

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Wednesday, March 8, 1995**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 95/03/08

[The Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

THE SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, grant us a daily awareness of the precious gift of life which You have given us.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we dedicate our lives anew to the service of our province and our country.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition with 229 signatures from the city of Calgary area requesting the government to ensure 400 hours as a minimum for early childhood services instruction per child per year.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to introduce a petition in this case signed by 309 Calgarians who urge the Legislative Assembly

to ensure all Alberta school boards provide the opportunity for each eligible child to receive a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of residents in the Edmonton area urging the Alberta government to provide "a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year" for eligible students.

head: **Reading and Receiving Petitions**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

MR. RENNEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to the report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills that was concurred with by the Assembly yesterday, I would move that the petitions I presented in the Assembly on Monday, March 6, 1995, now be deemed to be read and received.

[Motion carried]

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the petition I presented yesterday regarding ECS be now read.

CLERK:

We the undersigned Residents of Alberta petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to ensure all Alberta school boards provide the opportunity for each eligible child to receive a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year.

We also request the Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to allow Alberta School Boards to use money from the

Alberta School Foundation Fund to fund 400 hours or more of Early Childhood Services, as determined by the local community, so that there are no ECS user fees for 400 hour programs and so that all Alberta children have an equal opportunity or "level playing field" to succeed and compete in life by having equal access to basic educational resources.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I request at this time that the petition I presented on March 6 be read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned Residents of Alberta petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to ensure all Alberta school boards provide the opportunity for each eligible child to receive a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year.

We also request the Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to allow Alberta School Boards to use money from the Alberta School Foundation Fund to fund 400 hours or more of Early Childhood Services, as determined by the local community, so that there are no ECS user fees for 400 hour programs and so that all Alberta children have an equal opportunity or "level playing field" to succeed and compete in life by having equal access to basic educational resources.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Bonnyville.

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to request that the petition I presented yesterday be read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned Residents of Alberta petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to ensure all Alberta school boards provide the opportunity for each eligible child to receive a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year.

We also request the Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to allow Alberta School Boards to use money from the Alberta School Foundation Fund to fund 400 hours or more of Early Childhood Services, as determined by the local community, so that there are no ECS user fees for 400 hour programs and so that all Alberta children have an equal opportunity or "level playing field" to succeed and compete in life by having equal access to basic educational resources.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request that the petition I presented on March 2, 1995, regarding cuts to ECS be now read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned Residents of Alberta petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to ensure all Alberta school boards provide the opportunity for each eligible child to receive a minimum of 400 hours of Early Childhood Services instruction per year.

We also request the Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to allow Alberta School Boards to use money from the Alberta School Foundation Fund to fund 400 hours or more of Early Childhood Services, as determined by the local community, so that there are no ECS user fees for 400 hour programs and so that all Alberta children have an equal opportunity or "level playing field" to succeed and compete in life by having equal access to basic educational resources.

head: **Notices of Motions**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to give notice that at the end of question period under Standing Order 40 I will be presenting a motion to the Assembly to recognize today as International Women's Day and to discuss the current status of Alberta women on this important anniversary.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

**Bill 16**  
**Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1995**

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1995.

[Leave granted; Bill 16 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm tabling copies of two letters, one from Mr. Clark, president of the firefighters' union in St. Albert, and one from Wayne Hudson, secretary-treasurer of the Alberta Firefighters Association in Grande Prairie. In one of the letters it is stated . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. This is not an opportunity to explain what's being tabled, except what they are, hon. member.

MR. MITCHELL: These letters, of course, Mr. Speaker, dispute the claims made by the Minister of Labour yesterday that he had consulted properly . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. That's not an appropriate use of the tabling procedure, hon. leader.

MR. MITCHELL: . . . and establish that the Premier broke a promise.

THE SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. DAY: A point of order.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

MR. CHADI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table today four copies of seven letters from Albertans that are concerned about the privatization of jails.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings today. I'd also like to table copies of letters addressed to the Premier regarding privatization of jails and safety concerns.

My second tabling is four copies of a document entitled National Defence: 1995 Budget Impact Statement, which deals with the tens of millions of dollars that will be saved by consolidating bases and gives a rationale for consolidating the Chilliwack and Calgary bases in Edmonton, that being that Edmonton was the only facility that had the existing infrastructure to handle the consolidation.

Thank you.

1:40

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings to do today. The first is seven letters from Albertans dealing with privatization of jails, four copies of each letter.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I wish to table a copy of a letter addressed to Hon. Doug Young, the federal Minister of Transport, which deals with the safety issue with regards to the W-body vehicles and also invites the provincial government to bring this concern to the federal government's attention.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for St. Albert.

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling two letters from Sean Blake and Patricia Hagan of St. Albert urging the government to restore 400 hours of kindergarten per year per student.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. BRUSEKER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table copies of letters sent to the Premier regarding concerns about privatization and in particular about privatization of jails.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Community Development.

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you. As I'm sure you and all the members in this Assembly are aware, today is International Women's Day, and accordingly it's an appropriate time to introduce these two guests to you. Marilyn Fleger was appointed chair of the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues last year. Prior to her appointment she worked for 10 years in the area of family violence in Grande Prairie, Camrose, and Edmonton. Also here today is advisory council member Lois Loyer, who is an expert in the area of addictions training. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly these two fine members of the Advisory Council on Women's Issues, who are present in the members' gallery. I would ask that they rise and be recognized.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a constituent of mine, Clinton Monson. Clinton is a grade 11 student from Athabasca. As a work experience student at Athabasca University, Clinton did all the illustrations for a university text called *Native Literature in Canada*. He also did a sketch for the dog mushers of the Edmonton bicentennial mail run. He has also been interviewed by CFRN TV for their *Eyewitness* program and also by *National Geographic World*, who want to do a feature article on his work. I find it rewarding that this young native artist is being recognized and that he is receiving encouragement through our native education program. Clinton is accompanied today by Lionel Cherniwchan, vice-principal of the school, and Alma Swan, native education co-ordinator. I would

like them to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted to introduce to you and through you to members of the Legislature 33 bright, energetic, enthusiastic students from one of my favourite schools in my constituency, the Clive school. Accompanying them is their popular, dynamic teacher Rob MacKinnon; parent helpers Debbie Wagner, Teri Giles, Wes Shackleton, Jeff Giesbrecht, Teryl Schmidt, Eldon Bushman, and Larry Neufeld; as well, their competent bus driver, Garth McCulloch. They are seated in both galleries. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Vegreville-Viking.

MR. STELMACH: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon I have the distinct pleasure of introducing to you and to Members of this Legislative Assembly a very distinguished guest who has spent some time with you this morning and also visited with the Whip, who hosted the distinguished guest at lunch, and also has informed us that International Women's Day is a national holiday in Ukraine. I would ask Irina Khromenko to please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **Ministerial Statements**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Community Development.

### **International Women's Day**

MR. MAR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is International Women's Day, and I would like to invite members of this Assembly to recall with me some of the history of the day, some of the achievements that it celebrates, and some of the challenges that women still face in their homes, in communities, and around the world.

The first International Women's Day was celebrated on March 8, 1911. The focus then was on universal female suffrage and the special challenges facing working women. There has been much progress in both those areas since 1911, but there is still much work to do. International Women's Day remains an occasion to commemorate, celebrate, and reflect on the struggles of all women to live active and productive lives, however they define those terms.

We need to look no further than this Assembly to find examples of women for whom the description "active and productive" is entirely appropriate, women on both sides of this Chamber who serve Albertans ably and effectively, setting examples and serving as role models for women everywhere. Of course, we can all point to many other Alberta women, individually and as members of corporate, public, and nonprofit communities, who are serving their families, serving their communities, and serving this province with distinction. We all benefit from their achievements and their success, and we all benefit from their example.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we are mindful of the fact that there's still much work to be done. The government continues its commitment to action in the area of violence against women by maintaining the office for the prevention of family violence. This office is the first of its kind set up by a province in Canada. It remains at the forefront of its programs to address the issue of

family violence. The Women's and Seniors' Secretariat in my department is also looking to the future through programs such as Stepping Stones, which gives role model and career information to young women.

The needs and concerns of women are and will remain important to the Alberta government. That is why I have asked the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues to launch a public consultation on effective strategies for women to be heard by government and thereby influence public policy. The first meeting of this consultation was held yesterday in Fort McMurray. In coming months the advisory council will be meeting with many more groups around the province, working through regional community adult learning councils, and I look forward to the report on their findings this fall.

As we continue our efforts to improve the status of women, we must remember that there are many parts of the world where women do not enjoy the opportunities available in this country. Acknowledging women's progress over the past decade and identifying what needs to be done internationally will be the focus of a world conference on women in Beijing, China, in September of this year.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to celebrate International Women's Day, to commemorate the struggle and the plight of women in the past, and to recognize the positive changes that have occurred and will continue to occur. The symbols of International Women's Day are bread and roses. Bread represents economic equality. Roses represent women's continuing efforts for a better quality of life. Those are important goals for women and for all people in Alberta, and when women make progress towards those goals, we all benefit.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**1:50**

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I welcome this opportunity to respond to the minister's statement on International Women's Day and to perhaps elaborate a little bit on the history of that day. It was on March 8, 1857, that women textile workers from New York's east side held an unprecedented strike to protest unsafe working conditions, paltry wages, and long hours. As we might have expected, the reaction they encountered was cruel. Several women were beaten, and others were trampled under police horses, but the strike did not go unnoticed. In fact, while these same women had to return to the same working conditions at that time, women factory workers around the world began to follow their example. Textile workers in Montreal held more than 40 strikes between the period 1900 to 1908 on these very issues. The action caught the attention of a very determined woman in Copenhagen, Denmark, named Clara Zetkin, who managed to have March 8 officially proclaimed as International Women's Day in honour of the factory workers who took that courageous first step to speak out against the injustice that they encountered every day.

International Women's Day has come to represent the tremendous struggles that women have had to overcome literally for generations. Celebrating the day recognizes the gains that women have made and, perhaps most important of all, honours their strength, their wisdom, and their patience with a world that moves far too slowly in recognizing full equality for women in our society.

I close, Mr. Speaker, with a quote from Lyn Cockburn, a Calgary newspaper columnist, who wrote today about Interna-

tional Women's Day. It is very appropriate, and it is very, very powerful.

Today, then, is a day to commemorate women. It is a day to honor women. And I, for one, want it stopped.

I'm tired of having a day. I want the whole damn year.

We should all of us, Mr. Speaker, endorse this sentiment wholeheartedly and absolutely.

head:

### Oral Question Period

#### Regulations

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, one of the most disturbing features of this Premier's actions is that he is consistently and deliberately eroding our democratic institutions. He is grabbing power, centralizing power in his cabinet, probably in his own office, most recently through Bill 41 and now by avoiding the Legislature altogether on Bill 57 and simply proceeding with more and more backdoor regulation. Albertans don't want more secrecy in their government. They don't want a power-hungry emperor. How can this Premier claim that he is promoting more open and accountable government when in fact he is doing more and more of his work behind closed doors and avoiding public debate on so many of the issues that are so important to the people of this province?

MR. KLEIN: Well, all I can say to the question is: what was the question? But, Mr. Speaker, I can address the preamble. I know that Albertans didn't want a power-hungry emperor. That's why they didn't vote for him.

MR. MITCHELL: When this Premier talks about open and accountable government, he is an emperor with no clothes, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier stand in this House and at a bare minimum tell the people of Alberta why each of the following areas do not seem to be important enough to him to warrant public debate in this Legislature. Education: regulations and deregulation. Health care: regulations and deregulation. And perhaps irony of ironies, Mr. Speaker, freedom of information regulations?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, this again simply points out how very little this hon. member knows about the workings of government. I can understand why he knows very little about the workings of government. He's never been in government, and, thank God, he never will be. Regulations are a function of legislation. Regulations are the operative part of legislation, and the legislation that brings about the regulations, all legislation, is fully debated in this Legislative Assembly.

MR. MITCHELL: Will the Premier explain why he allowed his members yesterday to defeat Motion 502, requiring that all regulations would be reviewed in this Legislative Assembly's committee on laws and regulations? What's he afraid of, Mr. Speaker?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, there was a free vote on that particular issue. Was there not? You know, as I pointed out to the media on the way in, we're seeing something that the hon. leader of the Liberal opposition concurred with, and that was the advent of free votes. One of the beautiful things about a free vote in the Legislature is that the leader of the government and the Leader of the Opposition are just a part of the Assembly. They are no more, and they are no less. I would hope that that would be the spirit that the hon. leader of the

Liberal opposition would adopt when we enter into this very important phase of legislative democracy.

#### DeVry Institute of Technology

MR. MITCHELL: Let's talk about some backdoor regulation, Mr. Speaker, this time in education. Without any debate in this Legislative Assembly or any legislated authority whatsoever, this government has gone ahead unilaterally and allowed the DeVry Institute of Technology to begin granting American degrees out of its Calgary facilities. Will the Premier confirm that the only reason that DeVry was granted this privilege was because the Premier's corporate buddy the president of DeVry, John Ballheim, is also one of the government's secret advisers on education policy?

MR. KLEIN: Well, if he's one of my buddies, Mr. Speaker, he must be one of my secret buddies. First of all, I don't know Mr. Ballheim. I've maybe met him once or twice, but honest to God I cannot conjure up what the gentleman even looks like. I did have an opportunity many, many years ago, when I was the mayor of Calgary, to address the graduating students of DeVry Institute and was very impressed at that time with the quality of education provided those students. I would say that the appropriate Act of the Legislature puts in place the operative regulations that allow the minister to make those decisions. What I would like to hear from the hon. member – and he might want to answer this question, because I can't answer it: is he opposed to this wonderful initiative on the part of DeVry to broker degrees through I think a university in the United States? Is he opposed?

MR. MITCHELL: We're always opposed to secrecy and backroom regulation on behalf of the Premier's friends.

Is it the plan, the secret agenda of this government to downsize public postsecondary institutions in order to create a bigger market for his friend's private, American-based, corporate college?

MR. KLEIN: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. My apologies. It now comes to me who Mr. Ballheim is. He is now the president of the Alberta Chamber of Commerce. I have met him not once but twice. He is hardly a buddy. You know, he is not on my social list, nor is the hon. leader of the Liberal opposition. And I know him a lot better than I know Mr. Ballheim.

Mr. Speaker, I'll have the hon. minister of advanced education elaborate. But, first of all, what I see happening in postsecondary education is absolutely phenomenal. It is something that has never been attempted before. It is a program that now allows colleges that simply had that college status to go into applied degrees, to allow private institutions like DeVry Institute to broker degrees through American universities. Basically, it's a program to simply provide much more access for students to degrees than was ever there before.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to supplement the information that the Premier has given. This is not a new initiative in this province. Canadian Union College has been brokering a degree for the bachelor of education from Union College in the United States for a long time. DeVry Institute certainly comes with great credentials. As a matter of fact, of the students who've been going to the United States to get their degrees, some 603 of them in the last few years have come back to Alberta, and 80 percent of them have gained very good employment in this province. This is a benefit to the students of

Alberta. Certainly we give credentials to many private institutions in this province, and DeVry just happens to be one of them.

**2:00**

MR. MITCHELL: I wonder what happens to people who can't get access to public education and can't . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. MITCHELL: Does the Premier not think that there is a conflict of interest here when Mr. Ballheim's DeVry Institute gets special degree-granting status while he is a member of the Premier's eight-member advisory council on postsecondary education?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, no, I don't think that is a conflict. You know, we have numerous people – and there are some Liberals too – appointed to various committees, and we don't . . .

MR. N. TAYLOR: Who? Who?

MR. KLEIN: Oh, I'm sure, hon. Member for Redwater, that if we go through the list, we can find plenty of Liberals on various committees.

Relative to the specifics, that committee is ostensibly administered by the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, and I'll have him respond.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ballheim did serve on a committee for my department some time ago, about two years ago, and completed the work on that and submitted a report. Beyond that, he holds no responsibility on committees for this department.

MR. MITCHELL: Obviously pretty good work if you can get it, Mr. Speaker.

### Seniors' Housing

MR. MITCHELL: Government deregulation, regulation behind closed doors: this time, Mr. Speaker, seniors' lodges, without any consideration of the consequences for people. What we see now are more and more seniors being evicted from these lodges. Over 80 percent of lodge residents are living on less than \$13,000 per year. It is interesting to note on International Women's Day that a vast majority of the people affected by this latest deregulation are women. Can the Premier explain how these people, particularly vulnerable because of their age, are going to find adequate safe housing on less than \$13,000 per year?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, we said that what we would do is monitor on an ongoing basis and bring back recommendations relative to the cumulative impact of all government programs on seniors. Indeed, we put in a program that guaranteed that seniors would have a minimum, I think, of \$265 left over at the end of the month.

Relative to this particular case to which the hon. Leader of the Opposition refers, I will have the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs respond.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the Premier is right on that it's not a case of deregulation; it was re-regulation of the lodge rates. It was asked for by the Senior

Citizens Homes Association so that they could better manage their affairs, and certainly they're very responsible people. In most cases the rent has not increased significantly, and if there are hardship cases out there that are falling through the cracks, we need to know the specifics. If they're falling through the cracks through no fault of their own, we want to look at it. There is a task force of different ministers that are trying to check these out and make sure that nobody is falling through the cracks, because that's not our intent. We do know that they need to have \$265 a month over and above their rent and lodging, so that's what we've left the regulations at right now.

THE SPEAKER: The Chair would just remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that later on today the estimates of the Department of Municipal Affairs will be discussed.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Premier can somehow understand that these seniors are not just customers, and they're not just statistics. They are people receiving less than \$13,000 per year, and while he is quote, unquote, monitoring, they are literally living in fear for their future.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there was no question.

MR. MITCHELL: If the Premier and his colleagues earning over \$100,000 a year are having a tough time living, as the Premier says, on Kraft dinner, I wonder what he thinks these seniors receiving less than \$13,000 a year are going to be able to eat.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, first of all it was pointed out that there is a guarantee that all seniors living in lodges will have \$265 minimum at the end of the day. I would also point out that the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition gets paid the same amount as any minister here on the front bench. I would point out also that any one of these ministers is worth a lot more than the Leader of the Official Opposition.

We have said that we will monitor very carefully the cumulative impact of government programs on seniors. These include the thresholds that have been established for the payment of health care premiums. This will involve also the amount of subsidization that we allow for rent in various seniors' accommodations. This will also involve a multitude of benefits under various programs that provide seniors with benefits in this province. We will monitor the cumulative impacts, and we will make sure that the seniors in this province are treated fairly. I will point out to the opposition that notwithstanding adjustments to government programs affecting seniors, they still are among the best cared for and the best treated seniors anywhere in this country, perhaps in the world.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

### CFB Cold Lake

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 9 of this year I had the pleasure of chairing a public meeting of the Northern Alberta Development Council in Cold Lake, Alberta, and, I might say, fine people and a fine community. There was a very serious issue that was raised by many of the community leaders and those in the community regarding what at that time was identified as probable downsizing of the fighter base. On February 27 . . .

MR. HENRY: Question. Question.

MR. JACQUES: This is of concern to those, thank you, hon. member, not yourself. [interjections] We care what happens in northeast Alberta, Mr. Speaker. That member from Edmonton doesn't care.

MR. HENRY: You can give it, but you can't take it.

MR. JACQUES: I can take it. If you want to get up and ask the question, do it. [interjections]

#### **Speaker's Ruling Decorum**

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. The Chair has a rather extensive list of members who are interested in asking questions today. I hope that all members will co-operate in allowing their colleagues to complete that list. If we have the type of behaviour that was just exhibited repeated over and over again, there'll be fewer and fewer people who will get a chance to ask a question.

The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the federal announcement, they announced . . .

MR. HENRY: Question. This is a speech.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Preambles**

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, who gives you the right to decide how much time can be spent on preambles? You could make the very same comment at a great number of the members sitting in front of you in your caucus, and I don't hear you doing that.

The hon. Member for Grande-Prairie-Wapiti.

#### **2:10 CFB Cold Lake (continued)**

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government did announce some reductions at both Cold Lake and at Bagotville, Quebec. In their announcement - it's only a one-sentence reference - they refer to "community leaders and other levels of government to assist in the development and implementation of community adjustment plans." [interjections] We care about northeastern Alberta.

My question is to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Mr. Minister, what actions will you be taking to determine that those reductions at Cold Lake are not the product of political posturing?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'm certain that any community would be concerned when they're losing a portion of what would be a major industrial driver in their community: at Cold Lake, in Calgary. I would undertake to attempt to have that question answered when the Premier is meeting with Minister Collette, who is in charge of National Defence in Ottawa, as to the rationale behind the downsizing. I think some of it is spelled out in the white paper that came in '94, where there had to be a 25 percent decrease in terms of our armed forces complement across Canada. My undertaking would be to attempt to get the answer

when the Premier is getting the same groundwork for the move from Calgary to Edmonton.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister without portfolio responsible for economic development. Would you please advise of the estimated economic damage that that base reduction will have on Cold Lake and the surrounding communities?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it's great to have a question of that concern come from that side of the House.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's on our side.

MR. SMITH: And it's important that he is a member of this government.

The interesting part about this, Mr. Speaker, is that it shows how fragile public-sector investment is as opposed to private-sector investment, which hangs around for a long time, which builds long-term jobs. In fact, the city of Edmonton benefits from a \$450 million base of operations in Cold Lake, and the reduction indicates that there could be a social impact lost to the community of as much as 14 percent. Now, this could end up creating a reduction in military jobs of 600, a reduction in civilian jobs of over 60. In fact, we have to ensure that there are strong areas of opportunity throughout Alberta, the north being particularly important, to drive private-sector investment.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question is to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Given the federal statement that they are willing to work with "other levels of government to assist in the development and implementation of community adjustment plans," would you please advise what actions your department will be taking in that connection?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I think the minister of economic development alluded to that, that we have to work together with any community that has suffered withdrawal of a significant amount of industrial driver. I'm certain we would be working with them, through economic development, ourselves, and the federal government departments, to find out what alternatives can be made to replace this loss.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

#### **Social Assistance for Women**

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So we celebrate today as International Women's Day. Well, what is this government doing today to poor women and their children in Alberta? Sixty percent of all single-parent families living below the poverty line are headed by women. Here's the budget of a real life mom with a 21-month-old child: \$766 from supports for independence, \$135 for a child tax benefit, no support from the father. After rent, utilities, insurance, bus pass, laundry and diapers, and user fees are paid, this mother has exactly \$176 left to buy all food,

clothing, nonprescription drugs, personal household needs, and babysitting. Forget recreation. A hundred and seventy-six dollars is what she has left to buy her food. My questions are to the Premier. How can this be justified? Abandoning this single mother and her baby with a measly \$176 a month for all food and necessities: how can this happen in this province?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is obviously presenting a worst-case scenario and . . . [interjections] No, no. She knows darn well that we can't, by law, talk about individual cases. Obviously she's trying to draw the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services into discussing publicly a case.

MRS. HEWES: I'm not.

MR. KLEIN: Well, you are. You are. Well, what are you doing then? If you have these, hon. member . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. [interjections] Order. The Chair would invite hon. members to please address their comments through the Chair and not to each other.

MR. KLEIN: My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

What I would ask out of all decency for this hon. member to do, rather than come up with an anonymous case – and she knows darn well, Mr. Speaker, that we cannot discuss it. She knows that it cannot be discussed. It would violate not only the law but every moral principle. I would say that this lady of high moral standards and high principles should do the right thing and the decent thing and discuss that case with the hon. minister.

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to supplement the Premier's answer, because it does directly impact my department. I've said in this Assembly before that of course the Liberals' policy would be more welfare. From what I see out there when I'm talking to clients, more welfare is not the answer. The welfare system has been around over 40 years, and I do not see one person on welfare that is happy with the way the system was delivered previously.

Mr. Speaker, what we have done here now is put the young, healthy Albertans back into the workforce and allowed more dollars for the high-needs areas. In fact, if individuals are ready to get back into training opportunities, they are eligible for 30 percent more welfare rates than the old rates that were in place before.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, it has to be anonymous to protect her. And, Mr. Premier, there is no appeal.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier how he rationalizes \$176 a month for all food and necessities for a single parent when he has recognized in this House this afternoon, publicly recognized, that a senior in a lodge in this province should not have less than \$265 a month for incidentals. How do you rationalize those two numbers, sir?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, again, I am not familiar with all the intricacies of this particular case. The hon. member knows that these kinds of cases cannot be discussed in the Legislative Assembly or in any public forum. I'm sure that if the hon. member were to sit down with the Minister of Family and Social Services, he would be able to provide her with the rationale.

First of all, we don't know what this individual gets in health benefits. We don't know what this individual gets in educational

benefits, in child care benefits. None of that information has been provided by this hon. member.

I will add to what the Minister of Family and Social Services has said. Yes, we have reduced significantly the welfare roles. We have dedicated significant amounts of money to workforce experience programs, to skills upgrading, to job retraining, and it is working. Also, we have created through our economic initiatives in this province the environment for the private sector to create something like 89,000 new jobs. That is the way you go about getting the people off welfare, Mr. Speaker.

2:20

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, it's not working for this mother and her infant child.

Mr. Speaker, I expect the Premier to know what these numbers are that his department is using.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier if he will commit now, in the House this afternoon, to raise the food and shelter levels of assistance for people who must depend upon assistance so that this baby and all the other babies and the mothers in this situation have enough to eat and a decent place to live. Will you commit to do that?

MR. KLEIN: I will commit to what has been the policy of this government and what will continue to be the policy of this government, and that is that we will not allow welfare to be used as a form of subsistence to sustain a way of life. A way of life. If people are capable of working and contributing to society, we will provide that individual with every opportunity. I want the hon. member to listen to this next statement, because this is fundamental to our policy. Any person who truly needs our help in society – truly needs our help in society, and I underline: needs – will get that help.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge, I beg the hon. member to share the case of this mother and the child with the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services so he may personally review the situation with her.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

### Rail Workers' Labour Dispute

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the days pass, farmers are becoming more and more aware that yet again labour problems in our railways are meaning that agriculture producers will have to pay the price for labour unrest and unreasonable union demands. Farmers are well aware that they'll be the ones that will pay the cost if strike action begins. Can the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development advise whether any progress has been made towards averting a strike?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can. Unfortunately, it isn't good news. There has been no progress made. As a matter of fact, the situation is worsening. A second union that was in strike position, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of the Way Employees, today launched the first of a series of rotating work stoppages in eastern Canada. Without a doubt, this action will soon spread to other parts of Canada and will very likely affect Alberta. This is a bad indication since there is no means that we have to control these types of work stoppages. It's

a very significant indication that the farmers indeed are being held at a ransom with this type of a process that we have today.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister. With regards to the threatened strike action by the Canadian auto workers union, has a date been set for a walkout to begin?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's our understanding that the Canadian auto workers union has indicated that they won't strike before March 15. They have targeted CP Rail initially with the threat of rotating strikes, but this hasn't been confirmed. The potential of a general work stoppage is indeed frightening because, as I mentioned before, the months of March and April are very significant months as far as movement by rail and as far as shipment are concerned. With the spring breakup, of course, you have to get the product to the ports to last through the months of March and April as well as the months of May and June. So it's a very serious situation. It's one that farmers don't have the authority to deal with, don't have the regulatory opportunities to counteract, and one that's very critical to us at the present time.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: have any other associated unions or the federal government given any idea of what their activity would be regarding this strike?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: No. To date there have been no assurances from any unions. This, of course, is also very critical because there is such a multitude of unions, any one of which can bring the whole process to a stop.

More importantly and a larger additional worry is that our federal counterparts, who do have the authority to deal with this issue, at one time were talking very tough about things indeed not being allowed to progress to this particular stage. They seem to be very silent on the issue at the present time, and it is of deep concern to us. We are lobbying our federal counterpart to take immediate action on behalf of our producers and to see that the threatened work stoppages, which have now indeed come to a reality, are not allowed to happen and are not allowed to continue.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

### Women in the Workforce

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past years women have worked very hard to try to gain equality in the workforce, yet this government is pushing women back into the Dark Ages. More than 63 percent of public employees fired are women; 98 percent of nurses fired are women; 66 percent of teachers fired are women. This government is exploiting and victimizing women. My question is to the Premier. What are you doing to track what is happening to these women that you have fired? [interjections] Shall I repeat?

Mr. Speaker, 98 percent of nurses fired are women. I'm sorry if I said that wrong. I asked what you're doing to track what's happening to these women that you fired? Nothing.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, if that was to me, we have workforce adjustment programs. We're encouraging the various unions, the AMA and the ATA, to work with us to make sure that our workforce adjustments are effective and that those people leaving the public service, whether they're in health or in education, are properly accommodated. I really don't know what the hon. member is driving at or what kind of tracking system she would like to see put in place, but I can assure you that we're doing virtually all we can to make sure that these people are treated fairly if in fact they are the subject of layoffs. I'll have the hon. minister supplement.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, in terms of government reductions we are tracking this, even on a gender basis, and as a matter of fact, those numbers are published. We are very open and forthcoming with numbers of people who are going to be reduced from the public service. We also show how many people will be leaving the public service in terms of gender balance, not that it's the first line of relevance because what's first line is the merit of the position. Without the rate before me I can tell you – and I'd be happy to table it – that at least in the last two years where we have published those figures, there have been more men leaving the public service than women. This is the Alberta public service. I am having complaints come to me from men that they are being discriminated against because there are more men leaving than women. Those are just the hard facts of it. There is no discrimination when it comes to the restructuring in our public service.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you. My second supplemental: how can the government justify exploiting and victimizing women such as the dietary lab techs in Calgary who were thrown out of their jobs with absolutely no severance package? [interjections] It's true.

2:30

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, first of all, they are not government employees. They might be employed in a component of the public sector, perhaps by one of the hospitals or contracted by one of the hospitals. We are encouraging the hospitals and the unions in particular to do as we did in government, and that is to develop programs whereby the employees who have to be laid off, not fired but laid off through restructuring, are treated with compassion as much as possible. They can be invited to take severance packages, take opportunities for early retirement, participate in job-sharing programs. That is the kind of program we instituted in government, and by and large, the employees who have left the service of government think overall that they were treated very fairly indeed. This is not, believe me, an attack on women.

There's one more thing I want to add. Let's look at what happens in a global sense. The public service is one component – one component – of a very large workforce in this province. I can recall, Mr. Speaker, in the mid-80s, when we suffered probably one of the worst economic downturns that this province had experienced since the 1930s, and the hon. Member for Redwater knows what it was all about because he was in the business then. But literally thousands and thousands and thousands of people lost their jobs, and the majority of those people were men.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie. [interjections] Order please. The Chair thought he heard the hon. member saying that she was asking her second supplemental.



MRS. SOETAERT: I'm sorry. Thank you. My final supplemental: is it the policy, then, of this government, Mr. Premier, that more women should be out of the paid workforce and just be a part of an unpaid workforce? That's your agenda. Admit it.

MR. KLEIN: I would admit nothing of the kind, Mr. Speaker, and the answer is absolutely no.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Community Development wishes to supplement.

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, thank you. In fact, there are a number of initiatives that are taking place in different departments throughout government to assist women in making transitions to participate in the full economic life of the province of Alberta. Any of the ministers may wish to supplement this, but there are programs and services to assist women entrepreneurs in the area of Economic Development and Tourism. The Minister of Labour last fall introduced legislation on midwifery, which, as we know, is a growth area that is happening predominantly assisting women. Through education and training programs in the area of Advanced Education and Career Development women are given the necessary skills to make the transition in a changing labour environment. Of course, as the Premier already mentioned, Alberta Health has earmarked \$20 million to provide for a workforce adjustment strategy. There are important things that are happening in these times of change.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

#### Kindergarten Review

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The debate on the ECS program is stalled on the issue of 240 hours versus 400 fully funded hours, and as we move to higher learning expectations, I believe the discussions should be focused on appropriate program content. In the funding announcement February 1 a draft kindergarten program statement was referenced. I have received a copy of that draft statement. My question is to the Minister of Education. What process will this document go through in order to appropriately address the review of our ECS program?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as with other programs of studies documents this document is circulated to schools across the province. It is available certainly as a first priority to teachers working in the particular area but also to parents, to the general public, to any person who wishes to view it and to respond and make comment on it before it is finalized.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, there is no communication strategy that has been released with this document. So my question to the minister: will he provide a full communication strategy in order to get that information out to those who are interested?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, in terms of making people aware that such a document exists, this was part of our announcement on the funding framework in Calgary on February 1. It was announced, and the availability of the paper was done in front of the media of the southern part of the province, and that was

followed up. So the existence of the program's statement and its availability is well known across the province.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If parents must pay user fees in order to access ECS programs, will the minister consider a more extensive discussion process to ensure that parental expectations are met?

MR. JONSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the document that has been referred to, the very purpose of this document is to outline essential learning for preparation for grade 1, which can be accomplished within the fully funded 240 hours of instruction that is being provided for. Therefore, as I've said, it is a fully funded 240 hours, and the issue of instructional fees for the program that is outlined in this document is not an issue.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

#### Human Rights Commission

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Human Rights Commission was created to protect the freedom of every Albertan, not to protect the narrow interests of this government. But this government with its embarrassing record on human rights continues to treat the commission as if it were some kind of a puppet to be manipulated. Despite all of the past promises of an open competition we still find that this minister wants to keep the chief commissioner under his own thumb. My question is to the Minister of Community Development, the minister responsible for human rights. Why would he even think of making a three-year appointment as important as this one without at least an open competition?

MR. MAR: Because, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Mackintosh is the best person available for the job at this time.

MR. DICKSON: My supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker, would be this: will the minister acknowledge that the most important issue in 1995 for the Human Rights Commission is independence, not some kind of an administrative backlog?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, the protection of human rights in this province is an obligation that we take seriously. One of the most significant concerns that people have had is the length of time that it takes to have a hearing before the Human Rights Commission, and Mr. Mackintosh, the new chief commissioner of the Human Rights Commission, has embarked on a plan to deal with the administrative backlog of many numbers of cases, and that he has done by doing a couple of things. One, we have put five people from the department in, seconded them for the next 18 months, to deal with the backlog of cases that we have. Secondly, Mr. Mackintosh has streamlined the process by which cases are heard, so there's no longer an interim report, that was required, and that is helping deal with the issue of the backlog.

One of the most important things, Mr. Speaker, for the Human Rights Commission in the province at this time is the issue of stability, and I don't think it would be appropriate to be making changes to whom we have as the human rights commissioner at this time while he is in the middle of the process of an 18-month plan to deal with the administration of the Human Rights Commission.

MR. DICKSON: Well, I think we're missing the point, Mr. Speaker, but I'll move on to my final supplementary question. To the minister: since he's ignored this key recommendation from his own advisory panel, are Albertans to assume that the government and this minister will also ignore the other 73 excellent recommendations?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are of course a number of recommendations, some 75 recommendations, in the report that is being referred to by the hon. member. Some of the recommendations that have already been put in place were their administrative ones. The ones which relate to policy are currently before our standing policy committee and are in the process of being debated. Certainly everybody who thinks that human rights is important ought to be able to say that the government is taking the time to carefully consider each and every one of these recommendations. Perhaps it is not moving as quickly as the hon. member would like, but we are very carefully considering each and every one of those recommendations.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Dunvegan.

#### 2:40 Interprovincial Trade Barriers

MR. CLEGG: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. All Premiers and the Prime Minister signed the agreement on internal trade in July of 1994. The agreement will go a long way to opening up trade across the country. Government departments and agencies will have to remove barriers for the free movement of people, goods, services, and investment. This is positive. Why is it, however, that municipalities and other bodies such as academic institutions, schools, and hospitals have to live by the terms of the agreement as well?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the internal trade document was in fact signed last July and will come into effect in July of 1995. The objectives of the agreement at this time only bind government departments, but the objective was to in fact take down all barriers and regulations that might give advantage or allow advantage to be given to bodies across Canada, which would naturally extend, then, that any government organization – be it a Crown corporation, a municipality, an academic institution, et cetera – would be included in this agreement.

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, why is the agreement being forced on the MASH sector? Why haven't they been consulted?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: It's MUSH.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, actually we're getting some dialogue as to whether MASH or MUSH is right. If you use universities only, MUSH is right. If you use academic institutions, MASH is right. It's a matter of acronym, I guess.

It isn't being forced on the municipalities, and they are in fact being consulted. My predecessor in May of '94, prior to the finalization and signing of the agreement, advised all members of the municipal, school, hospital, university, and academic institutions of the progress, the contents, and in fact mentioned that it should extend to them to make this all-inclusive. They are not being forced and have been consulted.

MR. CLEGG: A final supplementary: aren't the terms of the agreement too difficult for municipalities, whether we call them MUSH or MASH entities?

MR. ROSTAD: Well, Mr. Speaker, there's no agreement. There are no specifics in an agreement to say whether they're uncomfortable with them or they're prohibitive. What has happened is that the groups have been consulted, and we've asked for their input as to how it would affect them, how it should affect them, what adjustments we might have to make, how we can extend it to them. I might say that in the municipal area, the municipal districts and counties have come on positively and said that they'd like to be involved and have made suggestions on what could be done or not.

I think there's a misunderstanding in the urban municipalities that something's being forced on them, which is completely erroneous. There's no doubt that they have to be included if we're going to make government procurement, as an example, effective in all areas of government no matter what level of government is involved. How the parameters should be set out and what the parameters should be is a matter of sitting down and consulting. What we would ask is for them to come to the table. There have been bilateral consultations with the major cities and some of the major counties. There has been continuing dialogue with the AUMA, but somehow there's been a miscommunication that we're in fact trying to force something on them. We're not. But it is important that they become part of it, and I think it'll be better for all Albertans and, most significantly, better for Canada.

THE SPEAKER: The time for question period has ended.

The hon. Government House Leader indicated that he had a point of order. No point of order?

MR. DAY: That's fine, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

#### head: Motions under Standing Order 40

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert gave notice of her intention to move a motion under Standing Order 40.

#### International Women's Day

Mrs. Soetaert:

Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize today as International Women's Day and discuss the current status of Alberta women on this important anniversary.

THE SPEAKER: Before recognizing the hon. member, the Chair would like to comment on the form of the proposed motion, which has given the Chair some difficulty. While the Chair does have the right to intervene if it thinks that the motion is improperly drafted, it's supposed to be under exceptional circumstances and not to be done routinely.

There are two matters here as drafted. The motion ends with discussion on "the current status of Alberta women on this important anniversary." That is like a Standing Order 30 motion because it doesn't end up in any resolution of the Assembly. Our Standing Orders are drafted so that it's only under Standing Order 30 matters that things can go that way. All other motions must have a real resolution of the Assembly attached to them. The Chair does not want to see the recognition of International Women's Day lost, so the Chair feels that it must separate this

motion at the conclusion of the word "Day" and not allow the remainder of the motion. Therefore, on that basis, the Chair is willing to hear the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert on the question of urgency for the beginning part of her motion.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, March 8, is International Women's Day as declared by the United Nations . . .

THE SPEAKER: Speaking to the question of urgency.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking to the urgency. March 8 is International Women's Day – that's the urgency of this – as declared by the United Nations in 1975.

THE SPEAKER: The Assembly must give the hon. member unanimous consent to move her motion. That's what the hon. member should be addressing her comments to, the reason why the Assembly should give that unanimous consent.

MRS. SOETAERT: Today's the day I ask the Assembly to pass this motion.

THE SPEAKER: Having heard the hon. member's request for leave to introduce her motion, does the Assembly agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

THE SPEAKER: Carried. [interjections] Pardon? The Chair is going to ask the question again. Does the Assembly agree to allow the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert to propose her motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.  
The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, especially for the re-vote. International Women's Day was declared . . .

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader is rising on a point of order.

**Point of Order**  
**Explanation of Speaker's Ruling**

MR. DAY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Standing Orders do say that a member can rise to ask for an explanation of your reasoning. My understanding of Standing Order 40 is that if there is even one person who says no, then in fact that wouldn't carry. On the area of urgency we've had the ministerial statement which addresses this particular issue. So with all due respect, sir, having heard more than one person say no, albeit not everybody said no, I would just ask for an explanation.

MR. N. TAYLOR: You're challenging the Chair.

MR. DAY: No. It's within Standing Orders to ask for an explanation. With respect, sir, I would do that, please.

THE SPEAKER: The Government House Leader is perfectly in order to ask for that. The Chair in those circumstances felt that the Chair had not put the question clearly, and the Chair wanted to be . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Let's do it again.

THE SPEAKER: No. The second time the Chair particularly put the question clearly, and the Chair heard no objection the second time. Therefore the hon. member will proceed. The hon. minister will take his seat. The hon. member has been recognized and will proceed.

**2:50 International Women's Day**  
*(continued)*

Moved by Mrs. Soetaert:

Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize today as International Women's Day.

MRS. SOETAERT: International Women's Day was declared by the United Nations in 1975. The date was chosen to commemorate the courageous women textile workers who in 1857 launched an unheard-of strike to protest the intolerable working conditions and paltry wages. While circumstances for Alberta women are a vast improvement over the conditions experienced by the brave factory workers, the situation for thousands of women has been harshly affected by the policies of the provincial government.

International Women's Day is not a time for celebration in Alberta; it's a time for mourning. The provincial government's desire to ram through policy changes and funding cuts has had a disproportionate effect on Alberta women. Across-the-board layoffs, funding cuts to education, health care, and social services have hit Alberta women the hardest. The numbers speak for themselves. According to the Department of Labour layoff statistics for 1994, 1,490 Albertans lost their jobs in health care. Since women comprise 81 percent of all health care workers, the total number of women losing their jobs in health care is 1,207 in 1994 alone. In education 668 people were laid off, and since women make up 66 percent of all education jobs, this resulted in 441 women losing their education jobs in 1994. In the public service 950 women out of a total of 1,583 lost their jobs. Service and retail accounted for 974 women out of 1,623 losing their jobs. Other positions came in at 92 women out of 112 employees, for a total of 3,664 women out of 5,476 layoffs in 1994.

The regionalization of health care has also resulted . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member is not speaking to the motion. This is not relevant to the motion.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the motion of speaking to International Women's Day. It's time for us to take a look at what is happening to women in Alberta. May I quote some prominent Alberta women who have made these statements about women? Heather Smith, president of the United Nurses of Alberta, so aptly described the Alberta environment for women.

The economic burden is transferred from government to individuals, to the "family," which is a euphemism for "women."

**Speaker's Ruling**  
**Relevance**

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair is not going to allow the hon. member to talk about things that are not within the scope.

This is just to recognize the anniversary of International Women's Day. We're not going to go into a full-blown debate on the condition of women in Alberta in this debate.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then may I point out the work that has been done by women in Alberta and how we should acknowledge it on International Women's Day? For example, the nurses who are taking the brunt of the health care cuts and who are now having to do unpaid work at home.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member asked the Chair a question. The hon. member will be able to talk about the contribution of Alberta women on this occasion, but the Chair is not going to just allow the member to carry on the way she was going to carry on before the Chair gave its ruling.

#### Debate Continued

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's remember the Famous Five in Alberta, who worked so hard to gain the status of persons for women. Let's acknowledge that with some of the policies of this government this is going backwards in time.

I urge all members in this Assembly to work hard for women's rights on this day of March 8, 1995.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I want once again – and I think I have every year – to rise to congratulate the Assembly for recognizing today as International Women's Day and to suggest a number of issues that could be addressed. The minister spoke very eloquently about celebrating, that we should celebrate. I believe there are a number of things that we can do, without incurring considerable cost, that will in fact celebrate International Women's Day, particularly for the women of Alberta. I'll just run through a list quickly.

I would appreciate it if we could, in fact, join together and agree to maintain the women's advisory council in its present form rather than collapse it. Mr. Speaker, it has done excellent work. It's provided all of us with good recommendations as well as our communities, and I think we could celebrate this day by determining that that will continue.

I've already asked a question, Mr. Speaker, in the House about social assistance rates. The issue here is that many of the poor in our province are women and women with children. We could celebrate by reviewing those rates and bringing them to a place where people can in fact have decent shelter and sufficient food.

I'd like once again, Mr. Speaker, to have us address and put our minds to equal pay for equal work, because it still doesn't exist in this province in spite of the laws that are there.

DR. L. TAYLOR: A point of order.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat is rising on a point of order.

#### Point of Order Relevance

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, relevance, Mr. Speaker. "Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize today as International Women's Day" has nothing to do with equal pay for equal work.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, the member didn't hear, but I prefaced my remarks by suggesting that I have a few ways that I think we could celebrate this day. May I continue?

THE SPEAKER: Yes. The hon. member may continue.

#### Debate Continued

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister also mentioned in his comments, his ministerial statement, that we need to be forever vigilant about family violence. I appreciate those remarks. We have a long way to go, and certainly for all women in the province, whether they're in difficult circumstances or not, I think this would be a way of celebrating. There are now some very creative ideas here where we can support families to strengthen themselves. We can work to achieve an end to violence against women and help for children who are being raised in those kinds of settings.

Mr. Speaker, we have spoken on this side of the House on the need for review of maintenance enforcement. This is legislation that we've had for some years. I think this would be a way to tell women that we value them, that we value them even though their circumstances are different. I'd be very happy to have some kind of an announcement of that kind on this special day.

I'm also aware, Mr. Speaker, of the difficulties that accrue to immigrant women, new Canadian women. We have many in our province who have much to contribute. I want us to put our minds to the ways that we can help these women to become full and active participants in our communities.

I've spoken many times about senior women in poverty. Poverty is female, and poverty is in many cases females over 65 years old.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to suggest another way. The minister mentioned it this afternoon, and I thank him for that. We must help provide means for more women to achieve senior positions in government and must encourage private industry to do the same and help women achieve positions on boards and commissions, where I think they have made a significant contribution already and will, I hope, continue to do so.

I hope the minister and the members of government will take these suggestions as they are intended.

#### Speaker's Ruling Relevance

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair wants to remind all hon. members – the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar always has a very nice way of producing; nevertheless, the Assembly must remember that this motion now reads, "Be it resolved this Assembly recognize today as International Women's Day." That is a very, very narrow motion. It does not now include the words "and discuss the current status of Alberta women on this important anniversary." Those words are not before the Assembly. Therefore, it is inappropriate for people to be talking about the condition of Alberta women in our society now, as the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat pointed out. This motion also must be taken in the background that we've already had a ministerial statement on the subject with a reply from the Leader of the Opposition. There are going to be no long comments on the current status of women in Alberta today. The Chair is not going to recognize it.

So with that, hon. members, if you have a word or two to say about the anniversary, this Assembly recognizing that day today, fine. But we're not going to have long speeches on the status of

Alberta women and the policy of the government on women in Alberta under the guise of this motion.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I commend you on your ruling.

3:00

### Debate Continued

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Certainly this day is a day that should be and has been recognized quite appropriately by the minister as International Women's Day. I would like to point out that as the years go by, there is more and more recognition and acceptance of the equality that has come between the genders.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be quite brief. I will say that if we want to look at ways to acknowledge this fine day, we should perhaps look in the positive and go and look at what other countries are doing. For example, the guest that was here, your guest and my guest from Ukraine, pointed out to me that today is a day of celebration in Ukraine. It's a holiday, if you will, similar to our Family Day, where the women of the households and women in general are recognized for their contributions. It was a rather interesting sidelight she gave, as only a mother and a woman could give. She said: you know, Stan, we have this holiday, but a lot of the mothers are at home cooking to acknowledge the holiday when we have guests tonight.

I should say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that this is a very worthwhile recognition for this Assembly to do, and I think we should put it in the light that it belongs. We're looking at not only equality for the two genders for women's day but equality for all people: male, female, young, and old.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for splitting the motion to make it a very worthwhile one.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To recognize International Women's Day and to commemorate the importance of the day, the federal Minister of Health announced today the centres for excellence program for women's health. The centres for excellence program will include support for a women's health network that will link researchers, policymakers, health providers, and women's organizations at all levels in every province across the country. The policy-oriented centres will help define the health status of Canadian women and identify key issues regarding research, investigation, and action. They will undertake work that traditional research granting bodies might not normally fund, and they will also influence the granting process of those funding agencies. These centres will provide analysis, advice, and information to government and health organizations.

I'm very proud to report, Mr. Speaker, that a coalition, unique across the country, based in Calgary has been formed: Centres of Excellence for Women's Health. The partners for that coalition include the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Calgary, the Grace hospital, the Calgary District Hospital Group, the Faculty of Law, Calgary Health Services, the Faculty of Medicine at the U of C, the Calgary General hospital, the Foothills hospital in Calgary, and the Alberta Children's hospital, amongst others. There could be no better way to recognize the importance of women's health than for the provincial Minister of Health to join with her federal colleague on International Women's Day in responding to this call for the establishment of a women's health centre and support the work of the Calgary Coalition, Centres of Excellence for Women's Health.

Women's health implies a holistic approach to health care based upon respect for women's life experiences and the acknowledgment of those influences and social determinants on health in addition to the need for medical care. Mr. Speaker, it is defined as a unique body of knowledge and skill that crosses the boundaries of existing specialties to promote a holistic and gender-specific approach to health care and research. I can think of no better way to recognize International Women's Day in this province than to give support to the excellent work of this coalition based in Calgary.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to stand today and recognize International Women's Day. I have perhaps a slightly different tack to take on this issue. Quite frankly, I was listening to a number of the comments, and it did occur to me that when this particular day was announced through the United Nations as worthy of recognition – and I believe my hon. colleague cited 1975, probably coming out of the International Women's Year that occurred at that time. I have a sense 20 years later that perhaps the idea of selecting one day and trying to focus all the attention of one group of people into a 24-hour period has outlived its purpose.

What I would like to suggest in recognizing International Women's Day is the fact that it is a celebratory time. It is not a time to list all the disadvantages and the hardships and the crises that women go through, because quite frankly, we go through them all the time. Those aren't restricted to one day in the calendar year. I think that if we're going to give a model to our children, to our colleagues, to our mothers, to our friends, and if we're going to recognize women, this is the day women should stand up and say what is good about what they do, what they enjoy, what they know, where they work, and how they integrate in society. To use it as an opportunity to only talk about how far we still have to go is an inappropriate use of the goals and the objectives, I believe, of the intent of setting aside a day. If I were to say to my daughter on March 8, "This is how bad it is, sweetie," quite frankly I would not feel very positive about engaging her in growing up as an Albertan, as a woman in 1995. I think we must take this day and use it as the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora just did and talk about the successes that then will encourage us to continue working together. I believe that if we were to engage in our successes, then we would have a better culture and understanding in order to deal with the issues that cause us so many problems.

The hon. member earlier spoke about poverty and women and seniors and tied them together as if it was the only visual and current position of our senior women. It is true that there is difficulty and there is poverty, and women over 65 share the brunt of that, but a lot of that, Mr. Speaker, is a cultural and historic situation. It had to do with poor education. It had to do with poor health. It had to do with homesteading in Alberta over the vast number of decades. It wasn't that society opted to persecute this particular segment of the population.

What we need to do in this Assembly as leaders and as women if we want to particularize the issue is recognize that some of these problems need to be addressed, not lay blame on one group or another. I feel that some of the seniors who struggled in this way, if they were to add, on balance, the number of things they've enjoyed in their lives and the things that were hardships, would choose to share the celebrations and not dwell on the

hardships. I'm frustrated that when we take a day like this, where we do get to talk about how we have moved along the spectrum in a vast number of areas, we have to make it a negative. I recognize quite clearly the concern about women in the workforce. I understand the issue of equal pay for equal work that was raised here, but the question that we really need to speak to in addressing women's day is the fact that we are moving forward collectively with our spouses, with our partners, with our children, with our grandparents. We are not sitting back and ignoring the issue.

I would like this Assembly to consider that as we go through a calendar of 365 days, some of which are designated through processes that didn't necessarily even originate here and that are thrust upon us, if you will, because of our culture to reflect a number of situations, be it World Health Day or International Year of the Child, those types of things – that we show leadership in this Assembly, draw on our strengths, share in our successes, and take it a step higher so that if indeed we do celebrate this another year from now, we will have moved the benchmark up, and women will feel better and more involved in our society for having lived in 1995 on March 8, rather than the alternative, which is to feel totally discouraged that there's not one good thing that's happened to them in the 20 years we've been celebrating this event.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3:10

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise this afternoon to recognize, to reflect, to remember some of the achievements and barriers of women over the years. We have to remember that International Women's Day was born out of conflict; it was born out of struggle. In fact, for us to assume a Pollyanna view of the world, that all is well and we should only look at what is good, is to in fact look at the past and not at the future. I think it's important when we look at a day such as International Women's Day that we look at the challenges that are ahead for women in our society. We have to look at the fact that within our society right now there are still women who are not being paid at the same rates as are men. We have to look at the fact that there are disproportionate effects to some of the cuts that are happening within the workplace. We have to look at what is happening to women within our society. That is part of the role that is a function of this Legislative Assembly and, I believe, part of our responsibility when we recognize a day such as International Women's Day.

There are indeed cultural and historical structures that have over the years been built up with regard to women's contribution in society. When we look at the fact that there is still in today's society a nonrecognition of women's place both in the workplace and out of the workplace, that there's a nonrecognition of unpaid labour, these are things that we need to recognize. It's fun to say and it's nice to say let's celebrate. It's like having a birthday party; let's just blow out the candles. But the realities are still there. The realities are still there the next day when the birthday is over and we've paid the recognition that this day deserves. But those are just words, and we don't have the actions that follow up those words, and that is what this recognition today in the Legislative Assembly needs to be about.

There is a family grid. There is such a thing that exists within this province. With that family grid one of the things that well could be looked at is in terms of: how do women fit within that family grid and within the policies that are put forward when

decisions are made? It is important for us to reflect, to remember, as I indicated at the outset, to recognize that this is a holiday that was not a nice idea to have, that this is a holiday that was not because there are women in this world, but it was a holiday because of the struggles that women had in the workplace and still to this day have to address. That is part of recognition. It is not enough to say, "Let's only look at one-half of the picture," because that is a Pollyanna view of the world. You need to look at both sides of the picture, and that is what is important.

So the motion is that we "recognize today as International Women's Day," that we recognize what that means in its fullness, and that we both celebrate and say, make a resolution to ourselves that we are going to move forward, that we are going to ensure that there will be full equality of women within this world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to also get into celebrating International Women's Day. In my view, we've come a long way. It has been a long ride. However, I believe it is a day for celebrating because we've come, in terms of being involved, full circle.

I guess when I look at history, today and in the future we need to be more proactive as women. We have to believe in ourselves, our abilities, and our collective power. I just want to quote a lady who put it into perspective, and she put politics into perspective.

The country is yours, ladies. Politics is simply public affairs: yours and mine and everyone's. The government has enfranchised you, but it cannot emancipate you. That is done by your own processes of thought.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, she threw out a challenge to women. Her message: get involved, don't whine, and take control of your own destiny. Women have done so but not without difficulty.

There are changes that have come into place, and yes, we have made miles and miles in terms of our path. Look at the media. We've got women in the media. When we look at anchorwomen, it's wonderful to be able to see that. When we see the different groups involved, we see that women are starting to take control of their lives. They are allowing themselves to do the things that Nellie McClung said we should be doing. The doctors, the lawyers, the presidents of companies, the vice-presidents of companies, and the deputy ministers are some of the women who have contributed so much to this province.

Mr. Speaker, just as an example, in the general election of 1989 out of the 83 MLAs elected in this province, 13 were women. Of the 27 people named to cabinet in that year, three were women. In the 1993 Alberta general election, of the 83 MLAs elected, 16 were women, a 23 percent increase. Of the 18 people currently sitting in the provincial cabinet, three are women, a proportional increase in representation of approximately 6 percent. Of the four standing policy chairs, half are women, 50 percent. So when we look at how far women have come in this world, internationally and in Alberta, I think we've come a long way, baby.

I don't think complaining is the way. My mother said at one time, "You know, as a woman, yes, we do have to put up with a lot. We do have to be mothers. We do have to be wives, but we can also be people who can make a difference in this world." The only way we are able to do this is by getting involved: in politics locally, provincially, and federally. That's the way you make changes, Mr. Speaker.

I want to congratulate all the women who have brought us to this point. It is because of those women that we are here today,

and I want to congratulate this Assembly for recognizing International Women's Day.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

THE SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert, "that this Assembly recognize today as International Women's Day," please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried, let the record show unanimously.

**Point of Order  
Factual Accuracy**

THE SPEAKER: Before calling Orders of the Day, there was one point of order that was raised yesterday that the Chair failed to deal with earlier. That was the point of order raised by the hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, the result of comments that he took exception to made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora. In the debate that followed the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection made some comments. The Chair feels that there certainly is a disagreement as to the facts between these three hon. members, but there really isn't basis there, upon reading the Blues, to find a point of order.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Written Questions**

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I move that written questions appearing on today's Order Paper stand and retain their places except for written questions 146, 147, 148, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, and 158.

[Motion carried]

**Standing Policy Committee on  
Natural Resources and Sustainable Development**

Q146. Mr. Collingwood moved that the following question be accepted:  
With respect to the natural resources and sustainable development policy committee between the period September 1, 1993, to December 1, 1994, how many times did the committee meet and how many of those meetings were completely in camera and how many presentations were made to the committee and how many were made in camera?

MR. LUND: Accept, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried]

**Underground Storage Tanks**

Q147. Mr. Collingwood moved that the following question be accepted:  
How many underground storage tanks identified under the management of underground storage tanks program were

removed between January 1, 1994, and December 31, 1994, and how many were replaced?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, I find it necessary to move an amendment. The amendment would simply add "which is administered by the Petroleum Tank Management Association of Alberta." So the question with the amendment would read:

How many underground storage tanks identified under the management of underground storage tanks program, which is administered by the Petroleum Tank Management Association of Alberta, were removed between January 1, 1994, and December 31, 1994, and how many were replaced?

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. LUND: We will accept Question 147 as amended.

[Motion as amended carried]

**3:20 Oldman River Dam**

Q148. Mr. Collingwood moved that the following question be accepted:

With respect to the Oldman River dam from the inception of the project to December 31, 1994, what was the total cost of construction including mitigation works, what was the total cost of mitigation works, what was the cost of each mitigation program, and what were the main activities carried out under each mitigation program?

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

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to accept Question 148.

[Motion carried]

**Private Woodlot Program**

Q152. Mr. N. Taylor moved that the following question be accepted:

With respect to the Alberta private woodlot program what was spent in the 1993-94 fiscal year and how much has been budgeted for the 1994-95 fiscal year, what proportion was budgeted in each of these fiscal years by the provincial government and what proportion by the federal government, and how many people were employed to run the woodlot program as of April 1 for these years?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, we accept that question.

[Motion carried]

**Government Buildings Energy Audit**

Q153. Mr. Collingwood moved that the following question be accepted:

How many energy audits and retrofits of government buildings were conducted each year between January 1, 1990, and December 31, 1994, what did the retrofits cost, what are the annual energy savings realized in each case, and how many government buildings have still to receive an energy audit?

MR. FISCHER: I'm pleased to accept Question 153.

[Motion carried]

#### **Environmental Laws Enforcement**

Q154. Mr. Collingwood moved that the following question be accepted:

How many inspections were carried out between September 1, 1993, and December 31, 1994, of auto recyclers and other establishments that handle ozone-depleting substances to ensure compliance with regulations under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, what proportion is this of the total number of such establishments in the province, how many infringements were found, and what action was taken or penalty imposed in each case?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're having a good afternoon. I request that Written Question 154 standing on the Order Paper in my name be accepted.

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment to Question 154 by striking out the word "inspections" and "what proportion is this of the total number of such establishments in the province; how many infringements were found" and substituting the word "investigations". So the question would read:

How many investigations were carried out between September 1, 1993, and December 31, 1994, of auto recyclers and other establishments that handle ozone-depleting substances to ensure compliance with regulations under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, and what action was taken or penalty imposed in each case?

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. LUND: The government will accept Question 154 as amended.

[Motion as amended carried]

#### **Timber Management**

Q155. Mr. N. Taylor moved that the following question be accepted:

With respect to the region covered by the interim timber harvesting guidelines for public land in the white area in the northeast region of Alberta, what is the total area of grazing dispositions and what is the area for which range development plans have been approved, what is the area of commercially valuable timber in the lands in the categories referred to in the first part of this question, and what is the area that has been designated in the northeast region for sustained yield timber management and what proportion is on lands referred to in the first part of this question?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, once again I find it necessary to move an amendment. The amendment would be to strike out "what is the area of commercially valuable timber in the lands in the categories referred to in the first part of this question." So the question would now read:

With respect to the region covered by the interim timber harvesting guidelines for public land in the white area in the northeast

region of Alberta, what is the total area of grazing dispositions and what is the area for which range development plans have been approved and what is the area that has been designated in the northeast region for sustained yield timber management and what proportion is on lands referred to in the first part of this question?

MR. N. TAYLOR: I accept the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The Chair will now inquire whether the Assembly accepts the amendment.

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, we will accept Question 155 as amended.

[Motion as amended carried]

#### **Deer Kill Statistics**

Q156. Moved by Mr. Bruseker on behalf of Dr. Nicol that the following question be accepted:

How many mule deer and white-tailed deer were killed by firearms and bows between January 1, 1993, and January 1, 1994?

MR. LUND: The government accepts Question 156, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried]

#### **Incarceration of Women Unable to Pay Fines**

Q157. Mr. Bruseker moved on behalf of Mrs. Soetaert that the following question be accepted:

What is the total number of women incarcerated in provincial correctional centres for the fiscal period April 1, 1994, to February 1, 1995, because they are unable to pay fines, how many are native, what is the average length of time of incarceration because of their inability to pay fines, and what is the cost to Alberta taxpayers for this type of incarceration?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've circulated an amendment to Written Question 157. I've also discussed it with the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert. In order to comply with the wording of information that we have at hand in the department, I am amending the question so that we take out the word "incarcerated" in the first line and substitute "admitted" and take out in the third line "length of time of incarceration" and substitute "number of days served". Now, with those amendments I'll be able to provide the hon. member opposite with the information requested.

[Motion as amended carried]

#### **Child Welfare Caseload**

Q158. Ms Hanson moved that the following question be accepted:

What is the total number of children who had or have status with the child welfare system for the periods April 1, 1991, to March 31, 1992; April 1, 1992, to March 31, 1993; April 1, 1993, to March 31, 1994; and April 1,



1994, to February 13, 1995; and what is the breakdown of the reasons for these children being taken into the child welfare system for each of these periods?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Family and Social Services I'm pleased to accept the question.

[Motion carried]

head: **Motions for Returns**

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I move that motions for returns appearing on today's Order Paper stand and retain their places with the exception of motions for returns 160, 161, 163, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 174, 178, 179, and 182.

[Motion carried]

3:30 **Environmental Laws Enforcement**

M160. Mr. Collingwood moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a list of companies and other bodies that to the knowledge of the Department of Environmental Protection infringed the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act between September 1, 1993, and December 31, 1994, with details of each infringement and the penalty imposed if any.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason for Motion for a Return 160 is for the benefit of Albertans to get a better understanding of the work that the Department of Environmental Protection is doing with respect to monitoring, prosecuting, and indeed protecting Alberta's wildlife. This information will certainly assist in an assessment of the work that the department is doing in this area.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the spirit of open, accountable government, the government will accept this motion.

[Motion carried]

**Heritage Rivers Consortium**

M161. Mr. Collingwood moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing the names of the consulting companies operating collectively as the Alberta heritage rivers consortium, which is co-ordinating the study for the selection of candidate heritage rivers, and a copy of each of their contracts showing their mandate.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta heritage consortium is co-ordinating a study for the selection of candidate heritage rivers, which is an important program for Alberta. We are one of the few provinces if not the only province that has not yet moved forward in terms of designation of heritage rivers under this program. The information we seek from the minister on this is: the companies that operate as the Alberta

heritage rivers consortium and the contracts indicating what the mandate is of each of those companies to the consortium and to the people of Alberta.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I find it necessary to amend this motion. I would move that the motion be amended by striking out "the names of the consulting companies operating collectively as" and substituting "the name of the consulting company operating collectively as" and by striking out "and a copy of each of their contracts showing their mandate" and substituting "and a copy of the contract issued to the consortium." So the motion would finally read then:

That an order of the Assembly do issue a return showing the name of the consulting company operating collectively as the Alberta heritage rivers consortium, co-ordinating the study for the selection of candidate rivers for the Canadian heritage rivers system, and a copy of the contract issued to the consortium.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To speak to the amendment, I must indicate that I am somewhat confused with the form of amendment put forward by the Minister of Environmental Protection. The motion as amended continues to recognize that the body is the Alberta heritage rivers consortium, yet the amendment indicates that it's only one company. What I'm having some difficulty understanding from the minister is: how can one company represent a consortium? What he wants to do is he wants to change the wording from "the names of the consulting companies operating collectively" to "the name of the consulting company operating collectively." I'm having a little difficulty understanding how one company can operate collectively as the Alberta heritage rivers consortium.

I think, Mr. Speaker, what the amendment is attempting to do is to prevent the release of the contracts for the individual candidates and members of the consortium. What the minister is prepared to release – and I'm making this assumption by virtue of the amendment – is a contract between the government of Alberta and the consortium. So he's going to release to Albertans a copy of a contract that names as the parties the government and the Alberta heritage rivers consortium. Well, that's not the point of the motion for a return. The point of the motion is to ask the minister: who are the companies that make up the Alberta heritage rivers consortium, and what is their mandate as set out in a contractual agreement, whether or not the parties to the contract is the consortium itself collectively, the government of Alberta, and the individual company involved or whether it's just the individual company involved and the consortium? The information that we're looking for from the minister is: who's involved, what do they do, what's their mandate, and copies of the contract.

Mr. Speaker, as I read the amendment put forward by the minister, first of all, it doesn't make sense in the wording that the minister has provided to us, and secondly, I think what it's attempting to do is get behind what it is we're really trying to get to and will not, with this amendment, provide the information that we're looking for for Albertans.

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the amendment, really there is only one contract. It's to a single consulting company. The agreements that are beyond that are between individuals and

the company, and therefore the consulting company is the one that the hon. member should be asking.

[Motion as amended carried]

### Special Waste Management System

M163. Moved by Mr. Sekulic on behalf of Dr. Percy that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of the latest 10-year business plan of the Alberta Special Waste Management joint venture system prepared by the operating committee of the Alberta Special Waste Management system Joint Venture Board as required under article 611 of the joint venture agreement for the construction, ownership, and operation of the Alberta Special Waste Management system.

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, I find it necessary to reject this particular motion. The difficulty is that the information that is asked for here, the business plan, has not even gone to the board at this time for their review and approval, and it would be necessary for them to approve the 10-year business plan before we could even consider it.

MR. SEKULIC: Well, Mr. Speaker, how do you argue that? It hasn't gone to the board for approval. However, I just want to reference a document, the joint venture agreement for the construction, ownership, and operation of a part of the Alberta special waste management system, and in particular clause 611 referring to business plans. It reads:

The Operating Committee shall cause to be prepared in each year a Business Plan for the Joint Venture System which plan shall include a projection of the next 10 years operation specifically including a projection of revenues, operating costs, capital expenditures, Joint Venture income, and such other financial projections as may be required from time to time by the Board. The Business Plan shall be based on assumptions as presented to and approved by the Operating Committee prior to April 30, and shall be reviewed by the Operating Committee and presented to the Board for approval prior to July in each year.

Now, that's true. However, this article 611 was added in 1993. So I'm wondering: seeing as this has to occur every year, perhaps we could get the most recent version. I think that would be acceptable. I agree with the minister that perhaps he can't give us something that hasn't yet been resolved or put forward or agreed upon by the committee. Certainly there must be something, a most recent document, which he could provide and which could fulfill the request.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to this particular motion for a return, it's somewhat surprising to hear the Minister of Environmental Protection indicate that one of the terms of the contract, the joint venture agreement, for the operation of the Swan Hills hazardous waste treatment plant has just simply been ignored. As my colleague for Edmonton-Manning has indicated, the agreement, as I understand it, specifically requires that the business plan be created under article 611 of the joint venture agreement. It is a requirement that the business plan be developed.

3:40

Now, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't actually surprise me that there's no business plan. How can you prepare a business plan for a joint

venture operation that nobody has a clue what's going to happen with in the future? What's critical about this particular business plan is that we will then be able to establish on what basis future projections are being made for the operation of that plant.

Now, obviously the government and its friend Bovar, who runs that plant, don't really want to address their mind to the issue of putting together an actual business plan, unless of course, Mr. Speaker, they need the business plan so that the government can flog its interest in the company to anybody who is prepared to buy it, although apparently at this point that's absolutely nobody.

I just find that it's not acceptable for the minister to stand in the Assembly and simply say: oh, we haven't got around to doing it yet. It's on the Order Paper as a motion for a return for a document because a contract that this government has entered into requires that the document be prepared. The minister says: well, we just haven't got around to it yet, and we don't really care about our obligations anyway under the agreement, and certainly our friends on the other side of the agreement really don't care anyway, so we can't give it to you because we never got around to making it. It's not acceptable for the Minister of Environmental Protection to stand in the Assembly and deny Motion 163 on that basis.

Thank you.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that the minister would condone the breach of a contract, a provision in the contract that was no doubt put into existence, into place by his own department. The provision is for the protection of the public. The public is entitled to know what's going to happen this year and next year and for 10 years. How can the minister stand in this Assembly and even consider breaching that provision, which the government no doubt insisted on having? I'd like the minister to tell the public about this situation.

THE SPEAKER: All those in favour of Motion for a Return 163 as proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning on behalf of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:44 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Abdurahman	Hanson	Sekulic
Bracko	Henry	Soetaert
Bruseker	Hewes	Taylor, N.
Chadi	Kirkland	Van Binsbergen
Collingwood	Massey	White
Decore	Percy	Zwozdesky
Dickson	Sapers	

Against the motion:

Amery	Friedel	Oberg
Black	Fritz	Paszkowski
Brassard	Gordon	Pham

Burgener	Haley	Renner
Calahasen	Havelock	Severtson
Cardinal	Hierath	Smith
Clegg	Jacques	Stelmach
Coutts	Jonson	Tannas
Dinning	Laing	Taylor, L.
Doerksen	Langevin	Thurber
Dunford	Lund	West
Evans	Mar	Woloshyn
Fischer	McClellan	Yankowsky
Forsyth	McFarland	
Totals:	For - 20	Against - 41

[Motion lost]

**Millar Western Pulp Ltd.**

M165. Moved by Mr. Sekulic on behalf of Dr. Percy moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of any loan or amended loan agreements between the government, Millar Western Pulp Ltd., Millar Western Pulp (Whitecourt) Ltd., and Millar Western Industries Ltd. concluded between January 1, 1993, and February 13, 1995.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for guiding me through this very first motion for a return. We would like to propose an amendment to this. The amendment reads:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of any loan or amended loan agreements between the government, Millar Western Pulp Ltd., Millar Western Pulp (Whitecourt) Ltd., and Millar Western Industries Ltd. effective June 1, 1994.

The reason for the amendment is in fact that this is the document that is current and it's the agreement that's in force today and it in fact supersedes all previous information. I know that the hon. member would want to work with information that is both current and timely.

THE SPEAKER: The hon Member for Edmonton-Manning.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's certainly one interpretation, that we're dealing with current information. However, because we are people who appreciate detail, particularly when it comes to taxpayers' dollars, we'd like to have a look at the whole package. In a way it becomes selective transparency: we'll give you what we think you need to see; we'll give you what we think the taxpayer needs to see. So it's in fact, I believe, selective transparency. If it is in fact a summary of previous materials and it supersedes previous materials, then there's no problem in providing the previous materials. I think it's important.

I know that the Treasurer would have leapt to his feet a little quicker than I had to describe some of the history of Millar Western and why it's so important that this motion be accepted as read. Millar Western received a \$120 million loan from the heritage fund.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MR. SEKULIC: A \$120 million loan from the heritage fund. In fact, that's taxpayers' money. This was back in 1987, and it was intended to facilitate the construction of a pulp mill in Whitecourt.

Repayment of the loan was to be based on 80 percent of net cash flow of the company at an interest rate of 10 percent compounded annually. Full repayment of the principal and the interest was to be due by the year 2004. So we're quickly coming to that point. The company had experienced, certainly, cash flow difficulties as a result of depressed pulp prices. As of March 31, '94, Millar Western owed \$120 million in principal payments and \$90.7 million in accrued interest to the heritage fund, to Albertans. They owed close to \$200 million, close to a quarter billion dollars to Albertans. As a result, the loan principal of \$120 million was revalued to \$74 million as of March 31, '93, based on an estimate of future cash flows.

On March 1, 1994, the then Minister of Economic Development and Tourism indicated in the Legislative Assembly that the government had helped the company set up a \$30 million loan from CIBC which takes precedence over the heritage fund. So, Mr. Speaker, in effect, they watched and perhaps even facilitated the development of an additional loan for \$30 million with CIBC, which takes precedence over taxpayers, over Albertans.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as of March 31, '94, the carrying value of the heritage fund loan to Millar Western had been reduced to \$20.6 million. As of August '94 the government, lender, and the company have reached an agreement in principle on a restructuring plan that is expected to enable the company to continue to operate through the current trough in the market pulp cycle without further funding by the province.

Now, the restructuring of the \$120 million loan gave Millar Western the ability to arrange for private-sector bank financing to sustain its operations. The heritage fund will continue to hold a \$90 million interest-bearing debenture in the company and a \$30 million non interest-bearing debenture in a new operating company, Millar Western Pulp (Whitecourt) Ltd. Now, that's quite a loan: a \$30 million non interest-bearing debenture. That's quite an advantage, I'd say, in the marketplace. Millar Western Pulp Ltd. will hold a 60 percent interest in the new company, while the remaining 40 percent will be held by Millar Western Industries, the parent of Millar Western Pulp, and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. So it's a fairly convoluted picture.

4:00

Mr. Speaker, the \$30 million debenture will be non interest bearing and is secured by a charge against the mill assets. It will rank behind existing and future bank loans. It is due to be repaid under certain conditions, including sale of the new company shares by Millar Western Industries and any sale of material assets of the new company or disposition of debt held by the CIBC, other than normal loan repayments that is. The loan is subject to the prior claim of all bank debt. The \$30 million debenture is non interest bearing and constitutes a form of financial assistance provided to Millar Western Pulp (Whitecourt) Ltd. The value of the forgone interest on the \$30 million loan has been estimated at \$9.4 million, which has been deducted from the \$30 million component in arriving at the \$20.6 million carrying value of the loan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in closing my comments here, I'll make reference to a letter dated October 5, 1994. It was to my Edmonton-Whitemud colleague from the then Minister of Economic Development and Tourism and the then Government House Leader. There's one point in there, one particular sentence, which I think we need to bring to the Legislative Assembly's attention and, more importantly, to the attention of all Albertans.

While there is a significant potential for recovery under the restructuring plan, a full allowance for possible loss of the \$90 million component has been taken in the AHSTF Annual Report in order to conservatively reflect the AHSTF's financial position. Well, that conservative reflection is in fact closer to \$100 million.

MR. BRACKO: How much?

MR. SEKULIC: One hundred million dollars. If this is free enterprise, it's certainly free enterprise that only exists in this nature in Alberta.

So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and given the long and convoluted history of this corporate marriage to the taxpayers' purse, I would say that we need to go beyond selective transparency and releasing to Albertans that which is deemed appropriate by this government. I think Albertans are entitled to see the full picture.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater on the amendment proposed by the hon. minister.

MR. N. TAYLOR: On the amendment, yes. My line is slightly different from the hon. member who just spoke. I was wondering if the minister for business development has really checked out the amendment. I don't want to sound like a barrack room lawyer, but the proposed amendment says: agreements between Millar Western and so on and so forth "effective June 1." I think he means in effect June 1, because an agreement that's effective at some date, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is when the agreement starts, when the agreement began. Now, maybe I'm splitting hairs, but I hope the hon. member isn't using "effective June 1" as some way to dodge out the back door. If indeed the amendment means any agreement in effect on June 1, 1994, then I think at least we're going to get most of the information we want. Would he care to answer whether he's being cute, or is this just a bit of a foul-up?

[Motion on amendment carried]

THE SPEAKER: The motion for a return has been amended, so therefore I guess the floor is open for further comments.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Well, speaking to it as amended, Mr. Speaker, obviously, because he wouldn't answer the first question, I guess he is trying to be cute, although over there I think he spells it with a "k".

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the Legislature is the type of place to try to amend an agreement to try to put something over. If indeed the minister has no intention of allowing us to look at the agreements in effect on June 1, I think he should have the courage to say so and not just sit there silent with a cat-that-stole-the-cream look on his face. That's really what I'd like to say. I think if it's just a foul-up in language, that's one thing, but if it is the hon. member's initial novice, freshman-type approach to being cute, I don't think we appreciate it.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I've always listened to elders for wise and sage counsel, and I hate to be disappointed on an issue such as this. What we are proposing with our amendment is that it is effective June 1, and

in fact the documents that I will table will indicate that the agreement is dated as of the 1st day of June 1994.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It occurs to me, just having listened to the last exchange between the mover of the motion and the hon. minister, that . . .

MRS. BLACK: Do you want the documents or not?

MR. DICKSON: I understand that the Minister of Energy, Mr. Speaker, is anxious to join the debate too, and if the cacophony from the other side were abated a little bit, I'd be able to finish the brief comments I wanted to share with members.

AN HON. MEMBER: How do you spell that word?

MR. DICKSON: Not with a "k".

Mr. Speaker, when will the government understand that freedom of information isn't about selectively giving certain documents and arbitrarily determining what period is available for scrutiny? The point surely is this: if the taxpayers have paid for something, if the taxpayers have been put in a position of exposure and liability, we're entitled to the information and we're entitled to the information from the commencement of negotiations, from the commencement of dealing between government and some third party. It's I think preposterous to have the responsible minister come forward and suggest that he's being open by having set an arbitrary time period and then passing it off as openness. It's simply too empty; it's too transparent. I just encourage the minister to reconsider. He's an intelligent man. He's got certainly enough business experience to know that Albertans have a right to see the whole package, the whole file, not just something that happens to correspond with an arbitrary deadline.

Thank you.

[Motion as amended carried]

#### 4:10 **Deregulation Plans**

M167. Mr. Sekulic moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of the government deregulation draft action plan, November 29, 1993, and the Economic Development and Tourism client group consultations, October 6, 1993, prepared by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SMITH: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the recommendation is to reject Motion 167. There is a Back to Basics document that was released in November of 1994 by the caucus task force on deregulation. It is the final version of the government deregulation draft action plan. Copies are available from Economic Development and Tourism. The input was provided in confidence by those client groups. Certainly, I've got the list of stakeholders here. I have actually a list right here that I'd be prepared to give the hon. member. That's also available on disk so that he could reduce his paper load. In fact, the people who had input into this are available. The report has been released publicly. All I can ask the hon. member to do is phone

427-0662 in the department and ask for this information, which is available to anybody.

MR. SEKULIC: Mr. Speaker, I'll go one up because we actually gave the request to the government in advance and in writing. Now, if this information is available if I were to dial that number, then why wouldn't it be available in this Assembly? That's a little bit of a concern.

Mr. Speaker, I just refer back once again to the then Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Development and Tourism and a letter to my Edmonton-Whitemud colleague on this issue. One paragraph in particular reads:

The Caucus Task Force, which is chaired by . . . Three Hills-Airdrie, has asked all departments and agencies to update their draft actions plan on deregulation. The government-wide draft action plan for deregulation will be completed by the end of August . . .

And this is dated August 11, 1994.

. . . and circulated to all interested stakeholders for their written comments and feedback. This report will essentially update the Draft Action Plan, dated November 29 . . .

I believe there's a typo here. It says 1994; it should read 1993.

. . . which was never released.

Now, I'm just curious, because if I dial a phone number, apparently I can get some information, yet if I ask for it here, I can't get it. I'm just questioning whether this is yet another update, a nonrelease update, that Albertans won't have access to. Mr. Speaker, I'm curious about the response in this area. In fact the member opposite, the minister without portfolio for Economic Development and Tourism, has the documents, then please table them.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to this particular motion, I listened with . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair regrets to interrupt, but the hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning effectively closed debate.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion lost]

#### **Pratt & Whitney Canada Inc.**

M168. Mr. Sekulic moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of any amended phase 1 loan agreements between the government and Pratt & Whitney Canada Inc. concluded between January 1, 1994, and February 13, 1995.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A copy of the phase 1 loan agreement between Pratt & Whitney Canada and the province was tabled in the Legislature after permission to make the document available was received from the company. Accordingly, the motion is accepted, and we will table today the amending phase 1 loan agreement.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is one example of favourable selective transparency, and I very much appreciate the member's response.

[Motion carried]

#### **Logging on Private Land**

M169. Mr. N. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of recommendations from the standing policy committee on natural resources and sustainable development to the Minister of Environmental Protection and/or the Lieutenant Governor in Council regarding unregulated logging of timber from private land and out-of-province sales made between September 1, 1993, and December 31, 1994.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We find it necessary to reject this motion, 169.

I'm very pleased that the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo brought up the issue about freedom of information, because one of the things in the freedom of information Act is that recommendations to cabinet are not public.

MR. DICKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted that the Minister of Environmental Protection referenced the new Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, because the esteemed minister I think may have remembered only part of the statute. What he's chosen to not mention is the fact that there's a public interest override. What's a public interest override? It says that notwithstanding some information, then a particular category may otherwise be exempt if there's a compelling public interest. If it's something that is going to have enormous impact on the lives of Albertans and to the future of this province, the commissioner would have the power to in effect override the statutory exemption and provide for that information, order that that information be disclosed. I can think of few issues that have focused the attention of Albertans in the fashion that this issue has. So I think the freedom of information Act in fact would be a compelling reason why the information should be shared and certainly no reason why the motion should be refused.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand here appalled that in this Legislative Assembly of Alberta we don't seem to have learnt anything from history. If you look at this motion, you see that it's "copies of recommendations from the standing policy committee on natural resources and sustainable development to the Minister of Environmental Protection" and so on. This is a government standing policy committee, fully composed of government members. The one thing that this government seems not to have learned from past grave errors, which resulted in the type of fiscal mess that this province presently is in and trying to get themselves out of, is that the government is the servant of the people.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

You're the servant of the people. You're supposed to share full information with the people of Alberta. You are not their boss. You are the servant. To suggest and deny this motion clearly shows that there isn't such a thing as a democratic process in the province of Alberta and that they still like to hide, through the Legislature, sharing that full information with Albertans. When we look at all the motions that are before us today, I think it's a sad reflection that indeed this government hasn't learnt anything.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

**MR. COLLINGWOOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to this particular motion, it seems with this particular government that when we do Written Questions and Motions for Returns, it's one step forward, two steps back.

What we have again in this situation is a government who says: we are not prepared to release to the public recommendations that come forward from the standing policy committee on natural resources and sustainable development to the Minister of Environmental Protection. Mr. Speaker, the sole purpose of the standing policy committee is to make information available to the minister and of course to the public. As my hon. colleague from Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan indicates, they are the servants of the people, not the bosses. I fear that this government has yet to figure it out.

This is one of the most important issues that is facing Albertans today: the unregulated logging of timber off private land. Every Albertan is familiar with this issue. Every Albertan is concerned about this issue. Every Albertan that travels this province comments about the number of logging trucks heading west – and now we hear heading south – out of the province so that they can get into the private logging boom before the government decides that they're going to do anything about the particular issue. This kind of information is extremely important to Albertans who are concerned about the issue of unregulated logging on private land.

**4:20**

You know, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the Minister of Environmental Protection had for a significant period of time been the champion of the new emblem legislation so that we could designate the bull trout as Alberta's emblematic fish. Well, the bull trout is a species of fish that is very susceptible to disruption of its environment caused by unregulated logging, caused by erosion, caused by those kinds of activities that in fact threaten that particular species. So here we have a government that on the one hand wants to promote the bull trout to all Albertans and on the other hand sits back and watches that particular species' environment just simply being decimated and destroyed. Why? Well, because it's private rights.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when the standing policy committee met with the Alberta Forest Products Association, it was very interesting to watch the standing policy committee debate that particular issue. All government members sitting around the table, you know, no opposition members allowed, paid for by taxpayers' dollars, not the Conservative caucus. I can't figure that one out. I don't know how that one happens. But every standing policy committee is paid for by taxpayers' dollars and sits around and discusses things behind closed doors. [interjections]

#### **Speaker's Ruling Decorum**

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order. I wonder if hon. members could lower their voices. I know that you're speaking for my

benefit because of my difficulty in hearing, but it's now coming through very loud and clear. So if we could drop it a notch, then we won't rupture the already damaged eardrums.

**MR. COLLINGWOOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be happy to comply.

#### **Debate Continued**

**MR. COLLINGWOOD:** Mr. Speaker, when the standing policy committee on natural resources and sustainable development met with the Alberta Forest Products Association, it was interesting to see the reaction of government members that sit on that committee who participated in the debate. Some members of course were very, if I could use the term, right wing. "Private property rights means private property rights. If you want to bulldoze your land, want to clear all the trees off your land, want to make a fortune off your land, want to forget about environmental protection, you go right ahead; there's absolutely nothing wrong with that."

We had other members of that committee say: "No, you've got a responsibility. When you're a landowner in the province of Alberta, you have responsibilities for the proper care of that land in terms of its environmental protection, and the government actually has a role to play in making sure that use of that land is regulated to prevent environmental damage." The discussion went from one end of the spectrum to the other.

So what we have now is we have the standing policy committee going behind closed doors. You see, Mr. Speaker, that meeting was in public, and it didn't look very good for the members of the committee not to be unanimous in their discussion. So now the standing policy committee goes in camera, goes behind closed doors, can't let anybody know what it's talking about behind closed doors, about the fact that it's doing absolutely nothing about an issue on which Albertans are saying: for God's sake do something.

So now what do we have? Now we have the Premier, as he walks down the hall out there, saying: well, the Minister of Environmental Protection isn't going to do anything, so I think I'll set up a ministerial task force; the ministerial task force can think about the issue for a while. Now that we've got all of the trees cut down – we've got enough logs on the ground to probably keep trucks moving to B.C. for the next two years – and farmers are ready to cash in, now we have the Premier saying: oh, we'll set up a ministerial task force.

Mr. Speaker, what this information asks for in Motion 169 is information about the recommendations that exist now with respect to what is going to happen regarding unregulated logging of timber from private land and out-of-province sales.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that I hope like heck you've got that information and that you're not simply standing back and saying: "You want to cut down the province of Alberta? Go ahead and cut down the province of Alberta. What do we care? We're only the government, and I'm only the Minister of Environmental Protection."

Mr. Speaker, this motion must carry. Thank you.

#### **Point of Order**

#### **Tabling Caucus Committee Documents**

**MR. DECORE:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order I rise against the vote being taken on this. Standing Order 65(1) and (3). We're talking about a standing policy committee of this Assembly. We're talking about an issue that that standing policy committee

has dealt with. We're talking about recommendations after they dealt with the issue going from the committee to either the Lieutenant Governor or to the minister. If you look at section 65(3) of Standing Orders, it says:

All documents which come into the possession of a committee . . .

This is standing committees or special committees.

. . . or which are prepared by or for a committee belong to the committee until the committee reports or ceases to exist, whichever first occurs, after which they belong to the Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this committee has dealt with this issue, to our understanding. Recommendations have issued. They've finished their work. Under the provisions of Standing Order 65(3) we're entitled to have this, and I don't think this can even go to a vote. I think the Speaker has to order that they be produced.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader on the point of order relevant to 65(3).

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry is certainly taking liberal liberties with Standing Order 65(1), and I congratulate him on the one hand for his creativity. However, we're talking about standing and special committees of the Legislature. The issue before us with this motion for a return is, of course, a committee that has been established by the Premier, a policy committee of the government of the province of Alberta.

There are in camera meetings and there are open meetings, and of course the information from the open meetings is available to all hon. members. I have the great pleasure, on a regular basis, of attending standing policy committee meetings on Monday evenings. I haven't seen too many members of the Liberal opposition attend when we have open meetings, but I would certainly present to them an offer to attend those meetings. In particular, I'd be delighted to see the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was about to interrupt the hon. Deputy Government House Leader. He was moving off the point of order and getting into an item of debate as to who attends what kind of committee and that kind of thing. What we're talking about is whether or not the committees are committees of this Assembly or are committees of the government caucus.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry on your point of order.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, this is so fundamental that I would request that the Speaker take this issue under advisement and have the benefit, if he chooses to do so, of solicitor input or the Clerk's input. If this was a committee, hon. minister, a Conservative committee that didn't get paid by public funds, I think your argument would have some merit, but this is a committee that's paid for by public funds. A chairman gets paid by public funds. That's dollars taken out of the pockets of men and women in this province, of corporations in this province. Expenses are paid. The members that sit on that committee get paid out of public . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: They do not.

MR. DECORE: The chairman, then, gets paid out of public funds. The chairman gets paid out of public funds. [interjections]

4:30

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. I think, hon. member, the admonition is normally that you talk through the Chair.

I guess the relative merits of the issue of who gets paid on what caucus, whether it's the Whip in this caucus or the Whip in that caucus, is another whole long debate. Your point is that the policy committee of the government caucus is somehow a legislative committee. The Chair will rule today and ask for counsel's advisement, and it will be either sustained or overturned when we can get that determination. For today the Chair rules that the committee that we are talking about is a caucus committee and is therefore not subject to Standing Order 65(1) and 65(3) in that regard, but I will ask for an adjudication by the Parliamentary Counsel on that for future reference. Insofar as debate is concerned today, we will continue with that ruling.

### Debate Continued

MR. N. TAYLOR: Does anyone else want to speak? I realize, Mr. Speaker, that I'll be closing the debate because it is my motion. I certainly am going to wait and see what the ruling will be on whether this is indeed a special or a standing committee, as it says on the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I asked the question and asked for the result – it wasn't by accident. I'd called and found out we couldn't get it. You can't hunt with the hounds and run with the hare at the same time. The Premier and the front bench over there have been quoted many times in saying that pay to the special committees is quite in order, that to give \$12,000 to that committee for the chairman and also the expenses, even if they run up to a thousand dollars for coffee some of the time, is all quite legitimate. And true, if that is so – and I'm not even sure it is so, because all the members of these committees are of one party. It's highly unusual. As a matter of fact, I have surveyed, at the strength of giving away some of my ammunition – the Speaker maybe can have access to it – and there is no legislative body in Canada that has a standing policy committee all of one party. There have been from time to time committees set up in some governments, but none in the last half a dozen years where they were all of one party and took taxpayers' funds to get going.

Certainly this is the only place it concerns, so I say that we have come to the dividing point, Mr. Speaker. If this is a committee that has a chairman who's financed by the Legislature and the meals and expenses paid by the Legislature, then everything that the committee reports has to be public. If it does indeed not have to report and it is not a committee of the public, then what in the dickens are they doing taking \$12,000 a year of the taxpayers' money to pay the chairman? They can't have it both ways.

I think we're ready to take a standing vote on that. I'll be most surprised if the Speaker, after checking it out, doesn't tell them that either they've got to quit taking money out of the Treasury and therefore can be as secretive as they will or that they can take money out of the Treasury and tell us what the hell they're doing.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard most of the motion by the hon. Member for Redwater, would those members in favour of the motion, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Defeated.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:35 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Abdurahman	Dickson	Sapers
Bracko	Hewes	Sekulic
Bruseker	Kirkland	Taylor, N.
Chadi	Leibovici	Van Binsbergen
Collingwood	Percy	Zwozdesky
Decore		

Against the motion:

Amery	Gordon	Oberg
Black	Haley	Paszowski
Brassard	Havelock	Pham
Calahasen	Herard	Renner
Cardinal	Hierath	Rostad
Clegg	Jacques	Severtson
Coutts	Jonson	Smith
Doerksen	Kowalski	Stelmach
Dunford	Laing	Taylor, L.
Evans	Lund	Thurber
Fischer	Mar	West
Friedel	McClellan	Woloshyn
Fritz	McFarland	

Totals: For - 16 Against - 38

[Motion lost]

#### Logging on Private Land

M170. Mr. N. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a list of the date and location of inspections made between January 1, 1993, and December 31, 1994, to determine whether logging on private land is having a detrimental effect on the environment, along with details of any breaches of legislation and of reprimands or fines imposed.

MR. LUND: The government accepts Motion 170, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried]

#### Paddle River Dam

M171. Mr. Collingwood moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all contracts between the government and contractors involved in phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River dam and any other documents sent or received by the government pertaining to the construction of this phase.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I find it necessary that we must move an amendment to Motion 171. The amendment would be that we strike out

all contracts between the government and contractors involved in phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River dam and any other documents sent or received by the government

and substitute

all monthly summaries of equipment reports involved in phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River dam and ministerial correspondence relating to this equipment usage.

So the motion would read

that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all monthly summaries of equipment reports involved in phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River dam and ministerial correspondence relating to this equipment usage pertaining to the construction of this phase.

Mr. Speaker, the reason for moving this amendment is that during the phase 3 construction of the Paddle River dam there was a great deal of care in monitoring the pour pressures and deflections there, so there was no tendering of contracts and the work was done on an equipment rental basis.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West on the amendment.

MR. BRUSEKER: On the amendment? Yes. Just speaking to the amendment, Mr. Speaker, I guess I have to wonder whether the amendment is even in order, because it seems to me that it significantly changes the intention of the original motion. The original motion for a return deals with the issue of contracts between the government and contractors involved in phase 3. The proposed amendment talks about "monthly summaries of equipment reports." That changes the intent completely, because to me contracts would deal with the issue of who was paid and how much was being paid on a regular basis, the terms of the agreement, the labour contracts in addition to equipment reports; in other words, monthly summaries of equipment reports.

I'm not sure if it's proposed that we simply get a list of machines saying: here are the machines that worked. Well, that doesn't do us any good in terms of for whom the machines did the work, in terms of the contractors. I would suggest that the amendment in fact virtually eviscerates the original motion for a return as proposed by the Member for Sherwood Park. From that standpoint, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you rule whether or not in fact this is an amendment that is in order.

4:50

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are there any comments on what is essentially, hon. member, a point of order? Are there any comments on the point of order? No? All right.

It would seem that it is in order. We have the motion for a return and the proposed amendment has been given to Parliamentary Counsel for their consideration. [interjection] Are we saying that, no, it hasn't been?

MR. BRUSEKER: There are no initials, Mr. Speaker. Usually amendments are initialled by Parliamentary Counsel.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Not all amendments are initialled, but usually they are at the Table. That's a good point then. If it's not been approved by Parliamentary Counsel, then we may indeed have a point. Just bear with us until we determine that; then we'll go forward.

#### Speaker's Ruling Admissibility of Amendment

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair, being now advised, therefore would make the following comment. As hon. members know, broad leeway is usually given to motions for returns. The



government can simply reject it or offer an amendment. Greater latitude is allowed in this regard. The Assembly has the right to reject the amendment, has the right to either pass the motion or reject the motion. Therefore, we will rule that this motion is in order for purposes of a motion for a return.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

#### Debate Continued

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: You may rule me out of order, but on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, surely this would set a very dangerous precedent. [interjections]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. The Chair is quite capable of deciding whether or not the hon. member is out of order, and a whole lot of shouts of "out of order" do not help.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't want to be challenging the Chair, but speaking to the amendment, I see this as a very dangerous precedent that's being set. Clearly, any amendment to a motion should not change the substantial part of the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: A point of order. [interjections]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute. Hon. members know that when someone is rising on a point of order, a point of order on the point of order is hardly a likely possibility. Hon. members are reminded that the government was invited to speak to the point of order in the first place.

Now, hon. member, are you making a point of order or are you entering into debate?

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I may not have made myself clear. I stood not to challenge the Chair on a point of order but to speak to the amendment. My comments were related to the amendment, that I as a Member of this Legislative Assembly felt this was a dangerous precedent in accepting this amendment, because I believe it changes the intent of the motion. So I'm speaking against the amendment, based on parliamentary procedure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for that clarity. We now have the Deputy Government House Leader rising on a point of order. Pardon; I thought we were on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

##### Citations for Points of Order

MR. EVANS: *Beauchesne* 459. I don't understand, Mr. Speaker – and I ask for your comments – how we are falling into a system of allowing members to stand up without authority, without bringing to your attention the basis upon which they are rising, going ahead and making a representation, and then taking their seat again. We have some rules here, and we must follow them throughout so that there is some decorum in this House and hon. members can follow the train of thought that other hon. members are taking.

MR. N. TAYLOR: A point of order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I just need one point of order at a time, thank you, hon. Member for Redwater.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader is rising on a point of order and citing, for his citation, relevance. That brings into play a different set of circumstances. The Chair has apologized to the hon. Deputy Government House Leader for thinking that the hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan was rising on a point of order. She then clarified that she was not rising on a point of order, so therefore she really couldn't cite anything. As she explained in her clarification statement, she was talking about the amendment and objecting to it in discussion on the amendment.

Now, the hon. Deputy Government House Leader would like to explain what relevance has to do with a point of order that did not exist?

MR. EVANS: You know, Mr. Speaker, I could, quite frankly, but this debate has gone far beyond reasonableness into a position of unreasonableness, and I will take my position so that we can get on with these motions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

#### Debate Continued

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We still have the hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan speaking to the amendment.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for acknowledging me once more. I just want to restate, so the members on the other side of the House clearly understand, that I'm speaking against this amendment because I believe that it violates the spirit of the motion. Therefore, I don't think it's worthy to be debated in this House, and I would ask that this amendment on that basis be defeated.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking directly to the amendment, the concern is this, that I think perhaps the minister miscomprehends what's being sought here. When he comes along and volunteers monthly summaries of equipment reports and ministerial correspondence, that's not at all what's being sought. The minister says – and as an hon. member I'm prepared to take his word if he says that there were no contracts between the government and contractors with respect to phase 3. I'm astonished, but that's what the minister said, and I'm prepared to accept his word on that. But what we've sought goes much beyond that. We've also asked for "any other documents sent or received by the government," not by a minister of the Crown but by the government. That means the departments and the agencies and . . . [interjections]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. The point I'm making is that it seems to me that there's a huge area which I assume is the subject of considerable correspondence, memoranda, documentation. So whether or not there are contracts, there's no denial that there was extensive involvement by government – tax dollars, agents for the taxpayers and citizens of this province – that dealt with phase 3. That's what we're after. The proposed

amendment really ignores all of that, focuses in on an incredibly narrow range or ambit of activity, and the minister proffers that.

5:00

I guess the other point that would seem to me to be a better practice is: if the minister says that there were no contracts, then why wouldn't he simply accept the motion as it's offered? If on further examination he discovers that there was a contract that may not have come to his attention, it could be addressed in that fashion. To me, to offer that as an explanation to defeat the entire motion and then offer this kind of a weak amendment I think misses the point altogether.

So I'd encourage members to vote against the amendment and then vote for the main motion unamended.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak further to the hon. Member for Calgary-Centre.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Buffalo.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Calgary-Buffalo; I'm sorry. I was buffaloes. I knew you'd feel an affinity with that animal, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

As the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo said, there may not be a contract. But being familiar with a lot of this type of work, you might have had everything just on day work. What the question is after, Mr. Speaker, is what moneys went where. I think the hon. minister is trying to do the right thing. In this list of equipment that he wants to amend it to – this is just a question maybe to him that he could either nod his head to or shake it.

MR. LUND: I can't hear that well.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'll listen for him.

MR. N. TAYLOR: I can't see that far, but my House leader can hear him.

It's whether or not the ownership of the equipment will be listed. In other words, just saying "one D-8 and one D-7 with bucket and one scraper" doesn't mean anything. Will the ownership of this equipment be listed in the answer to his question?

MR. CHADI: Like, was it Peter's first cousin, second cousin, or third cousin?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park to conclude debate on the amendment.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Indeed, Mr. Speaker. To speak to the amendment as proposed by the Minister of Environmental Protection. There's no question that the amendment as proposed by the Minister of Environmental Protection essentially guts the motion for a return. The proposed amendment that the minister offers to us, as my colleague for Calgary-Buffalo indicated, is a small subset of the final portion of the original motion for a return. The motion for a return asks for copies of

all contracts between the Government and contractors involved in phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River Dam, and any other documents sent or received by the Government pertaining to the construction of this phase. Now, potentially what the minister is offering to us as the amendment is part and

parcel of what we are already asking for in the motion for a return. So he offers us absolutely nothing in his amendment that was not already asked for in the original motion for a return.

Mr. Speaker, phase 3 of the construction of the Paddle River dam is I think, as members know, beyond the dispute between the government and Opron Construction, which dealt with phase 2 of the construction of the Paddle River dam. At that time, of course, there were a great deal of bad feelings that were going on. We had heard from the former minister of transportation that a great deal of the work was done on day contracts. Based on the discussion that had taken place and the information provided to this Assembly, it raised for us the motion for a return to ask for copies of the contractual arrangements for phase 3. The information that the minister purports to provide to us on the proposed amendment falls well short of what the original motion for a return has asked for. It has gutted it. It doesn't read the same at all anymore. The minister is simply trying to get out of providing information under Motion 171 by providing the amendment and then saying: yes, we're going to do it. It's really giving us nothing.

I would ask that the amendment to Motion 171 be defeated.

[Motion on amendment carried]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park to conclude debate on the motion.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to get my hearing tested as well on that last shouted vote.

Mr. Speaker, the motion for a return as amended, as I have just indicated in this debate on the amendment, provides little information about the work that was done and who did the work on phase 3 of the Paddle River dam. The minister will want us to accept that there were no contracts on phase 3 of the Paddle River dam, and I think members on this side of the Assembly at least, if not members on the other side, simply don't buy that argument.

Mr. Speaker, the phase 3 portion of the construction of the Paddle River dam occurred after the Department of Environmental Protection had run off Opron Construction and after they had finished with the deceit and fraud in terms of the arrangement that they had with Opron Construction. Because of the unbelievable mismanagement of this particular project by the Department of Environmental Protection in the part two phase of construction, they then, as we learned of course in the session last year, went to day contracts so that the appropriate cousins, brothers, uncles, friends could get all of the day contracts, could make a tremendous amount of taxpayers' money finishing off and completing the Paddle River dam. Well, we heard in this Assembly that that's in fact who was entitled to receive that kind of contract, that kind of work from this government. Of course, it isn't what you know; it's who you know in terms of the provincial government.

So that prompted us to ask the question: who did get the work on phase 3 of the Paddle River dam? "Sorry," said the Minister of Environmental Protection, "we're not prepared to tell you that." Now, I suppose if somebody were to sue the government, then we could have a long litigation and we could table all the documents and take them into the courthouse. Maybe then we'd be able to see who got the contracts on phase 3. Of course, all we were attempting to do, Mr. Speaker, was use the appropriate procedures in the Legislative Assembly to determine and assess and have the government come forward with who made taxpayers' money on phase 3 of the Paddle River dam fiasco.

My recollection is that the Paddle River dam went over budget about three times its original estimated budget. Member for Barrhead-Westlock, about three times the budget, I think, was about the right amount that it went over budget. Because of the dispute, because of the difficulty, because of the work that Opron Construction did, because of the fraud, because of the deceit – all of those reasons, of course, contributed to that particular project going over budget. Well, in terms of the dollars spent and in terms of who got the work on the Paddle River dam at phase 3, we would certainly want to know that information.

### 5:10

Now, again, the Minister of Environmental Protection may be of the view – and in fact perhaps it might have even been his deputy minister, who's very intimate with the Paddle River dam, or perhaps his assistant deputy minister, who is also very intimate with the Paddle River dam – that there were no contracts on phase 3. Perhaps it was first come, first served for the work that was to be done on the project. Obviously Albertans, who have been informed of this outrageous situation, of the fraud and the deceit against Opron Construction by the Department of Environmental Protection, want to know what happened next. That was the essence of the motion for a return. It is the essence of the documentation that we asked for. The minister has no interest in providing that information. The minister is only prepared to cloak himself behind some soft-pedaled form of the original motion for a return and give some innocuous response so that he can tell Albertans that he really is interested and that he really did want to respond to Motion for a Return 171.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, and as I say again in closing debate: Albertans just aren't going to buy it. I would ask that we vote for Motion for a Return 171.

[Motion as amended carried]

### Speaker's Ruling Amendments to Motions for Returns

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we recognize the hon. Member for Redwater, I'd like to make a number of comments with regard to the points of order and to the whole issue that just arose. If you read the Standing Orders of this Assembly, they are noted primarily in Standing Order 34. In the four subclauses of that there really is no mention of amending it. It is a custom of the House. If you look at *Beauchesne*, there is some resemblance there under *Beauchesne* 443 and particularly subclause (3). We have had the custom of amending a motion for a return to get some of an answer, and that has generally been debated and may be accepted. So the fact that the amendment may change the nature of the motion has been left to the Assembly at the moment that that amendment is prepared, and they can vote it down or support it.

### Unlawful Forestry Practices

M174. Mr. N. Taylor moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing the names of companies or operators that were charged with unlawful forestry practices, including breaches of forest management agreements and operating ground rules, with details of the charge and the nature and size of the penalty imposed from January 1, 1991, until December 31, 1994.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I find it necessary to amend this motion for a return. So I would move an amendment: by striking out

the names of companies or operators that were charged with unlawful forestry practices, including breaches of forest management agreements and operating ground rules, with details of the charge and the nature and size of the penalty imposed from January 1, 1991, until December 31, 1994.

and substituting:

an annual summary of penalties assessed against commercial timber operators for breaches of the Forests Act and regulations or of the Alberta timber harvest planning and operating ground rules, showing the number of operators against whom penalties were assessed, the number of penalties assessed, the total amount assessed, and the average penalty size for the period January 1, 1991, to December 31, 1994.

So with those amendments the motion would read:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing an annual summary of penalties assessed against commercial timber operators for breaches of the Forests Act and regulations or of the Alberta timber harvest planning and operating ground rules, showing the number of operators against whom penalties were assessed, the number of penalties assessed, the total amount assessed, and the average penalty size for the period January 1, 1991, to December 31, 1994.

Mr. Speaker, the reason for moving these amendments is that the tone of the original motion really causes some great concern. It seems to indicate that these penalties were for some kind of infraction that was determined in court, therefore making criminals out of these folks, that somehow they did not operate in a manner that we felt was totally within the bounds of the various Acts. I think that in all fairness to a lot of these folks, in many cases not only were they penalized, but they had to go back and clean up whatever problem they created. These are small people. They are not criminals. There are teachers, farmers, and tradespeople. So I think it would be really unfair to those people to print their names and make it look like they're criminals.

### Point of Order Admissibility of Amendment

MR. BRUSEKER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The citation that I'm going to refer to for specific reference is *Beauchesne* 578(3). The citation says, "An amendment approving part of a motion and disapproving the remainder is out of order." The motion for a return as put forward by the Member for Redwater asks for the names of companies that were charged, and then it says, "Details of the charge and the nature and size of the penalty imposed" and so on.

The amendment that was put forward by the Minister of Environmental Protection effectively says: we'll accept part of the motion but not the other part. Really what it says when you boil it down is: we'll accept the part that deals with the details of the charge and the nature and size of the penalty imposed – we'll accept that part – but we don't accept the part that deals with the names. The Member for Redwater specifically asked for the names and the charges. He wants to know "the names of companies or operators that were charged with unlawful forestry practices."

The effect of the proposed amendment to the motion seems to me to be in direct violation of *Beauchesne* 578(3) because it accepts part and disapproves another part of that particular motion. So from that standpoint I would suggest that this amendment is out of order.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I too rise on a point of order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We're hopefully on the same point of order.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader on the point of order as raised by the hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think your point was well taken earlier this afternoon that the very opportunity to make amendments to written questions and motions for returns is something that has developed as a matter of procedure by agreement on both sides of the House. There's nothing in our Standing Orders that provides for amendments to written questions or motions for returns.

Specifically on *Beauchesne* 578(3) I would point out to the hon. member opposite that (3) reads, "An amendment approving part of a motion." We're talking about motions for returns. I believe that that's a little more specific, and therefore that prohibition wouldn't apply to motions for returns.

5:20

I go back to your earlier comments, Mr. Speaker, which I think were exactly on point. What we are doing today with amendments is something that has developed as a procedure of this House due to the goodwill of members on both sides of the House, and I don't think the alternative is something that we would want to promote, the alternative being either we accept on the government side or we automatically reject. Hon. members opposite on many occasions have been critical of ministers who have rejected a motion for a return or a written question. I think it is appropriate to be flexible on both sides of the House so that we can in the appropriate circumstance amend a written question or a motion for a return so we can get at the issue the member opposite wants and the responsible minister can provide some information to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, I would just remind hon. members of the time in order to sort out this controversy and point of order.

So if it's succinct, hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry . . .

MR. DECORE: Very succinct. Mr. Speaker, 579(2) in *Beauchesne*: "An amendment may not raise a new question which can only be considered as a distinct motion after proper notice." Now, the Speaker or somebody has noted that there's a section on returns in *Beauchesne* that allows for a certain latitude, but if you look at *Beauchesne*, there is no provision for amendments, as the Speaker has quite properly noted.

If it's the custom of this House to allow amendments – ever since I've been here, the Speaker has allowed amendments – then I think you should have and follow some sort of procedure. You can't just have amendments willy-nilly coming out of the blue sky

without some sort of control over them. My suggestion, Mr. Speaker, is that once an amendment is made by the government, there's got to be compliance. This is a completely different thought, and I think it's out of order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. The Chair will make several comments. I guess one could say at any time that in dealing with motions for returns, the minister, or the government, could just reject it. I think the tenor of what you're saying here is that rather than giving an answer that may only give you part of it, you'd rather have none of it or all of it. That may be something that ministers may consider.

On the matter of the point of order as raised by the hon. Member for Calgary-North West, chapter 14 of *Beauchesne* does refer to things that are more substantive. Chapter 10 is perhaps more applicable. Chapter 14 and the items quoted in the 559 series refer to substantive motions. This is motions for returns, which is governed by chapter 10 of *Beauchesne*, not chapter 14.

I think that, hopefully, answers the question for the moment. If there's anything further, then the Chair can review that before the next opportunity for motions for returns to be dealt with.

In the meantime, we'll entertain a comment from the hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

#### Debate Continued

MR. EVANS: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. The government's had a rather ambitious agenda this afternoon with written questions and motions for returns, and unfortunately it doesn't look like we're going to get through all those that we've indicated we would be speaking to. It's my understanding that the ones that we are not getting to, have not completed, we would carry over to next week. On Tuesday the hon. Deputy Government House Leader would advise those matters that will be dealt with next Wednesday, written questions and motions for returns, and I would like to give some solace to those on both sides of the House that we will follow that procedure if you, Mr. Speaker, deem that to be the correct procedure in this case.

Assuming that that is the case, I would now move that we call it 5:30, recognizing as well, Mr. Speaker, that when we reconvene this evening at 8 o'clock, we should do so as Committee of the Whole.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader has moved a motion that we do now call it 5:30 and that when we reassemble this evening, we do so in Committee of the Whole. All those in favour of this motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no. Motion carried.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:27 p.m.]