the highway into Grande Prairie, is blocked with a massive mudslide that we have there. We haven't determined the total amount of damage to this point because a good number of the area is still under water, and we'll be working on that. The point I may make is that we're doing everything to ensure that we have access as quickly as possible after the waters have receded.

### Poverty

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family and Social Services has said with respect to poverty that Alberta has less than the national average of people living below the poverty line when in fact we have a greater number of poor families than the national average, and the numbers are growing. The Leader of the Official Opposition, unlike the Premier and this minister, takes these numbers so seriously that he has established a task force to look into the needs of these families and their children. I'd like to ask the minister: how can this minister downplay the seriousness of the thousands of families and their children living in poverty in this province and say that we are below the national average when in fact we are above it?

MR. OLDRING: Well, again, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd want to make it very clear that neither this minister nor this government has ever tried to downplay the seriousness of the problem as it relates to child poverty. I'm delighted, in fact, to hear that the Leader of the Official Opposition is going to be participating in a task force. I think that's the kind of input we're looking for from members opposite.

I'd like to quote my source, Mr. Speaker. It's a document that's put out by the National Council of Welfare entitled Children and Poverty. I know that the member opposite has received a copy of it. It shows very clearly that here in Alberta in terms of child poverty the most recent statistics that we have show Alberta's percentage of child population living below the poverty line at 15.6 percent. That compares to Saskatchewan at 25.7 percent, which is of course very regrettable. It compares to British Columbia at 20.2 percent, and it compares to the national average of 17.6 percent. So, as I've said before in this Assembly, quite clearly the information I have, not a source attributable directly to me but to the National Council of Welfare – according to that source we are considerably below.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I have said all along that we take no pride at being below the national average, that we in Alberta know that's not good enough. I've said all along that we're not prepared to sit back and just leave it at that, that we're going to continue to fight against poverty in our province and in our nation, and that we're going to continue to offer some of the best programs of support available in the country today, and we're going to continue to look for initiatives, new ways of addressing poverty. We're going to continue to work in partnership with Albertans, because again it's not something that this government can wave its wand at and put an end to. It's not something that this government can sign away. It's something that we have to work on together.

MS MJOLSNESS: Well, Mr. Speaker, this government cares so much, this minister cares so much that he won't even raise the shelter allowances for people on social assistance to ease some of their pain.

Mr. Speaker, the minister continues to say that the numbers are dropping. According to the Canadian Council on Social Development, however, the numbers are in fact increasing. I would ask the minister this: will the minister admit that the reason he says that the numbers are dropping, when in fact other sources say that they are increasing, is because he does not place these children and their families as a priority?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, again, I regret it when I see members opposite try to exploit statistics and situations for political gain. I can only say, as I've said on many occasions in

this Assembly, that we are committed. We're committed to working with Albertans; we're committed to working with Canadians. I would want to mention the progress on the national scene. We're working with groups like the Child Poverty Action Group, the Canadian Child Welfare Association, the Canadian Council on Children and Youth, the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Vanier Institute, and here in Alberta the new Premier's council in support of strengthening Alberta's families. Mr. Speaker, a very, very serious problem. I might add that I'm attending a ministers' conference with my colleagues from across Canada. The number one item on the agenda is children's poverty.

Mr. Speaker, we're all looking for solutions. We're all looking for answers, because we recognize that we have a wealthy, affluent nation. We have a province that has some tremendous resources. We're working to develop some of those resources. I wish the members opposite would be more supportive of some of those diversification initiatives that we're bringing forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
Edmonton-Gold Bar.

### St. John's Health Care Complex

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The anger that's been created by the transfer of ownership of the St. John's hospital from the Sisters of Service to the Edson municipality refuses to go away. The minister insists that consultation took place, yet we have correspondence from Archbishop MacNeil of Edmonton, Bishop O'Byrne from Calgary on behalf of the bishops of Alberta, and from Father Richard Conrad, a board member of the hospital from St. Catherine's Anglican Church in Edson. In Father Conrad's letter, he says:

I wish to express my displeasure in regards to the manner in which the proposed transfer of ownership was decided by the Hon. Nancy Betkowski.

I'll table these letters from the reverend gentlemen. The thing we've learned is that the process has been badly flawed, and we now see a major concern related not only to the specific but to all voluntary health care institutions. To the minister . . . [interjection] Not as long as the last one we heard, Mr. Deputy Premier.

The people are angry and frustrated that they have not been considered. Will the minister now place a moratorium on this decision and on the transfer in order to give opportunity to consider everyone's opinions and to rethink the decision?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not really sure what the hon. member is suggesting. Whenever a difficult decision is made, there are going to be people that agree with the decision and people that don't agree with the decision. The reality is that in the case of the St. John's hospital, we had two boards running a single facility, and when the sisters wrote to me to say that they could no longer be running the facility, that they weren't able to do it and wanted to change the equity agreement that had existed with the province for some time, we obviously had to look at it.

There was consultation in the community, but if the members of the Liberal Party think that by talking to everybody and coming up with a magic solution that's going to make everybody happy is going to be a solution, I quite frankly doubt that that would be the case. The hon. member, however, made a very serious allegation in her question, and that is that all voluntary institutions in our province are under threat of being closed

down by the province. I think the hon. member need only look at the additions that have been made to those voluntary hospitals, like the Grey Nuns hospital, a new hospital in Edmonton. We asked that the Grey Nuns run that hospital. I think that's quite an attestation, an historic one, of the support that the province has for the voluntary sector.

In addition to that, I have met with the Alberta Catholic foundation on more than one occasion to suggest to them that they look at the means by which the transfer out of the equity agreements occurs in order that the foundation might take over that ownership, because when you get right to the brink of that being the decision, the triggering mechanism being the sisters' contacting the province and saying, "We can no longer run this facility," then you start to have all of the public debate engendered by that. I think you only need look at Edson, look at the position of the democratically elected town council of Edson and how supportive they are and other municipal councillors are of the province's role.

Certainly as a bottom line the role of voluntary hospitals in this province is exceedingly important, and it is the intent of this government to do whatever we can to continue that role; in fact, enhance that role.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I'm only asking that it be reconsidered in light of the anger and divisiveness it's caused.

Mr. Speaker, my second question to the minister is this: if the minister truly wants to believe that the future of voluntary hospitals is secure in the province, then why didn't the minister and the department undertake to implement a joint board between the municipality and the foundation, as was suggested and has been working successfully in Lamont and Bonnyville?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, there was consultation within the community. In fact, I tabled a response to the question raised in that regard, I think by the Member for Edmonton-Centre, so it's a matter of record in terms of the consultation that occurred. It was the view of the review and certainly the view of our cabinet when we made the decision that in the best interests of the municipality and the best interests of the health of the community and certainly in the interests of having a single board, this was the best solution. What will happen with respect to others in the province is one that, as I indicated earlier, I'm working with the foundation to try and smooth the transition of that eventuality in those equity agreements.

MR. SPEAKER: Lesser Slave Lake.

### **Constitutional Reform** (continued)

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier. There is a great deal of confusion, particularly after listening to many of the questions brought forward this morning, regarding the ratification of the recent Meech Lake agreement. Could the Premier indicate to the Assembly what the concerns are regarding the deadline of June 23?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the June 23 deadline is not a consequence of Meech Lake or any of the constitutional agreements and discussions that we've been going through. The June 23 deadline is a creation of the constitutional amendment of 1981, when the first ministers at that time patriated the Constitution and built a new amending process into the Con-

sitution. We have no choice in the matter. We inherited the three-year period condition from the Constitution as it was patriated under the previous first ministers. It dictates that all Legislatures and the House of Commons and the Senate must pass the constitutional amendment within three years. So while it has obviously lots of problems with elections and changes of Premiers and so on, I don't think that former first ministers really considered all of the problems that might happen in this three-year period. One of the things that is in the current constitutional agreement is that we will review the overall amending process, including the three-year period as well as the matter of mandatory public hearings.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you.

Is there a mechanism in place, Mr. Premier, which will accommodate the extension of this deadline?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think it'd be helpful if the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Deputy Premier, gave some details about that feature in our Constitution.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is a serious issue, but the fact is that the only mechanism which would be available to relieve against the closure of time on this issue would be to pass constitutional amendments through all the Legislatures and the Houses of Parliament. Clearly, that is the only relief valve, and it's certainly not usable.

MR. DECORE: That stupid veto will stop that.

MR. HORSMAN: The leader of the Liberal Party is clearly uninformed about the Constitution of Canada. I don't know why he should be. He is a lawyer, and you would think he would know something.

MR. JOHNSTON: That's probably why.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, one would like to hope that a basic understanding of section 39 of the Constitution, which provides the amending procedure . . .

You know, it's rather interesting, Mr. Speaker. This morning I heard a broadcaster say that the Premiers had agreed at Meech Lake to a three-year deadline. You know, that type of misinformation coming from the news media is really unfortunate and, I think, has clouded the issue quite substantially. The fact of the matter is that it is part of the Constitution of Canada. It was not a decision made by the Premiers and the Prime Minister at Meech Lake or the Langevin Block. It's part of the Constitution, and that's the deadline and the dilemma we are facing now in the nation. There's just no other relief valve or mechanism than a full-scale constitutional amendment, and that's just not possible to achieve.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

### **Oil Pipeline Monitoring**

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. It concerns not the natural disasters but some of the human-engineered disasters in our province. Unfortunately, we have a situation where the Minister of Energy is putting off answering questions about the issue of pipeline safety pending an investigation of a spill of some 2

million litres in the Rocky Mountain House area. He did, however, state earlier this week that he did not discuss with the vice-president of Amoco the pipeline leak prevention code and the fact that neither the government nor the public has any role to play in writing or revising this document.

Now, as much as the government would like to focus on this one particular incident, I'm concerned about the alarming trend: the increase in the number of incidents. There's been a doubling of the number of reported failures over the last 15 years. We're up to about two and a half such incidents every day. I wonder if the Minister of the Environment, who has responsibility to clean up these messes, is also concerned about the number of incidents, and what he's doing to reduce the number in the province of Alberta.

MR. KLEIN: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would be most pleased to receive a list of these incidents from the hon. member. My gosh, you know, there are degrees of seriousness relative to spills. What is he talking about? Is he talking about someone accidentally knocking over a bottle of salt, or is he talking about something that is . . . [interjections] Well, he is talking in such generalities about spills, how can one possibly answer the question?

If the hon. member wants to be specific, if he wants to point things out, if he wants to elaborate on the seriousness of the spills, I would be glad to answer those questions relative to the specific nature of the spill.

MR. McINNIS: The question of what he's doing to prevent them is admittedly a difficult question, and perhaps he'd like to ponder it.

I would be glad to provide the statistics, which are very easily available from the Energy Resources Conservation Board. The minister is right; they're not all as serious as Amoco, and perhaps that's a matter of luck as much as any other thing. But according to Amoco's story, they followed the industry's recommended practice. A leak was discovered when they did their material balance after seven days. The only trouble is that in those seven days 2 million litres . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The supplementary question now, please.

MR. MARTIN: They went on for five minutes over there.

MR. SPEAKER: It's on number three.

MR. McINNIS: My question to the Minister of the Environment is: given that the industry code of practice only requires them to do a material balance every 30 days, does he not see that if you can get 2 million litres leak out in a week – how many litres does he think might leak out over a 30-day period?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, the situation relative to the Amoco spill is under investigation. It's under investigation by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. My department is involved, and if indeed something is found through that investigation that leads us to believe that there needs to be a tightening up of the monitoring and the rules, then that will be done.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that because of the emergency response preparedness of Alberta Environment, we were there on the site. We were able to take all the measures deemed necessary, along with OSCAR, to contain the spill and

to minimize the damage. I think that's very, very important to recognize as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Vegreville.

### **Ethanol Fuels Industry**

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Consumers in Alberta who are concerned about the environment and want to use clean-burning ethanol blend fuels can do so by purchasing it at Mohawk. That ethanol is produced in Manitoba, providing jobs and marketing opportunities for farmers and workers in the province of Manitoba. We've got news recently that a plant is now opening in Lanigan, Saskatchewan, near the Alberta border, because of a joint venture between Mohawk Oil, Pound-Maker Feeders, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Everybody else is getting into the game; Alberta isn't. I'd like to ask the Minister of Economic Development and Trade: given the fact that ethanol has substantial environmental advantages, economic development opportunities for regions outside our major centres, why is this government not doing anything to stimulate the development of this important industry in our province?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and I, going back for over the last number of years, have had a continuous debate on this issue. It's only fair to point out to the hon. member, as we have pointed out in the past, that this government is very supportive of it. If the industry believes it's the right thing to do, we are more than happy to work hand in hand with the industry. We have placed no inhibitors whatsoever on the development of that industry.

MR. FOX: Well, Mr. Speaker, going back over a number of years – in the meantime Mohawk's selling a product in Alberta produced in Manitoba, and another plant is opening in Saskatchewan. Albertans are left out in the cold.

Let's look at that inhibitor or incentive, Mr. Speaker. In Saskatchewan the government offers a 4 cents a litre benefit to people who blend ethanol into fuel. In Alberta, by contrast, it's four-tenths of a cent a litre. Why won't this government offer at least the same level of incentive as our neighbouring provinces so that if the industry is going to develop, it has a chance to develop here?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the hon. member does admit finally that we are offering incentives. We acknowledge that they're not to the degree that other provinces are doing. We're not about to get into bidding wars with other provinces, but I appreciate very much the acknowledgement by the hon. member that we are offering incentives to this industry.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

### **Myrias Research Corporation**

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications. Since 1982 the provincial government has given through various programs some \$20 million in support to a company called Myrias Research Corporation. In their audited financial statement ended March 31, 1989, they make a statement that they have a working capital deficiency of some \$3 million, and they state that additional support from either shareholders or from the provincial government, that has

supported them in the past, is going to be necessary in order for this company to continue. So my question to the minister is simply this: given our \$20 million investment in this company, what has the minister done to monitor this company and to monitor its progress over the last year to ensure that our \$20 million investment is in fact safe?

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, firstly, with respect to the hon. member's facts relative to the investment of this government, the government currently has preferred shares in the amount of \$1.5 million and a loan outstanding of \$7.5 million. There are, however, other major shareholders both in the private sector as well as the Alberta Opportunity Company that are involved in this company.

The company was financed primarily to develop a parallel processing computer system, which indeed it has in the form of an SPS-2 machine. It has gained wide support from the University of Colorado in its studies there. As well, it's been under review and studied by the Alberta Research Council. There have been certain areas within its technology that are still being developed and improved upon, and indeed when the SPS-3 machine comes out in early fall, it is anticipated that it will meet all of the specifications of a first-class parallel processor.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, wide support – I hardly call one lease and no sales in the last year wide support.

My supplementary question to the minister then: has the minister received any indication from Myrias that in fact the government will be approached for additional funding, or has that already occurred, and if so, is the government prepared to allocate any more funding to this particular company?

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, it has indeed made sales over the past year; obviously not as many as one would like, but it is in that preliminary stage of development of that technology. It's a very sophisticated technology in parallel processing. The reports I have received of late indicate that it is making solid improvement, but indeed it will require further capital as it goes down the road, and we will ensure that we keep a very close watch on this company and assess it from the financial standpoint in order to make sure that it remains viable and achieves its objectives in the parallel processing field.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Two ministers have supplementary information to supply to other members, but before we go to that, I wonder if first we might have unanimous consent to revert to the Introduction of Special Guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. SPEAKER: First, the Minister of Recreation and Parks.

DR. WEST: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to introduce to you and to the Members of the Legislative Assembly some people from my constituency, 38 students from the Innisfree junior and senior high school. They're here today to watch parliamentary democracy in motion, and I'll soon be meeting them and having my picture taken with them. They are accompanied by Mr. Harry Kulak, one of their teachers and the mayor of Innisfree, and Mrs. Mildred Saik, another teacher, and

parents Ms. Nadia Melnyk and Mrs. Joanna Hlushak. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the Member for Wainwright I wish to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 16 grade 8 students from St. Thomas Aquinas school, located in the town of Provost. They are accompanied by teachers Theresa Page and Debbie Wagner and parents Donna Broemeling, Ellis Swancoat, and Leonard Knox. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: M. le Président, ça me fait plaisir de vous présenter et de présenter à cette assemblée 31 étudiants de l'école Legal dans le comté de Westlock-Sturgeon. M. le Président, the 31 students are accompanied by their teachers Denise Cyr and Darlene Johnson and parents Kathy Brisson, Doreen Provencal, and Mary Parsons. They're seated in the public gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the Legislature.

#### head: **Oral Question Period** (*continued*)

MR. SPEAKER: First, the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism with respect to a question raised by the Member for Calgary-McKnight.

#### **Culture Grants**

MR. MAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Member for Calgary-McKnight raised some questions about grant funding to the Alberta Band Association, and the lead-up to her questions left the impression with the Assembly, and therefore with the people of Alberta, that there had been a dramatic decrease in the support the government provides to the arts. Her question pointed to something about a decrease of something in the order of 28 or 29 percent in the budget. Now, that is true. There was a decrease in the actual tax-funded budget of the department, but that coincided with a large increase in lottery allocations to the big A performing organizations, whose deficits were paid off, increased operating support, and there was a budget increase to the smaller performing arts organizations. In actual fact, when you look at the entire picture, there was not a decrease in funding to the arts. In fact, there was something in the order of a 30 percent increase in actual dollars arriving in the hands of arts organizations. So I should make that point in the preamble.

More specifically to the question of the Alberta Band Association, it somewhat parallels, but the facts are these. In the spring of 1988 the Alberta Band Association received an increase in their lottery allocation of \$25,000. That raised their total allocation to \$125,000. There was a coincident decrease in an operating grant of \$10,000 and the \$11,000 junior band program to which the member referred, but the net increase to the Band Association was \$4,000, an increase in allocations to that organization. We decided, though, in discussions in the department branch that the program would be funded for one more year to give them some opportunity to look for other arrangements. In April of this year I corresponded with the Band Association and told them that we would look at individual workshops in remote areas. I did that again in May, and then



again in June, just Thursday of last week, told the Alberta Band Association that we would consider individual requests for individual workshops in individual areas.

MRS. GAGNON: Then being very specific, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to let me know if the two canceled summer band camps have been restored.

MR. MAIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I outlined, the actual dollars to the association have been increased. The Band Association can apply for specific workshops on a specific basis. Things that have been canceled have been canceled, but there is money there to provide for these things. The hon. member wants to spend more tax dollars on bands. Their party wants to spend them on schools and parks and hospitals and on farms and on everything else under the sun, Mr. Speaker, but our commitment is to balance the budget.

### Disabled Persons Assistance

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education responded to some questions raised by the Member for Edmonton-Calder with respect to power mobility aids, wheelchair aids, provided by the province under the Alberta aids to daily living program or other means. I can tell the hon. member that I am currently, as I've told the House, conducting a full review of the Alberta aids to daily living program and the extended health benefits program to see if we're spending the over \$40 million on those programs in the appropriate way. Clearly within the context of that comes the recommendation of the Premier's council on the disabled with respect to power mobility aids for those over the age of 18, and that specific question has gone to that review team to see what I might be able to recommend to this House by the fall.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, the issue remains about the matching grant to the nonprofit agencies that are trying to supply power mobility aids. I would ask the minister: has she given consideration to matching the grants in terms of the money that the agencies have raised?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Yes, specifically and generally, and one of the questions I think we need to look at in AADL is: should there be a matching component for work being done by other nonprofit groups in the province? That's the specific question I've asked not only with respect to the Easter Seal support but also overall as a component of the program, and that will be something I'll speak to when I bring forward the proposed changes for the program in the fall.

### head: Motions under Standing Order 40

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Mill Woods, Standing Order 40.

Mr. Gibeault:

Be it resolved that since June 16 is the United Nations day of solidarity with the people of South Africa, commonly known as Soweto Day, and that in light of the fact that Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, is about to make an historic visit to Canada, the Legislative Assembly fully endorse international sanctions against South

Africa in order to speed up the full liberation of the South African people from the oppression of apartheid.

MR. GIBEAULT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask the unanimous support of members of the House for the resolution, which was circulated earlier to all members.

Speaking to the urgency of that matter, tomorrow, of course, is the United Nations day of solidarity with the people of South Africa, commonly referred to as Soweto Day. We are about to have an historic visit to our country by Mr. Nelson Mandela, so we have an opportunity today to get on the record showing some solidarity on this issue. I hope that we can count on members of the House to do that. Because just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the European parliament passed a resolution by an overwhelming majority calling on European community leaders to keep up economic pressure on South Africa. Our own record in this regard has been, to be pretty frank, very poor. We've had the province of Alberta supporting some 40 percent of Canadian exports to South Africa, mainly sulphur, and we've had the provincial government refusing to endorse the international boycott campaign against Shell Oil by purchasing some \$5 million worth of products from Shell.

So I'm asking the members of the House today, in regard to this special day that the United Nations has set aside tomorrow, to stand together with the people of South Africa so that we can be proud here in Alberta and not have to hang our heads in shame once again at the provincial government's complicity in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Oh, hold it – complicit. The Chair already has one of those difficulties with regards to statements yesterday, so the Blues will be reviewed with regard to that statement.

With respect to Standing Order 40, is there willingness to give unanimous consent? Those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter fails.

### Orders of the Day

#### head: Government Motions

#### 17. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that when the Legislative Assembly adjourns on Friday, June 29, 1990, at the normal adjournment hour of 1 p.m., it shall stand adjourned to Wednesday, July 4, 1990, at 2:30 p.m.

[Motion carried]

#### 18. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that when the Assembly adjourns for the summer recess, it shall stand adjourned until the time and date in 1990 determined by the Speaker after consultation with the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Highlands, followed by Edmonton-Whitemud.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to seek clarification, through his closing comments on this motion, that this is a requirement of the Assembly, to sit once again during the calendar year of 1990; not just that we are at the call, but that by passage of this motion, it assures a fall sitting of the Assembly.

Thank you.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that during that period of time when the House is in recess, the three or four months or whatever the situation may be, I would hope that the government House Leader and the leaders of the other two caucuses here would take that opportunity to sit down and try and come up with a resolution or solution to accommodate the media and get away from the problem that we have trying to get through there.

Mr. Speaker, I raise that, through you, with the House Leader because there's got to be other solutions. I don't care if it's additional space, but it's getting so you can't get through there any longer, and it's getting ridiculous. During the recess, that's the ideal time to try and work that out so in the fall session we can have it better organized.

Thank you.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know how many times I have to tell the Assembly that there will be a fall sitting, but I'll tell the members again.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway wish to make some comments to the House?

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I made some remarks in the House on Motion 325 to the effect that the government was complicit with the Principal Group of Companies in defrauding Albertans who bought FIC and AIC contracts. Mr. Speaker asked me to withdraw the remarks and went on to say that the member asking the questions "makes himself responsible for their accuracy," and that "where the facts are of sufficient moment the Speaker has required prima facie proof of their authenticity."

So, Mr. Speaker, I did a little homework on the Code report in some of my documents that I've saved up over the last three or four years while this project was going on, and I find that the guarantee on the certificates that were sold said exactly this.

First Investors Corporation Ltd. or Associated Investors of Canada Ltd. guarantee your principal and interest.

First Investors and Associated Investors are investment contract companies and are regulated by the Investment Contract Act. Assets equal to 100 per cent of certificate liabilities must be maintained on deposit with a government approved custodian.

Now, that situation existed for quite some time, and then finally there was a flurry of discussion between the regulators and the company culminating in a change, according to the Code report on page 394.

As a result of the September 28 and October 2, 1984 letters, the top left box on the reverse side of the contract application form was changed in October, 1984 [Exhibit 100] to read:

I understand that First Investors Corporation Ltd. and Associated Investors of Canada Ltd. are registered under the Investment Contracts Act (Alberta). Pursuant to the Investment Contracts Act, the company is required to

maintain assets equal to its liabilities to the holders of its contracts on deposit with a Canadian chartered bank.

Now, the key wording change is the part: is required by the contracts Act to hold. That wording was passed over to the vice-president of Principal, who happened to be the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, and was dismissed as being not an important change. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that that particular wording change says that the regulators and the ministers in charge of those regulators and the government became, then, part of – because you actually end up with a new statement which is a true statement, whereas the previous statement was a false statement. Yet it implicates the government in the process of saying that these things are guaranteed when they're not, and that is why I used the word "complicit."

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd prefer not to withdraw the word "complicit," but I do agree that the words "in defrauding," since I am not a judge or jury by myself and would not claim to have greater wisdom than Code after hearing all the things he heard . . . I will retreat to what Code said, and that is that the evidence tends to show that the company behaved in a fraudulent manner, and I would want to say that the government was complicit in that.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, thank you, hon. member, but I don't believe you've helped the situation at all. [interjection] I'm sorry, hon. member.

The Chair has had an opportunity to examine the Blues from yesterday afternoon, and in fact the Chair made the Blues available by 5 o'clock yesterday to the Member for Vegreville and the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway. Subsequent discussion was held between the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway and one of the Parliamentary Counsel, and there was an exchange of notes throughout all of last evening between the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway and the Chair.

The Chair would remind all members that language used in this Chamber must be temperate and worthy of the place in which it is spoken. An attack on any persons alleging what constitutes a criminal offence in this country where there has been no finding of criminal conduct in a court of law is inflammatory, unfair, and a dangerous violation of the rules of decorum. An attack on groups of individuals outside the House is even less parliamentary and unworthy of any member in this Assembly.

The additional issue is complicated in terms of it's a clear violation of the sub judice rule, and the Chair was concerned about the comments being raised again this morning by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway with regard to the whole matter of the sub judice rule. The Chair, in listening to the member, detects that there has been a withdrawal of one phrase but not only failure to withdraw the other phrase, but in fact he has underlined the other phrase. And so the Chair would like the member to consider whether he would now withdraw the other phrase as well before the Chair continues.

MR. McEACHERN: Do you mean the word "complicit"? Then I will just use the word "partners."

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will accept that rendition of an apology, I suppose. But the Chair cannot help but express some consternation at the lack of caring for the things of Parliament on the part of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway. [interjections] I'm sorry about your groans. Perhaps you'd like to listen to some of my groans about what occurs here.

The Chair still gives notice to all members that it will call to Order any member for unparliamentary comments. It will not allow inflammatory statements to be made against others, particularly when they touch upon matters pursuant to Standing Order 23. The Chair also makes note for hon. members that perhaps they'll refer to *Beauchesne* 193, that if in future the Chair has to deal with it, the Chair will deal with it with the full consideration of *Beauchesne* 193.

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

MR. SPEAKER: There's no point of order on a point of order, but I'll be interested to hear what it is.

MR. McEACHERN: The Treasurer yesterday, when he chose to argue with some of the points I made, said that I was misleading the House, and I think he should be asked to apologize also. [interjection] Well, I thought I was to back up what I said. Where is his evidence?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will examine the Blues.  
Now the Member for Three Hills.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, in yesterday's exchanges I had mentioned that again it would assist my own understanding of the words that are appropriate for use in this Legislature . . . When the hon. member used the term "defrauding," I understood that that had a very serious meaning, as well, in terms of the proceedings that are presently going on in a court of law.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: He withdrew it.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Oh, I'm sorry. I only heard the term "complicity" withdrawn.  
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair can understand the confusion with some things not being heard. The confusion and also sometimes the extra comments that are added in make it difficult for all people to hear what's indeed going on.

MS BARRETT: The House was silent at the time.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, I'm afraid that's not the case with you all too often.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the House was silent at the time that he was . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please take your silence.

## head: Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

### Bill 31 Livestock Industry Diversification Act

Moved by Mr. Fox:

The motion for second reading be amended to read:  
That Bill 31, Livestock Industry Diversification Act, be not now read a second time but that the subject matter of the Bill be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Public

Affairs to assess the need for an environmental impact assessment on the provisions contained therein.

[Adjourned debate June 1: Ms Barrett]

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I was talking to the amendment sponsored by the Member for Vegreville. Well, since that time – I mean, I was pretty committed to support of this amendment because I feel a principle is at stake here, and that is that the public is not being invited to comment on what are bound to be very long-term implications should this Bill proceed. So mainly I was concerned about process.

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, some information has come into my hands that I think constitutes such a serious indictment of the government that I believe this House should now feel compelled to refer this matter to the Standing Committee on Public Affairs. This stuff has to become public, Mr. Speaker. I'm referring to an analysis of the public input process which describes the evolution of the internally developed wildlife policy commencing in 1982, starting in the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Council under the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and proceeding to white papers and – what do you call it? – discussion papers and so forth, the first of which was called the white paper on game ranching, which was clearly a pro game ranching paper.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Some of the information might not be alarming, but I'll tell you, some of it is very alarming. Let me tell you what it is that I've since discovered. In April, 1985, I understand that Alberta Agriculture employee Judd Bunnage co-founded an organization called the Alberta Game Growers Association. Now, this organization was rather prominent in the news during the last few months leading up to the introduction of the Bill that's before us. It's pretty clear that they're looking for photo ops and everything else to have this Bill publicly supported. But I wonder if the public would agree that it was appropriate that a staff member from the Department of Agriculture actually co-founded this lobby organization. I understand that its self-stated purpose is to "unite game producers in Alberta such as to form an active, official lobbying group promoting the betterment of game ranching in the province."

While this organization was being formed, the government was saying that, you know, paid hunting was not being considered despite a provision in what was then the new Wildlife Act that in fact allowed it; it was permissive. It basically said that you wouldn't be busted for violating that Act if your activity was related to "reasonably incidental," I think it says, game ranching, or "the operation of permit premises under a permit that authorized the keeping of captive wildlife"; in other words, a game farm.

Then I understand that in October 1986 there was this paper released called the Game Ranching Issues Discussion Paper. I think it's commonly called the GRID Paper. It was released by the government, and I understand that it made positive reference to game ranching. The 1986 paper, GRID, states – I think I've got this quote accurate – that "Elsewhere large acreage ranches may be desirable, if hunting were allowed on them, to simulate a natural hunting experience." Mr. Speaker, I confess that I did not understand this issue until a few days ago when one of my colleagues explained that this is part of the consequence of this legislation. In other words, we'll be able to have managed acreages where, you know, you pays your money and you goes

and shoots. That just seems to me so weird. I mean, this is just such a distortion of our understanding of wildlife. Now I find to my own surprise that the government's own paper basically acknowledged that this is going to develop in the future, or they at least predicted that it was going to develop in the future.

I understand that since 1985 the Department of Agriculture employee to whom I referred before, Judd Bunnage, has continued to write and distribute materials promoting game ranching. Now, if that's the case, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how senior his position is, but it seems to me that some limitation needs to have been put on an employee of a department that in one instance declares itself to be neutral – that is, for a couple of years declared itself to be neutral on the matter – and then, contrary to statements made by the minister of another department that game ranching was not being contemplated, has this employee, having co-founded this lobby organization, distributing materials promoting game ranching. It seems to me that if it's not a violation of conflict of interest rules of the sort that I would support, it is at the very least a questionable practice. Now, I have no evidence of this, but the information I was given indicates that some of the literature indicating the AGGA's support and this employee's support for game ranching was even distributed on government letterhead.

You know, this is really a complicated issue. This is why the public hearings are really important. I understand that Norman Moore, the director of the Drayton Valley PC association, who nominated both the then MLA Shirley Cripps and the current MLA who I understand are both ardent game ranching proponents, and whose brother Marvin Moore, then the hospitals minister and former Minister of Agriculture and former chairman of the agricultural committee and the rural economic development committee of the government caucus . . .

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the hon. Minister of Agriculture rising on a point of order?

MR. ISLEY: I would ask that the hon. member check the current facts before she lays aspersions on people outside of this House as to what positions they hold in what parties.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I think I was referring to Norman Moore, not an employee of the minister's department.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's moved to the Reform Party. He got tired of the Tories.

MS BARRETT: Oh. It's possible that he has moved to the Reform Party, for all I know.

But in any event, I understand that this gentleman started importing elk from the United States in mid-October 1986. Now, what's important here is that – well, I'll get to that in a minute, Mr. Speaker. Then what happened . . . You know, you have to wonder about this. If nothing else, you have to wonder and refer the matter to the Public Affairs Committee as far as I'm concerned. Then, I understand that in 1986 the then Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife appointed the Alberta Game Growers Association to the Wildlife-Advisory Council; in other words, put this lobby interest on an advisory council that's supposed to tell you how to preserve wildlife, not how to corral and shoot it, which just seems so contradictory to me. Then I understand that the employee, Mr. Bunnage, developed a new

title, called the head of the animal breeding and game ranching section of Alberta Agriculture. Who knows under what authority that division was established? Probably just PC ideology. And then – well, maybe I won't say what I was about to say there, Mr. Speaker; I do want to stay within the rules.

But then what we find is that by 1987 the sale of antlers and making available for sale virtually every species of publicly owned bird and mammal to the supposedly still illegal industry was legitimized by Order in Council 121/87. Mr. Speaker, these and other events of suspicion were finally brought to the provincial Ombudsman in May 1988, who at least, if nothing else, confirmed that the public input process in the deliberation of the policy development had been skewed. The information that I have is actually fairly extensive. It's much too extensive for me to try to get onto the record. My point in raising it, though, is that if there is any doubt about the internal machinery that may have had the effect of bringing what was illegal, what was declared to be the government's intention to remain illegal, into a format that will now make it legal by those internal machinations that have skewed the public input process and maybe prevented adequate public input, now is the time to send this matter to the Public Affairs Committee of this Assembly. We as the Public Affairs Committee – it's Committee of the Whole – have the right to call in witnesses, including expert witnesses, to give us their view on, first of all, the evolution of this matter, that is, the process that's been observed, and secondly, the substance of the Bill at hand; in other words, whether or not this Bill is detrimental to our wildlife in the short and the long run.

Now, the minister and I have had a conversation about this Bill, and for a while I believed that some of the protective measures that he referred to during that conversation would be appropriate. For example, he said that if a restaurateur, you know, took in illegally caught game through the back door – in other words, if it didn't have that long blue stripe on it that he told me about – they would be busted if they were caught and they would lose their licence. But I looked in the Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I couldn't see where they would lose their operating licence; there was no reference to that. So I'm starting to think that while there is provision for a fine, the part of the matter is that the threat of loss of livelihood is not in that Bill. So now I'm even more worried that the past process since 1982 has been manipulated. I'm also worried about flaws in the Bill itself.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would urge members of the Assembly to support this amendment and refer the matter. I'll tell you, I always believe that if you're really serious about a bit of legislation and you're reluctant to open it up for public input, one of two things must be true: either your legislation is ill guided and stupid, or you know it is bad and don't want to take the heat of the public input. I would argue that one or the other must be the case in this instance if this amendment is defeated.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Smoky River.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands for becoming at least half knowledgeable about some agricultural affairs. I'd like to commend the hon. member for evidently trying to do some research work, and I would suggest to the hon. member perhaps taking the next step and finding out all the facts and all the details of what indeed we're doing.

MS BARRETT: I'm going to count on you.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Good. I'm glad to hear that you're going to be listening, and perhaps you can have some of your other hon. members listen as well.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

This indeed is a momentous change. This is something that is required and something that I have to compliment the minister for bringing forward, because it is an essential requirement for the diversification of our agricultural economy in western Canada. I've spent a lot of time traveling through the world and, particularly, exploring the opportunities in diversification. One of those opportunities has come from the bastion of socialism, the Scandinavian countries, where this has taken place for decades, where we've actually had reindeer farming; we've had all kinds of wild game brought into the circumstances where they are actually farmed.

We do that today in Alberta. We farm these animals today in Alberta, and I'm rather surprised to hear the hon. member suggest that we should be doing environmental impact assessments on whether or not we should be selling meat. I'm not too sure just how wide we're going to be drawing our parameters of environmental impact assessments. I wonder just which commodities are going to be brought into this. How wide are we going to bring this environmental impact assessment into? What are we going to do with things like honey and other types of commodities? Are there going to be environmental impact assessments done on that as well?

I heard the member allude to this wild terrorizing of animals, going out and shooting them and distressing them. I would like to know just where in this Bill we say anything about the hunting and shooting of these animals that are in captivity. I wonder where the hon. member actually got that information from, because this Bill is going to do something that is going to allow us, particularly in northern Alberta – I want to bring out the point that indeed we already raise buffalo and are allowed to sell the meat, and now in the northern part of Alberta we have more buffalo, more bison than in all of western Canada put together.

We don't have the wide sceptre of opportunities for diversification in northern Alberta. We've brought two forward, and in both cases we hear the opposition condemning and damning. Our woodland opportunity is something we're trying to pick up on. Our people need the opportunities. I, particularly, come from a constituency which has very little opportunity for diversification. It bothers me and bothers my people to hear day after day after day: "We've got to stop this. We've got to stop it." And for what reason? Since when do we have to do environmental impact assessments on whether we can sell meat or not? I don't think that's being fair, and I don't think that's nation building. People in my constituency resent that type of approach and that type of attitude. I don't think it's fair to mankind in general to deprive them of the opportunity of fulfilling and making a worthwhile living. I don't think it's fair. We've already had the hon. members across the way suggest that we don't need rural hospitals. "Let's close them down and centralize them in urban communities." We've heard enough of that. Those are people just like they are in urban Alberta. And when we talk about boundary review, we hear on a daily basis that one person should have one vote and they should be treated equally. Well, let's treat my people equally too, and let's give them the opportunity to survive and to work and to benefit from the opportunities out there.

Why can we not farm animals in a more effective and more efficient way? These animals are going to be treated far better than in the wild, and this is always the case. They have opportunities for veterinarian services; they're fed on a day-to-day basis; they're not subject to the starvation that wild animals can be subject to. They don't have wolves chasing them down on a daily basis. Yet I hear across the way that we should be protecting the wolves who terrorize these wild animals. Is that fair? I have to ask that question.

Our tourism industry: we're told that our tourism industry is going to suffer, and I have to wonder how this could possibly happen. The opportunities are going to be that much greater to access wild meat. The more meat you're going to be able to access, the less opportunity there is for poaching. Why are we going to be enhancing the opportunity for poaching when you can walk to the corner store and buy the meat? I don't understand that. I don't think we're being truly objective and we're truly being nation builders when we start taking this type of approach to a situation that's going to allow people to diversify where they have limitations and don't have that opportunity that they need so badly.

I also believe that we have to develop our economy in all areas of the province, not just in urban parts. This is something the agricultural community is looking for throughout the world. In my travels through the Scandinavian countries this has been a true success story. They sell their meat, they export their meat, and what's the difference whether you sell the meat in Alberta or sell the meat in Saskatchewan? We're doing that today. What does it matter? We send the animal to Saskatchewan so they can do the jobs to process it, and then we bring the meat back. Now, that really makes a lot of wholesome sense.

MR. TAYLOR: Sit down while you're ahead. Sit down before you goof it.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: I'll sit down when I'm ready.

I would suggest that if we turn this opportunity down, we indeed are going to be impacting agriculture. We hear from the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Would the hon. member occasionally address his remarks through the Chair, please.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I'll try and do that.

Mr. Speaker, I think we've heard many times where the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon has suggested that we have to enhance the opportunities for agriculture. I would encourage the member today to take up the opportunity we have before us with this Bill and to vote for this Bill and support this Bill.

Thank you.

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

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we're dealing with Bill 31, the Livestock Industry Diversification Act, otherwise known as the game ranching Act. I support the amendment which has been proposed, which would refer this legislation to the Standing Committee on Public Affairs in order to assess the need for an environmental impact assessment. I personally believe very strongly that this matter does need more review

and in particular, that we need public hearings on this important legislation.

Now, I quite frankly don't pretend to have grasped all the intricacies of this very, very difficult issue, but I have heard enough to cause me a great deal of concern about the long-term potential implications. In particular, I'm impressed by the fact that very credible individuals and organizations have serious concerns about game ranching that merit an in-depth review by capable people without an axe to grind. The Alberta Fish & Game Association, for example, has requested that a task force be struck, that public meetings be held, and that an environmental impact assessment process be set in motion. I don't see how we can do any less.

Now, in terms of the specific concerns expressed, the broadest concern relates in general to the implications of a fundamental change in the way we view wildlife in the long-term support for wildlife management issue. That is my understanding of the broadest characterization of the issue. In more detail or more specifically, it raises questions relating to what we may be doing in respect of encouraging increased traffic in wildlife parts. Can this be controlled? If so, how can it be controlled? Will poaching increase or will it decrease? There are differing visions presented. Is this the first step towards private and paid hunting? These are the questions which should be answered, I believe, Mr. Speaker, through an in-depth review. These are questions which haven't been answered, and as per usual we have the skimpiest of information from the government, which has all the resources of this province available to it. I've seen no significant studies from the government. I've seen press releases but no studies. Do they have studies? If so, why haven't they been presented for review? If they don't have studies, why not? If they do, are they hiding them?

Now, the stakes are very significant. I am persuaded, Mr. Speaker, that we need hearings. We need public input. We need an environmental impact assessment as part of that. I support such a process very strongly and would support the amendment.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to rise to support the amendment before us today. I think a very reasonable position has been put forward by my hon. friend and colleague from Vegreville. I think this is deserving of the support of the Assembly. I'd like to say how much I personally appreciate the support of the Liberal caucus for this amendment and the fact that they have changed spokespeople on this issue, because very many people have been upset about the position the Liberal caucus took on June 1 when we last debated this Bill. The new position, I think, is a good one, and I congratulate them for taking it.

There are many good reasons for asking the Public Affairs Committee of this Assembly to assess the need for environmental impact assessments. It was obvious when my colleague representing Vegreville first raised the question of an EIA on this proposed legislation that there was not a very deep understanding among the government benches of what an environmental impact assessment might accomplish on this issue. In fact, they scoffed and guffawed at the notion. Some of them are still in that position. So I think there is an education function that's necessary here before we proceed with an environmental impact assessment, because if we simply went ahead and did an

environmental impact assessment, the closed minds would not be at all interested in the outcome and the process of that.

So let's perhaps discuss for a few minutes some of the reasons why we need to have an environmental impact assessment. I want to say first that I agree with the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife when he wrote to an individual in March, 1988, stating that

The mandate of the Fish and Wildlife Division is the protection and conservation of wildlife populations, including protection from any potentially damaging effects of the game farming or ranching industry. For this reason the Division is the licensing agency for big game farms.

I think the minister in that correspondence presented sound and logical reasons why the control and management of this industry should be within the Fish and Wildlife division, because that is the agency that has the mandate for the protection and conservation of the wildlife population.

Many Albertans were led to believe that that was the policy and position of the government. They were led to believe so by signed letters from government MLAs, which I tabled on June 1 and are available for the inspection of any hon. member in the library, where those members said very clearly that this government will not bring in game ranching in the province of Alberta. There was also the statement of the hon. the Premier during the Stettler by-election in May of 1989, in which he said, and I quote directly, "Game ranching is not allowed in Alberta and the government is not considering allowing it," which is a pretty firm assurance.

Now, the last time we debated this, the Minister of Agriculture got up on an alleged point of order and said that I couldn't use the term "game ranching" to apply to this Bill because it's not game ranching. He wants to stick with the deceptive falsehood that this, in fact, is a continuation of the game farming industry. Well, I'd like to read for the minister and for the member a section of the Wildlife Act. It's section 1(1)(f.1): "'game ranching' means raising big game . . ."

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

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: On a point of order, Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Speaker, if I heard the member correctly, he was referring to a falsehood that had been perpetrated. If you, Mr. Speaker, would look at *Beauchesne* 489, that term indeed is unparliamentary, and I would ask that the member withdraw that term.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. I certainly have no intention of withdrawing the term, because I refer the Chair to *Beauchesne* 490, where you have the term "falsehoods."

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair notes the points of order raised by the two hon. members and will review the actual Blues. The ruling may hinge on the existence of an "s". In any case, please proceed.

MR. McINNIS: Well, it certainly is a barefaced falsehood. It has the designed purpose of deceiving the people, and I don't believe there's any two ways around it.

I was quoting the Wildlife Act of the province of Alberta passed by this Legislative Assembly and assented to by Her Honour in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, where section 1(1)(f.1) says: "'game ranching' means raising big game for the

purpose of selling its meat for human consumption." That's the legal definition of game ranching in the province of Alberta. So how can the minister of the Crown stand up in this Assembly on an alleged point of order and state that there's no game ranching involved when, in fact, the activities that are licensed and allowed under Bill 31 very clearly meet the existing legal definition of game ranching in the province of Alberta?

I do believe that we are embarking on what amounts to a reversal of some very solemn assurances signed and delivered in public places by spokespeople from this government, and any time a government reverses itself in that way, it has a solemn obligation not to do that without consulting with the people. That's why we need to have an environmental impact assessment on this question. Because an EIA consists of three things – and I know I've said this so many times that some may be getting tired of it – it consists of a statement of the effect of a proposed project or a program, it consists of an independent scientific review of that statement, and it consists of public hearings. Those are the things we have to do.

Now, my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Highlands has outlined some of the history, and I think the history of this is absolutely relevant to the point that the government led people to believe something else would happen with respect to this industry before they came along and, more or less out of the blue, introduced Bill 31 and expected somehow it should be passed in the Assembly. We certainly do have the statement of the Hon. Mr. Sparrow when he was Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. He said in *Hansard*, November 13, 1984, page 1506:

Just how game ranching will take place in the future, if it is approved by way of regulations, will be left to a lot more public input prior to those regulations being made.

Clearly, a statement that would at least reassure Albertans that they would have the opportunity of public input before this decision was made, but never, up to and including the Stettler by-election last year, did the government ever say they were going to move in that direction until the introduction of Bill 31.

The October 1986 Game Ranching Issues Discussion Paper has been referred to by some people as promotional propaganda for the industry. That document, among other things, also puts the lie to the statement of the Minister of Agriculture in stating that big game ranching is defined as the raising of big game for the production of red meat and other products for public consumption and use. So there's no question – I mean, the government in its own discussion papers was using the correct terminology to describe game farming. They knew what game farming was, and when they told people that there wouldn't be game farming, they were very plainly talking about the sale of meat, meat sales. That same document, as was referred to by Edmonton-Highlands, made reference to the viability of paid hunting as a possible avenue.

There is a very clear pattern of government statements in this particular area. On February 28, 1987, the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife said to the Alberta Fish & Game Association, "I am going to oppose game ranching; I am going to tell my colleagues that," again a statement which would have to reassure right-thinking Albertans that there was not about to become a game ranching industry as defined in the Wildlife Act, as defined in the government discussion paper, in anything like the near future.

Now, I think we should underscore the point that was mentioned, and I would table for the Assembly three copies of the letter of the Ombudsman dated May 4, 1988, in which the Ombudsman reviewed complaints about the way in which the

government had conducted the public input process. The Ombudsman says:

I have carefully reviewed the information gathered in the course of the investigation and on the basis of the facts before me, I find support for your complaint.

This is to Mr. Larry Simpson in the city of Calgary. Continuing with the quote:

I believe that conflicting information on how form letters would be evaluated was given to some organizations interested in expressing their views on big game ranching [and] this could provide the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife with misleading information as to the true opinions of the general public . . .

Here we have the Ombudsman, an official of this Legislative Assembly, who investigated the way the government conducted the public input process and found that the complaints were justified, that the process was skewed in a particular direction, and that it was misleading. So again that's part of the background and history of this particular issue and why so many Albertans feel betrayed by this government with the introduction of Bill 31 and the expectation on the part of the government that somehow this Assembly should just go ahead and pass it as if all these claims hadn't been made publicly on solemn occasions by people who ought to represent the government on this issue, as if the public input process hadn't been skewed all along, as if the Premier wasn't on record as assuring Albertans when it was time to vote that there wouldn't be such an industry.

I don't think you can do that in politics. You know, those of us who are in this Assembly have really only one asset to offer the electors. That's our credibility and our integrity. When people from the government say that one thing is going to happen at election time and do another thing, they harm the process and harm their own credibility, of course. But that's something that we as members of this Assembly on all sides have to be concerned about. I say to the government: if you think this is such a good idea, if you think this is the way to go, if you think this is the way to solve agricultural problems, if you think this is the way to do all these things that you're telling rural Alberta are going to be achieved, why not put it to the test? Why not allow the Public Affairs Committee to structure an environmental impact assessment?

This is the government that's going around distributing pamphlets in rural Alberta saying that this is an economically viable industry, and they're giving agricultural people in the province almost a government guarantee that they can make money in this industry. That's not proven either, and I think we could be into another financial mess if this Bill passes and people are so naive as to accept the claims that are being put forward by the government in this pamphlet. They could end up investing heavily in livestock, in equipment and not have the revenue to support that investment.

What happens then? Well, certain people will be mad at the government, but I guess that's nothing new. Some of them may suggest that the government should pay some of their losses, and I don't know how they would deal with that. Others will undoubtedly go back to the earlier discussion paper and say, "Well, jeez, maybe we should have paid hunting, because that's a way we can recover some of these losses." Of course, all the ministers will say: "Oh, no. We're not going to have paid hunting. It's not legal in the Act. We're never going to allow that." But, Mr. Speaker, that's what they said about game ranching too. When is it that we start believing them? When is it that they start telling the truth? Which solemn assurance is the one that Albertans can rely on? Well, I think in this particular issue there is no bottom line. There's no line beyond

which the government will not go, because they have proven that already by assuring Albertans that there is no game ranching, there never will be game ranching. I think it is unfortunate that faced with these circumstances, the government continues to try to pretend that what's in this Bill is not game ranching when in fact it meets the legal test of game ranching in the province of Alberta.

The other day the Minister of Economic Development and Trade tabled a piece of paper which is unsigned and undated. It purports to be a survey of the state of the game ranching industry in various locations across the country. It's quite an interesting document. It appears to suggest that there's a lot more sale of elk meat allowed and facilitated in this country of Canada than is borne out by our research, and I've had a researcher spend some time attempting to get to the bottom of this thing. The document, tabled Sessional Paper 566/90, has a column "Legalized Sale of Elk Meat." It says: British Columbia, yes; Saskatchewan, yes. Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, P.E.I., New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and the Northwest Territories all say yes, but there's a note that says, "No legislation prohibiting the sale." Again, I think a highly misleading document. I mean, there is only one or probably two provinces in Canada that allow this type of industry the government wants to bring in today.

The raising and sale of elk really only takes place in the province of Saskatchewan, which has caused something of a political fire storm in that province. I don't believe that all is rosy there. There have certainly been allegations of conflict of interest and government funding going to people who are close to cabinet ministers. I think the jury is out as far as whether it's a success in Saskatchewan.

I think New Brunswick does allow this type of activity. But they don't have a native elk population, so they don't have the downside risk we face potentially in the province of Alberta.

But in British Columbia – the document the minister tabled says yes on the sale of elk meat. In fact, it is technically possible that somebody could sell elk meat, but you need a permit, and no permits have ever been issued for the sale of elk meat in the province of British Columbia. It's never happened, and not only that, you can't raise elk domestically in the province of B.C. So you don't have anything like this industry that's being proposed for Alberta.

In Manitoba they took a look at it. They had a debate on it. They weighed the pros and the cons. They figured the downside was greater than the upside and made a policy decision to stay the heck away from it. I have all the information. I have all the positions taken by the various parties. But they had a public discussion, a debate, a dialogue over this thing before they made the decision. They heard from the people. The people didn't want it, so the government said no. I think that's a perfectly acceptable and honourable way to proceed, and I could accept a little more easily the government deciding to go yes if they were prepared to go the environmental impact assessment route, to involve the people in the decision ahead of time, but they're not.

Ontario: according to the minister's document, he says yes, there's no legislation prohibiting it. Well, in fact there may be a review under way, but under regulations at the present time they're not allowed to sell elk meat. And the same is true of Quebec. I guess the point I'm making is that the misinformation just goes on and on and on.

I need to deal briefly with an allegation that was also made by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade wherein he said that I had said something different to somebody in the elk

industry than I was saying in the House. Now, unfortunately he didn't have the courage to say what it was I was alleged to have said and to whom I said it, but I think I should say for the record that I made one and only one statement about the elk ranching industry. It's a matter of public record, and it's available to anybody who bothers to look at it. I categorically deny that I've said anything different to anybody else, and if he would supply any type of detail whatever as far as what was said and to whom, I could straighten that out in 10 minutes. But as it is, it's not specific at all. It's just a kind of vague smear and innuendo, if you like, that's kind of hanging there. If he wants to provide any detail whatsoever, I'll attempt to straighten out whoever he's talking to, who maybe is misinformed. On the other hand, you can't tell if he talks to anybody because he's not specific at all. So that needs to be put to rest.

Well, what are some of the questions people are asking about the game ranching industry? The fact that people have serious questions that they want answered is a definite reason for supporting the amendment, because the amendment will provide an avenue for the public to have their questions answered and to have their day to be heard on this issue before it's passed. People are asking about the section, I think it's 19(3), that stipulates that only a certified veterinarian or a veterinarian from another jurisdiction can provide a certificate of health. Now, one of the difficulties about this is veterinarians' training and discipline deals with domesticated animals. Veterinarians are not generally adequately trained dealing with wildlife diseases, although this is a provision of the Bill. Of course, there is the point that I raised on the debate on June 1 about how you test for meningeal brainworm. That's been the issue all along; that's been the reason why the borders have been closed to import of elk since 1988: because there is no reliable test for meningeal brainworm. Until we have that, this industry is in some danger irrespective of the efforts of the veterinarian profession of fostering and spreading that disease. You know, people are wondering: how is the veterinarian profession going to protect against the spread of meningeal brainworm when adequate tests don't exist?

I've had concerns raised with me about the fact that the Act doesn't specify what can and can't be ranched. It ignores that imported game species can be dangerous to our native species. I mean, the fact that you build high fences and that you have plans that there will never be any commingling of the domesticated stock with wild stock – there are stories around of things that happened during the rut. The fact is that any human system can break down and will break down, and one of the things you do in an environmental impact assessment is to assess the risk. What if? You know, what if this happens? What is the risk? And that hasn't been done.

There have been questions raised about provisions for insurance in the industry given that there is some possibility of damage. There certainly is a negative experience in New Zealand where they've had game management for a period of time. The industry has had some real problems, and I wonder, you know, why that issue isn't dealt with in the legislation, and a lot of Albertans are wondering about that as well. There is no provision in the Bill ensuring no entry of public wildlife onto the premises of game ranches. That was a problem in Manitoba during the brief time that they flirted with the industry, before they decided to open it up to their electors and made a different decision. Wild bulls are attracted by a bugling domestic bull elk, and they've occasionally broken down fences. And others – well, occasionally there were opportunistic hunters who sort of



used that as a convenient way to locate the trophies that they were searching for.

Section 18. People are asking – there's no onus on game ranchers to report diseases. Now, how is it that the director is to discover diseases if there is no requirement to report them? Section 22 is somewhat vague about how game meat is to be marked so that it can be differentiated clearly from wild game animals. There aren't any particular provisions in here to check buyers, wholesalers in terms of what they do with the game meat. The analogy that's applied is of the cattle industry, and we know that there are problems with rustling to this day in the cattle industry. How can anyone possibly make assurance without at least some administrative detail in terms of how this is going to function? When you have environmental impact assessment, you have an opportunity to have these questions addressed from an objective, scientific point of view and you have an opportunity for people to become informed as to the details of that and to put their view forward. Now, that's a basic right. No one, no government should be able to embark on a major new program of activity with serious environmental implications without going through that step. That's a principle that's fundamental. I'll certainly stand by it, and my party and my caucus will stand by it, and it's only this government that continues to try to nibble away at the edges, like we see in other legislation before the House.

So after all strict control it could be possible for some wholesale merchants to think twice about trading in these commodities. If, as the minister indicates, they're going to be extremely tough in this area, how will that affect the markets, the markets that have been more or less guaranteed by the provincial government according to this pamphlet which is being widely circulated in rural Alberta today?

You know, Mr. Speaker, the more I look at this Bill, the more I look at this industry and what's happening, the more I realize that we're into a pyramid sales scheme. You've got the lucky few who are in on the ground floor, many of whom have very close ties to members of the government. Sure, some of them are no longer on the constituency executive, some of them have gone on to do other things, but nonetheless there are the people who are on the inside on the ground floor, and Bill 31 gives them a fantastic opportunity to sell breeding stock to all kinds of people who are looking for another source of income, looking for a way to diversify their farming operation, and who knows what they're going to get in the process? They could very well end up holding the bag, and when that happens, they're going to be coming to this government and be coming to this Legislative Assembly.

Isn't it better to canvass some of these issues ahead of time? Why shouldn't Albertans in whose name we pass this legislation have an opportunity to assess the potential market, for example? What is the market for elk meat in Alberta? Nobody really knows. There's a speculation that it can be sold on the basis that it's low in cholesterol, and people who like to eat a lot of red meat and don't exercise very much are concerned about cholesterol, as they should be. So they figure someone will come along that will say, "Well, we've got this meat that's low in cholesterol, and if you eat that, you can continue to eat all the red meat you want and not exercise and you won't get a coronary." Well, somebody might buy that, but this industry is not the only one in that market. You've got people in Alberta today who have crossbred yak with cattle, and they say that's low cholesterol meat. I suggest, and there are people telling me, that the cholesterol in meat has more to do with the conditions under which the animals are raised than the species.

So if you domesticate elk and you shoot them with hormones or steroids, which is probably something that will happen – it certainly happens in other red meat industries – if you feed them grain, if you domesticate them in the way that beef cattle are domesticated, maybe the cholesterol level will go up as well. Maybe the low density cholesterol factor won't be such a big selling point after all. The Minister of Agriculture perhaps is an expert on eating red meat and not exercising; I don't know. But he can certainly take his place in debate and tell us his view of what the potential market is for elk meat. I think, you know, people should have the right to an objective view of it, and the minister would be quite correct to say that my view is perhaps not objective. I admit that I have a subjective view of things, but we can find people who can give us an objective survey of the market potential. That sort of thing is done all the time. There's absolutely no reason in the world that the government shouldn't be prepared to go through that exercise. Maybe they have some studies already, in which case that would certainly save some money. We wouldn't have to go out and do any more studies to determine what the potential market for this industry is.

I've talked to a few people in the restaurant industry because a lot of the proponents, the promoters of this industry, have it in their minds and on the tips of their tongues that restaurants are going to want to go into this in a big way. Well, I've talked to a few people in the restaurant industry, and there doesn't appear to me to be a great deal of interest in adding elk to the menu. Some of them have gone through buffalo. That was a kind of a fad in the market for a short period of time, but the demand for buffalo meat has certainly not eclipsed some of the other competitor products in the marketplace. There may be some reason for supposing that elk will take the market by storm, but I don't think we can afford to suppose anything when we're dealing with an industry that has definite potential environmental implications and a definite downside as far as our wildlife population.

You know, it can't be emphasized too frequently that we have a native elk population in the province of Alberta, or we certainly have an elk population. Now, I think every member of this Assembly should reflect upon the fact that North America came very close to decimating wildlife populations. At the end of the last century and the first part of this century there was wanton slaughter of the bison, for example, and we managed to bring it back but only after a great deal of struggle, and let's not . . .

[Mr. McInnis' speaking time expired]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to this amendment. I support the amendment in fact put forward by the game rancher from Vegreville, who game ranches the notorious honeybees down there.

But I rise to speak on this particular amendment because I recall back on my own days in university as well – I'm not sure how big a honeybee steak would be, but it'd be tough to barbecue, I'm sure. I well remember back in the years when I was in university the debates that raged back and forth regarding this particular issue. I think the Member for Smoky River has pointed out that in fact there is a need for diversifying the agricultural industry. In fact, I think the Member for Westlock-

Sturgeon has indicated that the Liberal caucus will be supporting the Bill.

[Mr. Moore in the Chair]

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I think that what is being proposed in this amendment and the reason why I can support this amendment is that what really is being proposed here is an education process. Even those individuals who have extensive training and experience in that area – and I'm not sure whether I would characterize my own training as extensive, but I have spent a considerable amount of time looking at the industry both in an academic sense and in traveling to New Zealand and have visited game ranches in New Zealand. In fact, they do serve a certain niche within the market and do have a valuable purpose.

But I think when one considers game ranching, and in particular I think what we're really referring to here is primarily elk, we're dealing with a very emotional issue. Canada is known for its vast open spaces, and as part of that, of course, our national parks are very well known internationally. One of the exciting things that tourists always find really a memorable point of their visit is when they can come here and see a wild animal, be that elk or be that bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain goat, so forth. Now, because of those things and the impact upon the tourism industry, because of the emotional appeal that these animals invoke from resident Canadians, native Canadians, immigrant Canadians, visitors to our country, people get very emotional and involved with the topic and clear, rational thinking perhaps does not come to the fore.

So the reason for having a hearings process . . . I'm not sure necessarily about the words "environmental impact assessment" on here, but I believe that what is being proposed and considered is an education process whereby what we in the Legislative Assembly would do would be to direct an educational process to occur. Now, there's clearly perhaps a dichotomy of viewpoints between urban and rural areas because the rural areas look at it from one point; the urban area residents look at it from a different point. I think what's really needed is an education process so that all people, both urban/rural, Albertans/non-Albertans, can understand really what is being proposed here. I think in the long term the market will determine how many game ranchers there will be, the market will determine how many animals there will be held in captivity, and ultimately the market will determine whether or not this industry will fly or not. To simply say that we shouldn't have it I think is very shortsighted. I believe we should be promoting diversification of our economy in any way that we can. I think the Bill before us for the most part is a reasonable concept.

But the education process . . . Coming back to the amendment that we have before us, I think what we should be doing is promoting an understanding. I think if more people get a feeling that in fact the industry that is being proposed and promoted in Bill 31 will be a highly regulated industry, it will be an industry that will help to diversify the economy, it will help to create new jobs, it might provide a more stable source of income for our farmers. There are a great number of farmers who have been subject, of course, to tremendous weather concerns this year and last year: in some areas it's too wet; in some areas it's too dry. Some farmers have been subject to tremendous price fluctuations in grain. Some farmers have been subject to tremendous price fluctuations in the price that they can get for their cattle, the cost that they have to pay for their hay, and so forth. By allowing a farmer to diversify, if he or she so chooses, that is, and meet the regulations, it could help to

provide some stability for our rural cousins. So I think that the proposal of allowing this diversification of the agricultural industry is an excellent concept.

But there are a great many people, Mr. Speaker, that really, I believe, don't understand fully what's being involved. For a farmer to make that kind of financial commitment and time commitment, obviously that individual is going to look after his commitment that he makes in his stock and in terms of the hardware that he has to put up: the fences, the sheds, and so forth. Elk are a very skittish kind of animal, and in order to vaccinate them, inoculate them, and so forth, they need to be worked on in very much darkened conditions, for example. So they need to put up a special shed in which the animal can be herded and handled so that it can be treated. Any farmer who puts up that kind of financial commitment is clearly going to look after the investment in the animals that he has.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I do support the amendment here. I think an education process would be in the best interests not only of the industry but also in the best interests of the government. I'm sure that the government wants to be well regarded in the eyes of the people of Alberta, that the government, I think, has an obligation to make it clear what it is that's being proposed, how it's going to be regulated. I think many of those fears that the public has can be assuaged, and then I'm sure that Bill 31 would go ahead with no opposition at all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise to support this motion because I believe very strongly that it addresses this issue in a responsible manner, in perhaps the only way that it is responsibly addressed at this stage in the evolution of this matter and of this issue. On the one hand, Mr. Speaker, there are some very important questions of fact, empirical questions: will this Bill, in promoting game ranching as it certainly must and inevitably will, increase poaching? The consequences of increased poaching would be devastating to certain species of wildlife that would be involved in game ranching.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Will there be adequate provision for disease control? Clearly, the implications of disease, not only for our wildlife but for other domestic animals that could be caused by the importing of disease-ridden stock, creates a tremendous potential threat and danger for our agricultural industry more broadly and certainly for species of wildlife in this province.

Those are but two of the specific kinds of empirical questions that must be answered. The kind of public process, environmental impact assessment, or task force, as we would term it, that could conduct public hearings around the province, that could call experts to ensure that not only is the information available, the studies have been done, but that that information has been reviewed and reviewed in particular under an adversarial process so that we know at the end of that process that we have the facts we need to make this decision: this amendment would provide for such a process. This process would in turn isolate, identify the kinds of facts that are required to make a responsible decision on this very important issue.

There is another level, however, at which this issue must be dealt. I believe that this issue has engendered a profound

debate about how we in our society view wildlife. It has raised a very important point of principle, which is public ownership versus private ownership of wildlife. That represents a fundamental change, if we were to make this step, in a philosophy that has been integral to our society's view of wildlife over literally decades and decades. This is not an easy or a small decision; this is a decision at the level of philosophy, at the level of principle that will have profound implications for the kind of respect and the kind of emphasis, the kind of value we place on wildlife in our society.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that as is the case with most philosophical discussions, there have been extreme positions taken. There have been extreme positions on the one side against and an extreme position on the other side for, and it is very important that those extreme positions be presented in a public forum, that moderate positions in between those two extremes be presented in a public forum, that we debate this issue not only at the level of empirical evidence of facts but at another level, at a level of our concept and our vision and our relationship to wildlife, the place that we put wildlife in our society, the value we place on wildlife: how we treat it, how we respect it, or on the other hand perhaps how we reduce that respect for it.

Mr. Speaker, it is therefore extremely important that we have this kind of public debate, the kind of public debate that will be engendered in a proper environmental impact assessment process and a proper public hearings task force process around this province. And given the passion of some of those members across the way for this particular issue on one side, given the passion of others for this particular issue on the other side, I think it underlines the importance of bringing the public into a debate where these issues and these extremes can be fleshed out, can be moderated, and society can be in a position to make the proper decision about this very, very important issue.

We will vote for this amendment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Rocky Mountain House.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've listened with a great deal of interest to the debate this morning and when we had it before the House before on this very important incentive by the Minister of Agriculture. While I want to just make a couple of comments on the amendment, I won't enter into the debate at this point as far as all the advantages. Certainly the Member for Smoky River this morning has won the debate by far as far as the advantages of this great, important initiative, but I do think that I have great difficulty understanding where the naysayers were for the last number of years. Certainly the hon. Member for Calgary-North West mentioned that it was discussed in university when he was there, and I would hate to ask how many years ago that was, but I know certainly in my area it's been discussed since the early '80s – and many public meetings on the issue to start with.

Yes, there were a number of very, very important questions, but they have been answered to the satisfaction of certainly the vast majority of the constituents that had concerns. I know there's the odd one out there yet that still does have concerns, because they like to live in that iffy world and have all those hypothetical things happen: that the sky is falling in and, you know, how we're going to lose everything. But coming down to reality, of course, people quickly realize the very importance of this Bill. Since the Liberals seem to be – you know, we don't know for sure which way they're going; I would certainly invite

you to come on over to the most popular side of the issue and join in with the vast majority of Albertans in supporting this.

MR. TAYLOR: We're already there.

MR. LUND: Thanks to the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon for suggesting that he's been supporting this far earlier than we were. We waited to hear the public before we made that decision, so that's why we might be a little bit behind him on that one.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, that the most important thing in this amendment, the thing that disturbs me by far the greatest, is that I believe this is just the thin edge of the wedge as far as getting this whole process of every time somebody wants to do something, we've got to run out and do an environmental assessment, hire a bunch of lawyers and consultants, and trot around the country and pay them big money. Mr. Speaker, if agriculture had been subjected to that kind of nonsense from the early days, just think of what we would have. Why is it that we've got such a great province here? We've got great agriculture, and we didn't go through all these processes. I have great difficulty understanding why all of a sudden now we have to have these kinds of processes.

I really would urge any member in this Assembly that is truly interested in helping rural Alberta and helping the farmer to defeat this amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, on the amendment.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you one thing we'd have if we had more EIAs in the country and more public hearings: we'd have less pollution in our rivers in northern Alberta from pulp mills. [interjections] Well, I'll have my say; you'll have your say if you stand up and get recognized by the Chair. Otherwise, keep quiet so I can get on with mine.

Of course I'm rising to support this amendment to ask the government to call the select Standing Committee on Public Affairs so that we can hold public hearings and invite the people of Alberta to speak on this issue. As has been pointed out, there are a lot of pros and cons about this issue and a lot of people on one side and many on the other, so public hearings and full debate would be in order.

But I think the thing that bothers me the most, Mr. Speaker, is the duplicitous way in which this government has purposely orchestrated a series of statements over the years telling the people that they were going in one direction while working behind the scenes to go in another direction. Now, my colleagues have already mentioned a few of them, but I'll just hit a few. For instance, the Premier down in the Stettler by-election did not admit that; in fact, he said they would not have game farming in this province. The Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife has said the same thing on several occasions, one not too long ago. Actually, the way he said it was really rather interesting, because although what he said wasn't quite what he seemed to be saying, it still shows that he's prepared to kid people about where he's going. After I heard the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon raising questions about elk farming, I specifically stood up and asked the minister: are we going to have game ranching in this province? He stood up and said: no way, as long as I'm the minister, there will be no game ranching on public lands in this province. So he slips in "public lands." "That's not private lands," will now be his answer when he reads this. So be it. But anybody listening would have thought that he was totally denying that there would ever be game ranching

in this province, and they would not have picked up on the "public lands." I did not myself at the time and in fact sat down assured that we were not going to have game ranching in this province. So all it was was a con job. That's exactly what it was, and purposely so. I mean, that's exactly what he meant to do, was to kid anybody that might read that statement or hear that statement as to whether or not there would be game ranching in this province.

If you're going to have game ranching on private lands, if we've got all kinds of leases for cattle, who's to say that you aren't going to start having public lands leased for the raising of elk and the slaughter of elk?

Another minister, Mr. Sparrow, has also often promised public hearings.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. That's unparliamentary. It's the Minister of Tourism. Order please. [interjection] No, you're not the only member that's doing this, but we do not refer to each other by surnames in this Assembly. Thank you.

MR. McEACHERN: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I got carried away. The Minister for Tourism in *Hansard* on November 13, 1984, on page 1506 is quoted as saying:

Just how game ranching will take place in the future, if it is approved by way of regulations, will be left to a lot more public input prior to those regulations being made.

He's promised to hold hearings, and that's what we're asking for. So I expect the minister to stand up and support this amendment, because it is the direction in which he said he would go, and it's the direction that we would like to go.

Just to reiterate and back up my point that the government talked in one direction and really lead us in another, back in 1982 an internally developed wildlife policy was released by the Alberta government. Buried within it were indications that the development of the game ranching industry would become part of the long-term goals of the division. Yet we've had statement after statement in the meantime saying that no, they weren't going in that direction.

Also, in 1985 Alberta Agriculture employee Judd Bunnage cofounded the Alberta Game Growers Association. Now, here's a department official helping the game growers get organized so that they can become a lobby group to the government to promote game ranching in this country, hence obviously leading in one particular direction at the same time the ministers are running all around the province and replying that . . . Another one was the present Minister of Advanced Education who said that the government would not be proceeding with the concept of game ranching in this province, on June 1 . . . I don't have the date on that one; I'm sorry. In any case, Mr. Speaker, we've heard pronouncement after pronouncement that the government was going in one direction while at the same time they were doing things that were leading in the opposite direction.

Now, the development of game ranching at this stage, of course – they've done it in stages. They've just allowed the people to set up elk farms. They could only use the antlers and sell them for breeding stock. "No, no; no meat." Now, in some ways they're trying to say that this still isn't game ranching. I remember one of the comments from the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. It was something to the effect that there'll be no ranches for big game hunting. Well, nobody ever thought, or at least I don't suppose anybody ever did, that somehow you're going to have all these tame animals and somebody comes along with their big boomer and shoots them and then

calls this hunting. I have more respect for the people that hunt in this province.

I no longer hunt. I was born and raised on a farm. My father shot a moose probably every winter when I was a kid. It was the mainstay of our fare in the wintertime. So I don't have any great antipathy to that in a necessity sort of situation where you need the meat and you use it all. But that day and age has gone for most of us, Mr. Speaker. Most of us do not need to go out and hunt. Now, the few people that do, okay, I have more respect for them than to believe that they would for a minute go out to a game farm or a game ranch somewhere and shoot some tame animal with their gun and then say that they'd bagged trophy. I mean, I just cannot believe that any of them would want to do that. So that is not a question here.

What is at question is: are you going to allow the slaughter of elk in the same way that we treat cows? Mr. Speaker, we might go back and take a little bit of an historical look. Somebody started looking back. You know, 400 years ago the Laplanders started farming caribou, so to speak. That's true those kinds of things go on. I don't blame them. Again, it's matter of necessity and survival in a very harsh climate. Somewhere further back in history, some 6,000 years or so ago, mankind decided that he should tame cattle. We don't even know; it's so far back in history we're not even sure of how it came about or in what way it happened. What we do know, if we think about the subsequent history, is that we don't have any wild cows around any more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sure we do.

MR. McEACHERN: Oh, sure we do. Lots of them, aren't there? Where are they? The odd domestic cow that may have escaped here and there in the bush country somewhere; sure. But we don't have anything that you could say is . . . [interjections] We have a few wild cows, but not as wild as some of the cow milkers or cowboys around here. In any case . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could corral the matter and bring it back to the wording of the amendment, the need for an environmental impact assessment, without the whole history of the human race let alone the animal race.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But I guess I raise those ideas with the view to showing the need for public hearings so that we can have a full discussion about what direction we want to go. Do we really want to domesticate the elk of this society? I for one have great qualms about that. If you think we're going to turn the elk population of Alberta . . . This is the only one it applies to, but if that sort of thing starts happening in other provinces as well – it's only happening in two other provinces as this stage; seven of them do not – then we're going to turn elk into cows, or we're no longer going to have . . . [interjections] Well, if you can't see the analogy, then that's your tough luck.

Mr. Speaker, there is a very good chance that the poaching that will go along with game ranching may very well lead to the extinction of wild elk. I didn't say it'll happen overnight, but you must admit that there is that danger. You know, 50 years, 100 years, 200 years down the road those things may happen, and it may date back to the kinds of start . . . [interjections] No, you have to think in the long term. You can't just sort of say: "Oh, well. We're not going to think about this." It's an important question.

Mr. Speaker, could I have some order around here? [interjections] I've got all day.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to hasten to assure the hon. member that the Chair is not intervening in trying to settle the House down mainly because your interesting turn of phrase is very helpful to relieving the frustration of not only the end of the week but towards the end, or perhaps just to the middle, of the session. So I encourage the hon. member to continue in the same vein.

MR. McEACHERN: I can try. Well, I'd like to just point out that the Bill is not just about elk, and some of the concerns that I have for the wildlife of this province do not just stop with the elk population. If you look at section (f), the definitions on page 3, it talks about "game-production animal." What a wonderful way to describe a beautiful animal like the elk. You know, you guys can laugh all you like, but it's a serious philosophical debate about where you should go with this kind of thing.

The amendment calls for public hearings where we can have a full-fledged debate on the importance of whether or not we wish to keep some of our wildlife wild, whether we're going to preserve species on this earth besides mankind or are going to obliterate everything and subject everything to our whims and our ways, what we want for our own selfish gains. I think we have to stop and look at that, Mr. Speaker, and these public hearings would be geared to do that.

But this definition raises fears for other animals besides elk, because it doesn't even specify elk, although they are the ones which at the present time are already being game farmed or game ranched.

"Game-production animal" or "present game-production animal" means a wildlife animal of a prescribed species that does not belong to the Crown, that is identified and registered and that is in captivity in Alberta for the purpose or the ultimate purpose of reproduction, sale as breeding stock or as meat or the sale of prescribed parts of it, or for any combination of those purposes. I just ask the members to think about how ludicrous it would be to try, say, moose, deer. Okay? Are they at stake? What about bear? We're going to fence bears in and sell their parts? Sell them for meat? So this Bill does give rather sweeping powers for mankind to change a lot of fundamental beliefs he's had about the animals that he shares this earth with. I think it's time we started to change that, because the overriding attitude has been one that the fish and the fowl and the plants of this earth are just for our exploitation, and I think that sort of thing is running out. It's certainly leading us to a situation where we have a rather polluted planet, and I'm not sure that we'll survive much longer if we continue in that vein, in the headlong direction that we're going.

Now, I don't really believe that the farmers that are involved in this game ranching or game farming are some kinds of devils or anything. Nobody is saying that at all. Nor are they doing anything terribly wrong. They're merely trying to make a living in a rather complex society, and they've found something that maybe is working for them or that they think will work for them. So I have some sympathy for those people that were led in this direction, but I say that the issue is bigger than just whether or not a hundred people can make a living at that kind of thing. I think it's an issue that has to be fully debated by the whole of the society and decide what direction we want to go with that. I guess it was possible to live with it, although I find cutting the antlers off to sell them when they're in the best of the velvet

very disturbing. I have visions of these beautiful animals with bleeding heads because of the velvet being cut at the most sensitive stage and that sort of thing. But it's the meat, moving the right to sell parts to commercializing the production and sale of meat that really is . . . We've now come to the nub of the question as to whether we'll proceed in the direction of turning wild animals into domestic animals or obliterating them altogether. [interjections] Well, because it's a serious topic, that's why one sometimes has to also say it in a serious way.

So those are some of my concerns that I think could be brought out and debated in this Assembly under the Public Affairs Committee. I guess my final point that I would like to make is: if the Minister of Agriculture and the members on the Conservative side and the Liberals, who have decided that they are also in favour of this Bill, have really decided they've got all the answers – I shouldn't say that. The Liberals didn't say they had all the answers. They admitted they had some questions yet and would like to have these hearings so that we could bring out all the points, pros and cons. But if they are so sure they have all the answers, why are they afraid of the public hearing process? Why are we rushing ahead with this Bill? Why don't we take the time to really have that debate now, because this is the crucial time. The shifting from just horns and those kinds of parts and using them as breeding stock to using them for meat is the nub. We're now at the nub of the question about which direction we go and how we treat other species, in this case particularly elk, but also, since the Act would allow it, other animals as well.

So let us have those public hearings at this stage, Mr. Speaker, not wait till it's too late, until we have too many people involved in the process: restaurants used to having elk meat, people used to going into restaurants and eating elk meat, until perhaps we see poachers obliterating our wild elk. Those are the kinds of dangers I see ahead, so I ask the government to hold those hearings now if they're not afraid of the debate. I'm not afraid of the debate.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes on the amendment, because it's not particularly radical. It says that it be not now read a second time but that the subject matter of the Bill be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Public Affairs to assess the need for an environmental impact assessment . . . contained therein.

Mr. Speaker, the point that I'd make to the government is that this is a major change in policy emanating from this government. We had the top ministers. It's already been mentioned: Premier Getty saying in the Stettler by-election that he was totally against this type of approach *in* dealing with our wild animals; formerly the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife was against this particular policy. That's the information that went right across to the people of Alberta, that they were against this particular Bill. Now, a year and a half after the election, and certainly less than that from the Stettler by-election, we do have a major change in government policy.

The point that I would make to the government: they in their wisdom may have decided that this is a good initiative, but even they must admit that this is a different initiative than they talked about before the elections. So it seems to me logical, then, flowing from that, that if they now believe this is, as I say, a good policy and one worth pursuing, then there should be some access to the public to deal with this. That's all we're asking here: lay out your cards on the table through public hearings in a democratic way. That's all this is saying. Surely that is reasonable when you've had the Premier, when you've had the

minister in charge saying that they're against this type of approach. Why the rush? Are four elk farmers in trouble? Do they have Tory cards? Why the rush? Why are we doing all these things in such a rush when it's a change in government policy? I say to this government: when publicly you've changed your mind, do you not have an obligation then to go out to the public? We're not even going that far in this particular amendment.

I wanted to just refer government members to something that did happen in Manitoba a few years ago. At that particular time the Manitoba government was going to embark on a very similar initiative to what this government is contemplating. But what they did do: they brought it forward as government policy, and they did have public hearings. As a result of those public hearings, the result of the information they received from those public hearings, they backed off. Now, there must have been a reason that they backed off after the public hearings, because it was a government initiative. So I honestly say to the government, to the front bench and the back bench: why are we in such a hurry? Can we not just back off and at least take a look at the pros and cons of it? If it is a good initiative, it will stand the test of time. If we have to come back and deal with a Bill like this, you know, in the fall, is that the end of the world? Of course it isn't. So this is not an unreasonable amendment. It would not be unreasonable to almost any Albertan sitting out there. I'm sure 95 percent of them would agree with this, especially after a shift in government policy officially said by the top ministers of the government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what is bothersome about this *is* that I talked about this at the election. They'll say things during the election, but you can't trust them because they have a different agenda after they're safely elected. This is a good example of it. [interjection] Well, how else could you justify the Premier saying in Stettler that he was against this approach, and then less than a year later we're into dealing with it in the Legislature without any sort of public hearings or environmental impact assessment? How else can people judge it? How else would you judge it if you were an Albertan sitting out there? You know, I wouldn't get exercised about it. That's the truth. If you were an Albertan, you would be doing the same thing. It makes eminently good sense what we're proposing.

What is even more offensive about this whole approach is that we're dealing now with a lot of major Bills, not only this one but other ones, all of a sudden brought in at what they expect to be near the end of the Legislature, when people are watching Meech Lake. As we say, "People are almost Meeched out, and we can slide through all these things quickly and have them there as law so we don't have to face the flack or have public hearings." [interjections] This can't be a coincidence that we're dealing with all these things at this time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I see the government opposite getting a little exercised. Good. Then I hope they will stand up and justify why a perfectly reasonable . . . There's a change in government policies as espoused by the ministers, as espoused by the Premier, and we can't even have public hearings. They won't even look at having this referred to the select Standing Committee on Public Affairs. You know, that's a Legislative committee. They could at least look at doing it. Now, I don't know all of the little ins and outs and debates that went on within the caucus. Surely there are some people that must have expressed some views against this. But I just say to the government: what is so wrong about looking at the possibility of holding some public hearings? What is the hurry? What is the rush to bring this in? Why do we have to do it right now when

it is clearly a change in government policy? I wish the Minister of Agriculture would explain this to me: what the rush is, what the hurry *is*. If he believes, and I take it that he does believe in this initiative, why is he so afraid to have public hearings about it or look at the possibility of it? In view of the fact, as I explained, that one other government was considering this initiative, had public hearings, and backed off, surely that should send up some sort of bells in the minister's head that maybe we should at least take a look at it. Maybe times have changed. That was four or five years ago. Maybe it's logical that you could, look at this initiative now and you couldn't back then. But if that's the case, we still don't have to rush and hurry with this particular matter. Take a look at it.

The problem when you bring in a Bill like this and make it law: if you've made a mistake because you didn't get all the proper information, you didn't do the public hearings and you make a mistake — it's even possible for this minister maybe to make a mistake — then how do you turn . . . I know he's shaking his head. Well, I'm sorry, hon. minister; I got carried away there. Of course, you'd never make a mistake. But the point that I make: if — that hypothetical if, Mr. Speaker — it is a mistake, how do you turn it back? You can't. That's the problem with these particular laws, not only this one but the AGT one and all the rest of it. You can't turn back the clock on major mistakes. That's why I say: why the rush?

The minister hasn't indicated to me why. I mean, it'd be one thing if the minister and other people had made clear that this was one of their initiatives, during the election or after, of I suppose you could even justify it even if they'd remained mute on it, although I would still probably be making the same case. But when you've had the Premier and you've had the minister in charge indicate clearly to concerned citizens and the people of Alberta that this will not happen, it is not government policy, and a few months later we're into debating a Bill, I say to the minister that that's unfair, that's unacceptable to the people of Alberta. For that reason, I certainly would think that the minister would be glad to support an amendment like this. Just back off for a while; take a look at it, Mr. Speaker. It may well save him from making a major mistake. Down the way he's the one that will be blamed for it. You're the ones that will be blamed for it if it doesn't work out.

Now, maybe the minister and the government don't care if they make a major mistake. Well, the people of Alberta do. Long after this government's gone, the people will be picking up the pieces of unthought-out Bills. I really say to the minister: in your research that you've done, if you've done any, and if you firmly believe that this is a reasonable way to go, admitting that it is a shift in policy, why are you afraid to go to the public with it and let everybody have their say, get together as much information, and then make the decision there? Is it absolutely so crucial that two or three or four months is going to mean the end of this initiative? Of course not. By the very nature of pushing through with a particular Bill like this, people are automatically suspicious. Because that's what they're saying: "What's the hurry? Why is the government rushing this through? Why are they changing their minds so quickly and now having a Bill?" I say to you that it is a totally unacceptable way to run government: to say one thing during an election . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, you're repeating yourself now.

MR. MARTIN: I'll repeat it many times so the minister over there will start to understand it. He'd better wake up and find out what's going on.

MR. MAIN: I got it the first time. This is the fourth time.

MR. MARTIN: For that minister we have to repeat it. I'll say it 25 times and it might sink through, because what I'm saying is good common sense and the people of Alberta would support me on it, even if this minister doesn't have any good common sense. I was hoping the Minister of Agriculture, coming from rural Alberta, would have some of that good common sense.

Mr. Speaker, again I ask the minister even at this late date . . . [interjection] Oh, is that the minister from South Africa still going on?

MR. SPEAKER: We don't have one of those.

MR. MARTIN: I say to the Minister of Agriculture: think about it. Why don't you get on the phone and talk to the people in Manitoba and ask them why they changed their minds? Why don't you even do that at this late date, because they'd take in a lot of information. Why did they change their minds in that government after public hearings? That's the least, it seems to me, that the minister could do, and I would put that to the minister, to think about it and act upon it – we still have time to do it – and to use some reason and rationality here and proceed in that matter.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would, first of all, like to extend my appreciation to the Member for Smoky River for his kind words in saying that the Member for Edmonton-Highlands was half knowledgeable. I'm only sorry that I can't return the compliment.

I would like to speak in favour of the amendment, Mr. Speaker, and I will just make a comment or two before I choose to adjourn debate. The comment that I would like to make could be directed at the Minister of Agriculture and his partner the Minister of Tourism, who was the former Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. If he would check his comments in the November 13, '84 *Hansard* when they discussed the regulations to the Wildlife Act, Bill 84, in those comments he promised the people of Alberta there would be extensive public input into any changes to the regulations concerning game ranching. I would strongly recommend that the two ministers get together, and I'm sure they would also support this amendment if they did that.

With that, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: A motion to adjourn the debate. Those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion carries.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, we would propose to deal in Committee of the Whole with certain Bills on Monday afternoon and then return to second readings Monday evening. I would move that we call it 1 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Before the Chair puts the question, again this morning there were at least two – probably more but certainly two – interventions of the Chair with regard to the language in the House. One occurred while I was absent briefly from the Chair. The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place used the phrase "deceptive falsehood," which seems to be a bit redundant. But it's also along the line of a similar phrase which was cautioned by the Chair some time ago, in '87. It's along the nature of "absolute falsehood."

There were other comments made about: some minister used the word "misleading" on another occasion. Then we also had another phrase as used by the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods which was exactly the same as a word which had been used yesterday and which had been dealt with to some degree by the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway this morning.

The Chair is not going to rule on any of this nonsense. The Chair is just absolutely tired of members wanting to sit there, flip open *Beauchesne* in terms of going through: now, what is in order; what isn't in order; what can I sneak in past the Chair? Fine, but the Chair believes that hon. members really . . . This may just be a manifestation of the tiredness towards the end of session for hon. members, and I'm quite certain that come Monday morning everybody will be in a much more positive frame of mind and we'll be giving the usual high regard for things parliamentary.

[At 12:59 p.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

