

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, July 25, 1989 2:30 p.m.**
 Date: 89/07/25

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

As Canadians and as Albertans we give thanks for the precious gifts of freedom and peace which we enjoy.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we rededicate ourselves to the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy as a means of serving our province and our country.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and to all those in the galleries as well, a friend of mine and my predecessor as a Speaker of this Legislature, the former Member for Calgary-Millican, the seventh Speaker of Alberta, the hon. Art Dixon.

head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I would table for information of the members of this Assembly amendments that I will be proposing to Bill 1, the Family Day Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Banff-Cochrane.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 16****Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1989**

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 16, the Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1989.

This Act replaces part 4 of the Act relating to small claims matters by increasing the monetary limit of the court to \$4,000, by streamlining the judgment and appeal processes, and by changing the name of the court to the civil division of the Provincial Court.

[Leave granted; Bill 16 read a first time]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 16 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. HORSMAN: I'm pleased to table the 15th annual report of the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs for the period ended March 31, 1988.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table copies of the annual report for 1987-88 on behalf of the Alberta College of Art.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly this afternoon some 60 members of the Alberta Real Estate Association and member boards from around Alberta. In doing so, I'd like to thank them for their participation on behalf of all Albertans in ensuring a fair and open marketplace in the real estate industry. I'd like to specifically introduce you and the Assembly to their executive, and I'd ask them to stand as I name them: Bev Andre, the president; Tim Grisak, the first vice-president; John Toole, the immediate past president; and Al Larson, the executive vice-president. Would all of the guests that we have now stand, please, and I would ask my colleagues to give them the usual warm welcome.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today are 15 summer temporary employment program students now working with the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. These young people come from across Alberta, attend various institutions of postsecondary education in the province, and they are here to observe the members in action. I would ask that they stand and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Code Inquiry Report**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Despite its promises of the past two years, this government has refused to answer any questions in this Legislature on its involvement in the collapse of FIC and AIC. It won't answer to the Legislature and it won't answer to the people of Alberta, because it says that it's developing an official response to the Code report. But, interestingly enough, while it refuses to answer to elected representatives, members of the government caucus have felt free to offer their own versions of their government's position. During the emergency debate, for example, the Treasurer said that Mr. Code found no evidence of government negligence. The Minister of the Environment said that the government was responsible and some damages should be awarded. The backbenchers say something else, Mr. Speaker; Lord knows what. It's sort of a version of the Keystone Kops. My question to the Premier. In view of what is happening, in view of the fact that ministers are taking public positions, is the Premier prepared to answer questions on this matter today?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as we've told the hon. member many times in the Legislature, the government has received a very important report. It is taking its time to assess it and review it and will be making a full statement.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the point I'm making is that other people are commenting in the halls, everywhere they go. The Minister of the Environment has said publicly that the Code report virtually ensures investors a legal victory. My question to the Premier. Is the Minister of the Environment speaking for this government, and does the Premier back him up on this matter?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of the Environment and myself have discussed this matter, but discussions between the Premier and cabinet members are private.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, frankly if it wasn't so serious, this would be a laughing matter. We have a total lack of leadership. I want to ask the Premier: who is in charge of this government? Is it the Treasurer, is it the Minister of the Environment, or is it the backbenchers? Who's running it?

MR. GETTY: As I have pointed out, Mr. Speaker, and many times in the House as well, the people of Alberta have supported very strongly the government and the leader, and the hon. members should notice that.

MR. MARTIN: Well, let's go to the polls right now, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. [interjections]

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, in the period . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The member hasn't been recognized. Order please.

Edmonton-Jasper Place.

PCB Leak at Hazardous Treatment Plant

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, in the period since the former Minister of the Environment fired board chairman John Elson over his refusal to recommend a sweetheart contract, the Swan Hills hazardous treatment facilities experienced a number of operating problems. There is a 2,000 tonne backlog of toxic solids, hundreds of thousands stored around the province. There have been design problems, unforeseen shortcomings, and mechanical problems, just to quote the management. I wonder if the Minister of the Environment has investigated to determine whether the PCB spill recorded at the Swan Hills site was a matter of the storage of the backlog materials or the handling of the materials on the site.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member also forgot to mention that this is the only government that had the courage and the foresight to go ahead with a plant of this nature in the first place, and I think that should be acknowledged.

Mr. Speaker, on June 7 a crack in the drain trench on the concrete bridge crane pad was discovered. That pad is the area in which trucks transporting waste to the treatment centre are unloaded. Samples of water under the crack were taken for analysis immediately, and the degree of the contamination of the water was 270 parts per million and 45 parts per million of PCBs. The thing to note here is that this matter was reported immediately, and it was reported immediately to the Swan Hills community liaison committee. All appropriate action is being taken to make sure that contaminants are contained and that the problem, the crack, is remedied as quickly as possible.

MR. McINNIS: I'm sure it was an oversight, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear the minister say whether it was a matter of the storage of the material or the handling of the material on the site. Is that in the script there somewhere?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, it pertains to neither the matter of storage nor the matter of transportation. It apparently pertains to a fault someplace that is now being investigated, and it will be remedied.

I think the thing to be pointed out here in as strong terms as possible is that this is a new, innovative project that no other province has seen fit to undertake. Yes, when you try something new and innovative, there are going to be problems along the way. We can examine those problems, learn from those problems, and still maintain our leadership position in this field.

MR. McINNIS: I have to assume he doesn't know whether it's storage or handling.

Has the minister reviewed the guaranteed return provision of the Bow Valley Resource Services contract and the clause that requires the government to pay them 10 years' profit if they get out of the thing to see whether he has any options left in the face of what his predecessor has done, or does he have to simply pay for all time?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, like any innovative project, this government has seen fit to participate in a meaningful way with the private sector, and that is exactly what is happening with the Swan Hills project. We expect that in the near future this facility, this one of its kind facility, will start generating meaningful revenue, and at that time hopefully the hon. member will have nothing more to complain about.

MR. SPEAKER: On that issue.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, leader of the Liberals.

U.S. Countervail on Alberta Products

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, a recent decision of the United States International Trade Administration is alarming for Alberta businesses; hog producers for sure, but others as well. In determining a countervail, one of the factors that was used by the American investigators was the fact that the Alberta government had given or provided for certain loan or loan guarantees to Alberta companies. The investigator specifically noted the following: first of all, that there was no standard criteria for approval or rejection of applicants for loans or guarantees; secondly, that there was no method of determining why certain companies qualified and others did not. Further, they noted that one could not determine how many applicants there were for such assistance, and finally they noted that there was no standard application process. Businesses in a number of Alberta industries such as oil and gas, pulp and paper, steel, meat packing, and high tech have also received loans and guarantees. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Finally.

MR. DECORE: It's coming. Wait for it; wait for it.

Did the government, prior to the United States' decision, consult with Americans or with GATT officials or anyone else to learn whether countervail would be levied on pork meat as a result of the loans or the loan guarantees to Gainers or to Fletcher's?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the hon. them-

ber opposite might do, we develop our policies within this province. We don't consult with others as to what we might do as it relates to the diversification of our economy, recognizing the important spin-off benefits that have occurred with a number of our loan guarantees.

I should indicate to the hon. member that yesterday the Minister of Agriculture responded to this question in a very thorough way, indicating to the questioner at that time that the jury was still out as it relates to this countervail, and hopefully by early September we will have a ruling that is favourable to our pork producers within this province. I'm sure the hon. Minister of Agriculture would like to supplement the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: And get the supplementary.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry has done that much research that he should have seen the entire list of various programs across this country that were deemed to constitute the 3.6 cents countervail, and he would know very well that the one he is raising is a very minute part of the entire picture.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I noticed that, and I hope that the minister noticed the comments made by the investigators on loans and loan guarantees.

My second question is also to the minister of economic development. Noting that you didn't feel it necessary to inquire of anyone to ensure that no countervail would be imposed on any Alberta businesses or their products, what assurances can you give this Assembly, Mr. Minister, that countervail will in no way be applied to businesses that have obtained loans or loan guarantees in the hi-tech development area, the pulp and paper industry, the forestry industry, the oil and gas industry . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, can I respond? The hon. member is incorrect when he indicates we did not inquire. I indicated to him that I did not consult with the Americans, but we did inquire with our own legal counsel. We are of what we consider the valid opinion whereby these loan guarantee programs that we have put in place are not countervailable.

MR. DECORE: You've been a two-time loser on this, Mr. Minister.

I'd like to know what you're prepared to do to assure this House that Alberta businesspeople are not going to get another setback with respect to the definition of subsidy. What actions are you taking in that regard vis-à-vis the free trade deal?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would review the record as thoroughly as he has done some research, he would find that I answered that question last week, I believe it was, in the Legislature. In my former responsibilities we involved ourselves with the pork producers so that we could indicate the validity of what we are doing within this province whereby we can also show the Americans the high level of support that they give their producers themselves. We believe what we are doing does not contravene the trade agreement we have with the U.S. In addition to that, the agreement allows us access to means to resolve these disputes in a much more speedy way

than what was the case in the past. We're working that through with the pork producers themselves, and I'm happy to leave the hon. member with the assurance that we're going to work very closely with our producer groups who were very supportive of the trade agreement to make sure that they at all times have an advantageous position as it relates to production within this province.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Lacombe, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

Buffalo Lake Stabilization Project

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to the Minister of the Environment, related to the Buffalo Lake stabilization project. Now, that's a major project in central Alberta that affects not only the Buffalo Lake area but many other towns in the basin as far as their water supply is concerned, and thousands of acres of prime farmland is flooded in the process. So it's not only the Buffalo Lake stabilization question; it's the whole area of central Alberta. Through to the minister. This is a process that's been under way for a number of years. It's a major concern, and it's getting more serious by the year as the water problems in those towns are getting to the urgent area. Could you let the citizens of central Alberta know today: are we proceeding with that project or is it shelved?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the project hasn't been shelved. As a matter of fact, we are proceeding with this important water management project. Certain portions of the project are being implemented already, certainly those related to flood control. With respect to the lake stabilization program, this matter is under study still, and hopefully we will have a report in the not too distant future.

MR. MOORE: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could we have some indication as to the timetable when we'll proceed with this? Is it this year or next fall or next year? It's been a number of years that this has been going on, and we seem always to proceed to next year. Is this the year?

MR. KLEIN: Hopefully this is the year. No. I'm sure this will be the year. As a matter of fact, this will be the year.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Order please. With that three-time assurance, that's terrific. Final supplementary.

MR. MOORE: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I appreciated that last answer. However, we've gone through, I think, around 18 studies, very in-depth studies. To the minister. Hopefully, when he indicated that this was the year, this isn't the year for another study. Can we be assured that?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, indeed there have been 29 studies on this particular matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: This year?

MR. KLEIN: Not this year.

This involves, of course, a diversion of water from the Red Deer River to Buffalo Lake, and of course there are some environmental problems that will have to be assessed through a full environmental impact assessment. Of course, that will be undertaken after the final report is submitted this year, and soon this year. Once the environmental impact study has been completed, the deficiencies will be addressed, and hopefully we can get on with the project. But there will be no more studies.

MR. SPEAKER: Before the Chair recognizes Calgary-Mountain View, I'd just like to quickly point out: let us as members stop using the word "you." When you're pointing across the aisles at each other, you refer to the minister, the Premier, or the member from such and such a location. That's occurred twice with the last two questioners. Thank you.

Calgary-Mountain View.

Funding of World Blitz Chess Championship

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Tourism tabled a report on a now defunct chess tournament in Calgary. His report states that his department was advised that satisfactory progress was being made by Emr/Curtola with respect to raising financing for the television production. Based on the strength of that assurance his department let \$50,000 go on May 3. Then on May 4, the very next day, the city of Calgary and the Associated Canadian Travellers put the whole project on ice for 30 days while they attempted to find out how Emr/Curtola would put in place the \$300,000 equity they were required to put into the project. My question to the minister is this: who gave the assurance to the Department of Tourism that satisfactory progress was being made, when subsequent events proved that that was clearly not the case?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, that's part and parcel of the report. Under contract, I believe, the date is the date the proponent received the cheque. The contract date when it was due was April 15. The payment was overdue because of the checking the department was doing.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister is not answering the question in terms of who it was that gave . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Order. The first comment is out of order, so let's have the question.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Stating the obvious.

Mr. Speaker, who gave this department the assurances on which the department relied and got comfort and gave \$50,000 of taxpayers' money to this project, which then disappeared right down the drain. Who gave them that assurance?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if all the members of the Legislature have had an opportunity to read the report, but that's very well covered in the report. The new contract with the Associated Canadian Travellers had just recently been signed, and the budget figures and the tally that we had at the time and the discussions with not only the city of Calgary but ACT showed that the project was under way. The cheque which was due -- I'm told it was due on April 15 -- was released, and it was received by the proponents in May.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Is the minister covering up the identity of this person because it was clearly misleading for them to give that assurance to the Department of Tourism on which they then gave \$50,000 of taxpayers' money? Is that the reason he's covering up the identity of that individual?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker. I don't think you're talking about an individual. The department had discussions with all the parties involved. I just mentioned who they were. There was just a new contract at the time with the Associated Canadian Travellers, and it was discussions the department had with the city of Calgary and ACT that gave them the assurances to allow the final payment to be made.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo, followed by Bow Valley.

Civil Legal Aid Funding

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we have another example of how poor government management is costing this province millions of dollars. Two years ago we learned that the provincial government was failing to access millions of dollars from federal programs for women's shelters. Now we find that the province has not been claiming \$1 million to \$1.5 million per year which is available under the Canada Assistance Plan for our civil legal aid programs, even though other provinces have been getting millions. In the meantime, we have 4,500 needy Albertans a year who are being denied civil legal aid for important legal problems. I'm wondering if the Attorney General could tell this House and particularly the Provincial Treasurer why the provincial government has failed to claim millions of dollars of federal money for civil legal aid under the Canada Assistance Plan when it's there for the asking.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the program that delivers legal aid in Alberta is a joint effort through the government of Alberta and the Law Society of Alberta. A study was commissioned last year for the Law Society to find out how proficient we were in the program we're delivering now and to make suggestions for additions. I'm glad to see that the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo is so alert and prescient to see that civil legal aid is required.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, this has been going on for years, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs is prepared to acknowledge that it's the responsibility of his department to access these federal funds under these kinds of program!;. Will he undertake quick action so that the people of this province stop losing millions and millions of dollars because of their mismanagement?

MR. HORSMAN: The hon. member should read the definition of the role and responsibility of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and it would be worth while looking at the report which I filed today with the Assembly. He's wrong, as often happens with him.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, the minister should talk to his department for a change, and he'd find differently.

Now, back to the Attorney General. I'm wondering whether the Attorney General recognizes that many needy Albertans are

being refused civil legal aid because of a shortage of funds and whether or not he will commit to improving the civil legal program in the event that the government gets around to doing its business and accessing these federal funds.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I think that goes back to my first answer that, yes, the study has been done. Recommendations have been made to the Law Society of Alberta and the government of Alberta. We are now in the process of trying to devise a plan that will allow more access to civil. I thank the hon. member for his representation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Bow Valley, followed by Edmonton-Centre, then Calgary-North West.

Ammonite Mining

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy. Last spring the Department of Energy established a procedure for issuing ammonite shell agreements. This is to permit the excavation of these fossils, which in turn become a very high-priced gemstone. My first question is: can the minister advise the Assembly on the progress of issuing these ammonite shell agreements?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, the issue of the ammonite mining is an important one. It is an historical palaeontological resource, as my hon. colleague the minister of culture pointed out to me today. Disposition and certification and transferring of titles is the area of the minister of culture. My area is having regard with my responsibilities for leasing and our experience in that area. Until this spring, Mr. Speaker, there was no system in place for permits and rights to quarry or mine for ammonites. We now have in place a system. If there is one application only to mine or quarry or look for ammonites, then we do negotiate an agreement with the individual. If there is more than one application, then we will put it out to public tender, the same way we do our oil and gas rights. Basically that's the mechanism in place, and it is there to protect this important resource.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, in Bow Valley constituency the big concern is the landowners' rights. Do the collectors' permits infringe on the landowners' rights, or do they need to deal with them also?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, the manner in which individuals receive a right of entry is the same as they would on freehold or Crown natural gas rights. That is, they must get a right-of-entry permit or permission from the landowner. If the landowner does refuse, then the individual who is seeking to mine or quarry or collect the ammonite must go to the Surface Rights Board. If the Surface Rights Board then hears and makes a decision as to the right-of-entry permit so that the individual can come onto the property, there is then compensation to the landowner, no different than a surface lease or the Surface Rights Board's manner of arbitration for right-of-entry procedures.

MR. MUSGROVE: The original concern from the people that I've talked to about it is -- it's my understanding that it's some different to an oil company in that they have to go in and stake a claim, and then they bid on that particular claim. Now, some of the farmers and ranchers in that area are having a problem be-

cause these people come down the river in a canoe and stake out a claim -- they don't know who they are; they don't know where they came from -- or else they drive through their property and don't believe they need permission to drive through there to stake out a claim.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, that may have been the case prior to the regulation being put in place, the manner in which the department deals with it. At the present time, individuals are in trespass if they have not received the disposition of the rights from the Crown or if they have not received a right-of-entry permit from the surface owner of the land. Failing that, then there are laws against trespass, and I'm sure the full weight of the law will be brought to bear. I know that my colleague the minister of culture has some comments about the background to this issue, and I'm sure he may wish to supplement my answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. MAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It may be useful for all members to just have a little bit of background on the ammonite business. In actual fact, what we're talking about here are the shells of squids that according to some estimates are 75 million years old. We're involved now in joint management between Culture and Multiculturalism and the Department of Energy, as my colleague has described, land management. We're in charge of making sure that the historical resources are retained for the Crown. The process is very much as it is for oil because these squid didn't quite make it all the way to oil: you discover; you bid; you negotiate; you're involved in surface rights. If all the ministerial orders for disposition are in place and everything else is proper and those who are mining for ammonite are trespassing, a simple recourse, as my colleague so ably described: call the cops.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

Management of Health Care Facilities

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 5, which provides for the privatization of hospitals in the province, has now been followed by Bill 17, introduced yesterday by the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, which calls for that minister to work with any public or private owner of a health care facility to provide renovations or other services. But just to back up and check with the Minister of Health now, since she has on record as of June 19 said that we certainly have the potential now with Bill 5 of moving certain facilities from being operated and managed by the Department of Health to some other option, will the Minister of Health confirm today that that option she has in mind is, in fact turning certain health care facilities over to the private, for-profit sector?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I made it quite clear on June 19 that it was certainly not our intention to act beyond the capabilities that existed within legislation. I also committed to this House that I would review our intent with the wording of Bill 5, and when the Bill receives second reading, which I understand will take place on Thursday evening, we will be discussing the matter further.

REV. ROBERTS: Well, sometimes the patience of Job would-

n't be enough to deal with this lot, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting to note that while some hospitals in southern Alberta are cracking up, others, including the health facilities to be privatized, have in fact received recent extensive renovations. Will the Minister of Health confirm that over \$13 million has been spent over the last three years to renovate Rosehaven, Claresholm, and Raymond in order to make them more salable to the private sector?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: No, I certainly won't, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the maintenance and the upkeep of all health facilities in this province is a priority of this government, and one which we will not fall back on. But to suggest that it is for the purpose that the hon. member suggests is simply wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, prove otherwise.

REV. ROBERTS: That's right. It's the lack of trust, Mr. Speaker, which many Albertans have which begs these questions.

So to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, who tabled Bill 17 yesterday. Will that minister confirm that under section 2 of his new amendment he can now provide funding for renovations of health care facilities, including those which in future can be privatized under the current wide-ranging provisions of Bill 5, unamended?

MR. KOWALSKI: No, that isn't correct, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we introduced Bill 17 and we had reading number one. To this point in time the minister responsible for the amendment Act has not had an opportunity to introduce it in second reading nor to provide the rationale or the explanation with respect to certain sections in it. But as the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre has raised it today, perhaps I should read into the record exactly what section 13(1) says, Mr. Speaker, so that there is absolutely no misunderstanding anywhere with respect to this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, no.

Calgary-North West, followed by Cypress-Redcliff.

Disposition of Recyclable Materials

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few weeks ago I drew to the attention of the House my concern about the closing of the glass plant in Redcliff, because of the potential loss of jobs and also the concern about the damage that it would do to the glass recycling industry in the province. Now we see that in the city of Edmonton up to 100 tonnes of coloured glass per week are being deposited in the dumpsite at the Clover Bar dump. It's further indicated in a report that this process could be stopped and eliminated if there were a local glass grinding and cleaning plant within the province of Alberta. My question is to the Minister of the Environment today. Does the minister propose to allow this dumping to continue and the subsequent presumably increased dumping that will happen once this plant closes down completely?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, landfilling recyclable materials of any kind is possibly the worst solution to a problem, but if there are no markets, something has to be done with these products if indeed storage space is at a premium. I can tell the hon. member that my department's working on a fairly comprehen-

sive recycling program. We hope to have that program ready for announcement in about four months' time, and we hope to address this issue of glass grinding facilities, de-inking plants, and all the other kinds of infrastructure that need to be put in place if, indeed, recycling is to become a meaningful program in this province.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, my supplementary question to the minister then is: will the minister today commit to take immediate action to stop the dumping and, presumably, store the glass somewhere until the long-term proposals that he's mentioned can be implemented?

MR. KLEIN: Well, I would love to, but I can't. It's one of those things, Mr. Speaker, where if storage space is at a premium and there simply isn't enough storage space and there aren't the markets to take the glass, something has to be done with it. I can't give a guarantee that it won't be landfilled other than to say that I agree with the member that landfilling is probably the worst possible solution, but it's a solution that unfortunately has to be looked at out of necessity.

MR. BRUSEKER: My final supplementary would be how the minister can reconcile the use of landfill sites in light of the November 10, 1988, news release by the former Environment minister, which said in part: "It is important to our province . . . to keep our environment clean and diminish" -- diminish: I emphasize that -- "the usage of landfills."

MR. KLEIN: Well, the hon. member might be well-advised that notwithstanding some deficiencies that we hope to correct within the recycling field, this province was a leader, a leader in recycling programs in this country. I'm sure that my predecessor was referring to a normal situation and not a severe situation. In this particular case we have a severe situation where storage is at a premium and where landfilling has become the solution that is only possible at this particular time.

MR. SPEAKER: Cypress-Redcliff, followed by Edmonton-Kingsway.

Soil Conservation Initiative

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. Sometime in the past the minister as an MLA introduced into the House and piloted through the House the Soil Conservation Act. Later, after being appointed minister and being responsible for that Act, in answer to a question I asked her about the soil conservation agreement with the federal government, the minister made some comments related to negotiations that were ongoing with that agreement. I wonder if now she can inform the House if indeed the federal government has signed that agreement.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to tell the hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff and indeed the Assembly that that very important initiative, the Soil Conservation Initiative, has been signed by the Alberta and federal officials. I want to thank the Member for Cypress-Redcliff, who has pressed very hard on this agreement on behalf of his constituents and indeed all Albertans.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister can outline for the Assembly the timetable that we can now expect relating to that Act, because we are probably four to five months behind in what was projected to take place over the next three years.

MRS. McCLELLAN: I could tell the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, that we are pressing ahead very quickly with this agreement. Because of the very strong commitment that our Premier and our government have had to this initiative, we have been doing the planning process in our province and in our department for some time. I would expect that letters will go out to the various agricultural service boards and other government and nongovernment agencies that work in this direction in the very near future, perhaps as early as this week.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I wonder, then, if the minister can suggest to the Assembly when the man on the street will see concrete action as a result of this agreement.

MRS. McCLELLAN: The man on the street or the man in the field will see concrete action very quickly because, as the hon. member should be aware, the Canada/Alberta agreement involves some \$34.8 million aimed at fighting soil degradation. Our contribution to this will be \$12 million over a three-year period, and if the figures don't add up, it's because the province of Alberta has received considerable credit for soil conservation initiatives that we have taken. So actually our conservation program is in place, will be improved and enhanced, and there is a co-ordination occurring in the conservation development branch of Alberta Agriculture to see that this proceeds very quickly because it is a very pressing problem in our province and indeed in Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, followed by Calgary-McKnight, then Calgary-Glenmore.

Management of Regional Airports

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Economic Development and Trade introduced enabling legislation for the purpose of creating a regional airport authority, Bill 14. Theoretically this legislation was to be based on the recommendations of the Regional Airports Task Force Association. The authors of that task force focused their attention on the feasibility of the local airport authority, the ownership of which was to be vested in the local municipal governments. To the minister. Given the task force's stated preference for a community-owned local authority model, why is it necessary for this legislation to include section 23, a section which effectively allows for the privatization of the whole operation?

MR. SPEAKER: The detail of a question such as that, related to a Bill yet to be discussed, is really not in order. [interjections] It's not really in order.

MR. McEACHERN: Section 23 allows for the privatization of the whole . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. Thank you. We'll take it as a general question related to the whole Bill, but stop asking about specifics.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, hopefully we'll have the opportunity to debate in depth this legislation when we do bring it before the House for second reading and committee study. If the hon. member wishes at that time to make amendments, I'm sure we'll give due consideration to his thoughts.

MR. McEACHERN: If it is the intention of this government to allow for the privatization of the airports, why don't they just admit it right up front, be straight with the people of Alberta and say so?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should not be so quick to judge us by their own traits, whereby they are suggesting we have some hidden agenda. If they will examine the record, they will find that this legislation was put together at the request of the task forces that were established both in Edmonton and Calgary so that we could have a greater economic impact from the air travel within this province. It contributes approximately 4 percent now to our gross domestic product within this province. We feel that can be increased with greater local input. I say with all sincerity: if the hon. member has concerns, we look forward to doing our level best to address those concerns when we do have the Bill before us at debate stage in either second reading or committee.

MR. McEACHERN: It says right in section 23:

An authority shall not sell, lease or exchange all or substantially all of its assets unless the disposition is approved by a special resolution.

So they have the right to sell. My question is: given that this Act in no way limits those at the receiving end of section 23 -- that is, the buyers -- can the minister tell this House whether this Act and its provisions for public accountability, community involvement, and community development would apply to the individual buying those assets?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure the hon. member is aware, the Municipal Airport, within the city of Edmonton, falls under the jurisdiction of the city of Edmonton. The International Airport, just south of the city of Edmonton, falls under the federal government. There presently is in place an agreement whereby, on a lease basis, they will assume the responsibility of those airports. If the hon. member has concerns as it relates to ownership, he should maybe talk to the present owners. It is not our plan, but what we are doing is working very closely with the authorities concerned so that we can have a greater economic stimulus from the airports within the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-McKnight.

Cheating on High School Examinations

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently Albertans have become aware of a situation wherein 30 Edmonton high school students were caught cheating on the 1988 high school mathematics exam. This week Alberta Education reacted with a weak and totally inappropriate compromise, allowing those students who co-operated after being discovered to retain their marks despite the fact that those marks were obtained through cheating. Those students who did not co-operate have been given the opportunity to rewrite the exam or to use a school-based mark on their high school transcript. My question is to

the Minister of Education. Will the minister advise his department that such action is totally unacceptable, is uneven, is unjust, and require all the guilty parties to rewrite the exam?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, first of all, may I tell all members of the Assembly that this government and that this Minister of Education find that anybody who cheats on an examination is taking action which is unacceptable and cannot in any way be condoned by any of us in this Assembly. We have so advised all of the students that were allegedly involved or admitted involvement in cheating in a June 1988 mathematics 30 exam.

In order to get to the bottom of it, Mr. Speaker, we were out to find the culprit who leaked the exam, who got a hold of it and sold it. That was our first objective. In finding that information, we found that the investigators had to inform those students with whom they spoke that in order to get the information, no action would be taken against those students. That got us to the bottom of the problem, found the culprit, and that man has been charged and will be appearing in court in the days ahead.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to all members of this Assembly that we do not condone that kind of action. The letter of repudiation, a strong letter, has gone to all 30 students. That will remain on those students' files until they purge their misdoing, their misguided action, and will stay on their file until they rewrite the mathematics 30 exam.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MRS. GAGNON: I find it difficult to understand why all 12 students who became stooges would have had to be paid off. Does the minister realize that by these actions he's telling our young people that it is okay to cheat as long as they inform on their cohorts after they have been caught? Is this the message he wants to send?

MR. DINNING: No, Mr. Speaker, it is not, in no uncertain terms. We have informed all of those students that that blight on their student record will stay there no matter whether they were the 12 who participated or the 18 who did not participate and who we suspect cheated on the exam. That blight will remain on their record until they purge their record by rewriting the exam.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for the 18 who did not participate in the investigation, we have advised them that their diploma exam mark will now be noted as incomplete on their transcript, that their school-awarded mark will stand, and they can, as I say, purge their record by rewriting the exam on August 16, when the math 30 supplemental exam will be sat. The other part of it is that those new transcripts for those 18 students will be sent to all of those bodies, all of those institutions, and all of those people who received them in the past. So a new transcript will be sent to those institutions.

But I repeat, Mr. Speaker, we do not condone this kind of behaviour.

MR. SPEAKER: Final.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to ask the minister if he would commit to the creation of a small, short-term task force to study the problem of disciplining cheaters and to formulate an intelligent policy for dealing with any future such incidents.

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's assistance and offer of assistance. She will be able to participate in such a discussion when the estimates of the Department of Education are before the Committee of Supply this evening. I welcome some comments and some suggestions from that member.

But, Mr. Speaker, let it be known on the public record that I have informed the Deputy Minister of Education and all those involved that in the future this kind of plea bargaining, if I may use that word, shall not be acceptable and should not be used except under the most extreme circumstances and, again, that we will avoid at all costs putting ourselves in a position where this kind of behaviour is in any way seen by anybody to be acceptable, because it is not.

MR. SPEAKER: Points of order arising out of question period. One from yesterday. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rose at the end of question period yesterday on a matter related to comments made by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place on what he had thought I had said on the matter of Middle Sand Hills ecological area. I've reviewed *Hansard* and the Blues and still maintain that the comment that was attributed to me I did not make. I believe the question that was asked of me by the reporter was, "Did you speak to the minister before such an action took place?" I had said: yes, I did. So I don't know how out of that they could take that I would have the power to cancel that meeting.

MR. McINNIS: If the member would be good enough to clarify what comment of mine he finds objectionable, I'll consider withdrawing it, but I don't understand at this point what he objects to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair just regards it as being a discrepancy as to the facts, a difference of opinion between two members. No point of order.

Deputy Premier.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rose to make a point of order when the hon. leader of the Liberal Party persisted in his use of the terms "you" and "minister." The use of the personal in the Assembly rather than addressing the House through the Chair was being adopted by the leader of the Liberal Party. Your Honour subsequently made the point to ask hon. members to use the usual form of parliamentary reference, and I therefore withdraw any point of order. I hope it is a lesson, however, that the hon. members on all sides will keep in mind.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Chair did look at *Hansard* yesterday, and one hon. member used that personal pronoun five times within two questions. Hopefully the member will take that under consideration. Also, one other member from the gov-

ernment benches used the word "you," and another one later on used the word "she." So indeed perhaps we'll get back to the proper parliamentary form.

While we're at it, perhaps in both Committee of Supply and Committee of the Whole as well as in the House we will indeed keep referring to members by the name of their constituency rather than by their names, and also that the constituency names are given correctly. One footnote to that as well is that when referring to departments of government, perhaps the full and complete title will be used.

Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that written questions 208 and 209 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

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

With regard to the Oldman River dam project:

- (1) who were the consulting law firms who provided advice to the government;
- (2) what are the names of the individual lawyers within each firm listed in reply to (1) who provided this advice, and
- (3) which aspects of the project were referred by the government for a legal opinion?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the government will be unable to accept question 203. There currently are a number of legal situations that we're involved in. Perhaps it would prejudice the results of some of those decisions to provide that information.

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move the following motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper: motions 191, 192, 194, 195, 198, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, and 210.

[Motion carried]

170. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing all the Alberta government studies, surveys, documents, projections, calculations, working papers, reports, speech notes, and meeting minutes which the Alberta government generated using Alberta taxpayer dollars that were used to conclude that the free trade deal would be good for Alberta, as well as those which showed there would be negative consequences.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the members of the Assembly to defeat this motion. It really contains the most incredible array of material, much of which, of course, is related to internal documentation between a minister and his staff, not only his departmental staff but presumably his own personal office staff. I make particular note of such items as working papers, whatever they may be. Speech notes: I'm not

so sure that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway would want to see some of my speech notes, but I'd be happy to supply him with the final speeches, some 60 or 70 in number, that I made on behalf of the free trade agreement during the course of the last year or so if he would read them and pay attention to what was said in them. Meeting minutes: really, Mr. Speaker, a request for documentation of that kind is obviously inappropriate.

We'd be happy to provide the hon. member and all members of the Assembly with a wealth of documents related to the free trade agreement: the agreement itself, its subagreements that have been entered into, made public. But to go beyond that into such things as speech notes, meeting minutes, working papers, and calculations I think is really extreme and really an unacceptable request on behalf of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the minister has made some reasonable points, I believe, but he's only dealt with a few of the array of requests made. Certainly none of his remarks apply to the obviously commonsense idea that the government studies and surveys and documents, certainly the studies and surveys, made with taxpayers' dollars for the purpose of educating the government and, indirectly, I suppose all of us as to the pros and cons of free trade should be made public. The public has spent the money. Surely we're entitled to see the product.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to the comments of my colleague from Edmonton-Strathcona, I would add in the first instance that the Deputy Premier I think is trying to argue that meeting minutes, for instance, just simply can never be tabled. We're not asking for cabinet minutes, Mr. Speaker. We're asking for minutes of meetings during which the government might have been informed of information that has not hitherto been shared with members of the Assembly. Now, I remember that last year one minister, the then Career Development and Employment minister I believe, made certain statements in the House about how many jobs the free trade agreement was going to bring to Alberta, was going to directly cause for Alberta. Despite a rule in our own book, in *Beauchesne*, that says that once you do that, you have to cite that document if you're a minister of the Crown, that minister refused to do so. Now, that's a blatant example of how likely it is that these people, these jokers, were making it up as they went along, Mr. Speaker. But if they want to argue that they weren't making it up as they went along, then I think it's incumbent upon them to table some of the documents.

The Deputy Premier will act in a very subdued manner and indicate a presence of reason and all the rest of it, but if he's got a specific objection to one or two parts of this motion for a return, then let him recommend an amendment, which is the conventional way of dealing with this. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker -- and it will never cease to gall me -- that those people, those Conservatives attempting to run a government, spent my money and your money wrongfully, in my opinion, advertising their position in favour of the free trade agreement, wrongly interfering in the process of a federal election campaign, wrongly using taxpayers' dollars to do that, and then don't even have the guts to come back and give us the informa-

tion upon which they claim the statements they made during that campaign were valid. Now, that's outrageous. What an abuse of the system, Mr. Speaker. And the minister can posture all he wants on this sort of thing; the fact of the matter is that these guys, these jokers, spent our tax dollars interfering in a federal election campaign when they should have spent their own Conservative Party money doing it, in the first instance, and in the second instance, have never, not once, ever given to the Assembly any of the documentation, any of the studies, any of the analyses that they say -- I underline "they say" -- support their claim that the FTA would be good for Alberta and Canada.

Now, if the minister has a concern that he doesn't want to lay all the information out -- for instance, if he had meetings with chambers of commerce in which, you know, they said, "Well, it will be good for some industries and lousy for others," if he wanted to delete those minutes, that would be okay. But the fact of the matter is, he doesn't want to give any information. This government doesn't want to give any information. This government is like a turtle in hiding. The only time they put their heads out is when they've got money to offer the voters of Alberta or sops that they want to hand out. The rest of the time the head's underneath the shell; they won't give information to anybody. It's high time they learned the old adage, Mr. Speaker; it's called "give them enough rope." As far I'm concerned, there's enough rope, and I look forward to the occasion when next the people of Alberta can pull it around their collective necks.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, summation.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is true that I've included in this motion a number of items that one would normally not, but there is a reason for that. It's because the government never released one document that they paid for with taxpayers' dollars showing that the free trade deal was good for this province, not one. Now, they've bragged all the time that they had them, but they never showed us one document. The one document that they released was based on a study done by the Economic Council of Canada. That's not one of your own -- that doesn't implicate any study about free trade; that tells your position on free trade.

MR. SPEAKER: Through the Chair, hon. member, through the Chair.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of difference between putting out propaganda saying that the free trade is good for you in a general sort of way based on somebody else's research. I'm talking about this government doing any kind of in-depth research setting out any kind of criteria indicating which industries would benefit, which industries would not, hard facts, documents that we could study and therefore debate the various merits of the free trade deal.

What this government did put out was a question-and-answer paper which they based on some information put out by the Economic Council of Canada. And when the Economic Council of Canada changed its basic figures because the free trade deal that was negotiated was different than what they originally thought -- in fact, it included the service industries -- and changed their whole projections downward as to the number of jobs created, this government turned around and put out another document using the original figures, refusing to accept the new study and

the new information that was put together by the Economic Council of Canada.

A member of this Assembly, who is now the Minister of Family and Social Services, debated with myself before the Forum for Young Albertans, and he swore that this government had documents which showed that free trade was good for Canada and good for Alberta. [said: "Where? You have not released one -- not one -- in the Assembly that shows, other than just at a very superficial level, what their policy is." There is a difference between that, hard facts, and studies, because hard facts are hard to come by in a situation like this, and this government did no studies. This government collected a few documents and a few studies from other organizations, I gather, sort of read them over and said to Albertans, "We must jump through this window of opportunity, land in the Americans' lap even tighter than we already are, tie ourselves tighter to the American economic system, become part of America," and then told us it would be good for us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I didn't expect that I would get all of these various things, but the reason I put that many different things on there was to give this government a chance to show that they actually did have somewhere in all their government papers, all those things that supposedly helped them to make the decision that free trade was good for us, something worth releasing that said that free trade would have some benefits to this province. They might even have the honesty and courtesy to release a few documents showing that there were some negative sides to it, but they didn't do that either. They put out a question-and-answer at a very superficial level based on some erroneous information and then called that a free trade study.

Mr. Speaker, this government has asked the people of Alberta to join the Americans in an economic union, called it a free trade deal, based on nothing. They don't have any studies. They don't have any information. They don't have anything that -- it's not to say that taxpayers didn't pay some money to have some studies, but we've not seen one of them. They keep claiming they have these studies. They keep saying that it was a good deal. They seem to think that they know it was a good deal, but they can't release any factual documents indicating any study of any merit whatsoever outlining what they did that shows that it's a good deal for this country.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about the election results?

MR. McEACHERN: That doesn't mean a thing in terms of whether it's a good deal or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Through the Chair, hon. member.

MR. McEACHERN: So, Mr. Speaker, although the Minister of Federal and Intergovernment Affairs says that he doesn't want to release speech notes and minutes of meetings and those kinds of things, I can understand that. The reason that I included all of those there was just in case they might be able to find something, because I suspect that there are no documents. Now, if there are, they were paid for by the taxpayers and the taxpayers have a right to see them. So it's just nonsense that this government continues to work in the dark, hide its head under its shell like a turtle, as my colleague from Edmonton-Highlands said, and stick it out once in a while to sort of bribe the voters or lie to the voters to get their support at election time. It's quite incredible that they continue to operate this way. So they have

their chance to make some documents available. Here's the motion on the Order Paper, and they should vote for it.

[Motion lost]

171. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the report prepared by Mr. Keith Alexander regarding the privatization of Alberta Government Telephones.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, to the extent that any such document exists as such, it would not be a government document but rather part of a consulting arrangement between Alberta Government Telephones and Dominion Securities. In addition, such document, to the extent that it may exist, would not be any personal document by Mr. Keith Alexander but rather done by Dominion Securities. Furthermore, if any such document were to exist and be deemed to be a government document for any reason, it would constitute a document that would be an internal document, the purpose of which would be to provide advice to the minister, and not be subject to production. I would therefore urge all members to defeat the motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, do I correctly infer from what the minister is saying that no public money was expended in the production of this document, that it was commissioned not by the government at all? The minister nods; I take it that is the case. Therefore, the same reasoning that applies to question 170, which I was about to repeat, does not apply to this one, I take it. Nonetheless, it is, I'm sure, a document in the possession of Alberta Government Telephones, which is a government company, a Crown corporation, and this minister is responsible for that corporation. It is a public document, although not a government document, because it has been received in connection with this very important question of privatization. And it is quite, quite wrong that ministers and the government in general are entitled to sit on documents that in the ordinary course of business, without any confidentiality whatever, are germane to a very important issue, are permitted simply to do that and to not disclose those documents when requested by other hon. members.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, it really is shameful that this government is not making this report available to the Assembly. It was a report; let's be clear about this. It was commissioned to Mr. Alexander at Dominion Securities as a favour for stepping aside so the Premier could get Edmonton-Whitemud. Now, I'm not going to point out that that was a wasteful exercise because the Premier was kicked out of that riding just March 20 last, but that's the fact of the matter. That was his payoff. This concerns a very important entity in the province. Alberta Government Telephones.

MR. SPEAKER: Please, hon. member. Order please. Terms like payout and so forth are imputing false motives and other sorts of things here. Be much more judicious in your comments. Be much more judicious.

MR. GIBEAULT: The report was clearly commissioned, Mr. Speaker, by this government, and the buzzword that they used -- they weren't honest enough to call it a privatization study of AGT. They called it a study into the financial restructuring of

AGT. But we all know what that means, don't we, Mr. Speaker? They want to sell off one of the best Crown corporations in the province. It's in a financially profitable mode, and they're gearing up to sell it off. We were very concerned about that when we were looking at the question of the future of Edmonton Telephones here just recently. So we need to know, Mr. Speaker, what the intention of this government is. They use all kinds of public money to produce and commission this report with which Mr. Alexander was involved, and we'd simply like to see it, Mr. Minister. We'd like to see what, exactly, this expenditure of public funds did accomplish. What is the recommendation? Is there some recommendation against or for privatization -- or as they call it, financial restructuring -- of AGT, this important public utility in the province?

Now, I would think, Mr. Speaker, if the report was in favour of selling off this valuable Crown corporation, this government, this minister, would be all too happy to put it on the Table for members of the Assembly and the public to see so that we can see exactly what the case is. Now, could it be that the report has a recommendation other than selling it off? Could it be that the recommendation is to maintain this fine Crown corporation in the service of the people of Alberta? Well, we don't know, but we sure would like to know. There are all kinds of people in this province, Mr. Speaker, who depend on the service that AGT provides. We recently invested many millions of public dollars in the extension of private-line service. Are we just now to turn that over to some corporate friends of this government? Well, a lot of people who are served by AGT, a lot of people who are in the employ of AGT, would very much like to know about that. What is this government's intention?

This report has been floating around in the government for some time now. The minister this afternoon couldn't even bring himself to admit that it existed, but his predecessor made that very clear to me, that it certainly did. We would like to know just exactly what that says, Mr. Minister, and I'd implore all members of the Assembly to support this motion for a return so that we can in fact know what are the possible directions for the future of AGT, so we can get this cloud that continues to hang over it off AGT.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I share the concern of my colleagues that the government appears to be denying members of the Assembly access to this report. The hon. Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications can use those specious arguments if he likes by saying, well, whether we have a report or not, or whether it was prepared by Dominion Securities or Mr. Alexander, who's a principal in Dominion Securities, whether it relates to the privatization of AGT or not, whether it's a government document or an internal document -- I mean, those reasons are all pretty flimsy as far as I'm concerned. The bottom line here is that the government urged Mr. Keith Alexander to prepare a report for them to use, whether it was routed through AGT hands or whether the government commissioned it directly is, I think, irrelevant. The government engaged the services of Mr. Alexander and his company, Dominion Securities, to prepare this report with one thing in mind, Mr. Speaker, and that is the privatization of a major and very successful and important Crown corporation in the province of Alberta. I'm very concerned about that as a legislator. I want to know what this government's hidden agenda is. I want to have a chance to examine it in public and debate these things.

I think the government has privatization in the back of its

mind, no doubt. AGT is a prime target for that political agenda, Mr. Speaker. Privatization: the very utterance of the word causes backbenchers and even some cabinet ministers to salivate, Mr. Speaker. It's a conditioned response of Conservative politicians across the country, whether you're in Ottawa advocating the sale of Crown corporations back to the people who already own it in the form of a share issue to generate revenue, whether you're a Devine Premier in Saskatchewan who wants to sell all of that province's heritage to the private sector, or whether you're here in . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: You had the private sector with Roy Romanow.

MR. FOX: Well, they didn't have a deficit in Saskatchewan before the Conservatives took over.

MR. SPEAKER: Through the Chair, please, hon. member.

MR. FOX: They didn't have a deficit in Saskatchewan before the Conservatives took over, and I think we're getting into the same situation here, Mr. Speaker, where the government has in the course of three and a half years of mismanagement accumulated a debt in excess of \$10 billion. They try and hide that, make excuses for it, pretend that we're moving along a well-charted path towards a zero deficit by 1990, 1991, 1992 -- whatever it is, hon. Provincial Treasurer.

But, anyway, the debt's a problem in Alberta, and I suspect that this government's short-term solution to dealing with the deficit will be to try and privatize, sell off some of the assets of the province. You know, as someone who's been involved over the years in small business, a successful small entrepreneur, Mr. Provincial Treasurer, I think it's absolutely ludicrous to suggest that we could benefit long term by disposing of the income-generating assets of the province in an attempt to hide the fiscal mismanagement of this government. What would we be left with, Mr. Speaker, after the revenue generated from the sale of AGT is used up? What would we be left with? We'd have that much less to generate income to try and pay the bills of the provincial government.

I think, you know, judging from the comments coming from members opposite, it's obvious that privatization is their agenda. They're not being forthcoming in admitting that to people. They didn't campaign on it in the 1989 provincial general election, but it's coming down the pike. It's our job as members of the Official Opposition to expose that government agenda so that it can be debated in public, not in the Conservative back rooms of Calgary and Edmonton. Certainly the former Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, now a private consultant or whatever with Dominion Securities, Mr. Keith Alexander, apparently a very good golfer as well, like another former Member for Edmonton-Whitemud -- we're dealing with a couple of former members -- was well known in the Assembly for his particular point of view, his particular right-wing point of view that favours things like privatization at all costs. I think that's consistent with this government's approach, and we're just urging them to be forthcoming, to be honest and open with the people of Alberta. Admit that they want to privatize AGT, along with some other things, so that we can have that debate, because I think when all is said and done, Mr. Speaker, the people of Alberta -- the people of Alberta who are free-thinking, independent people -- recognize that over the years there have been some

substantial benefits accrue to the people of Alberta through public ownership of some of the industries in the province.

Certainly the communications industry, the AGT success story, is something that we ought to take note of in that regard. It's been a leader in technology. It's been a leader in providing service. It's, you know, done a wonderful job, not to say there can't be improvements made. Certainly the hon. Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications and I have the opportunity to discuss some of those changes from time to time, the efforts to make the service that AGT offers to Albertans a little bit better. It has been a good company, and it has brought returns to the people of Alberta. If AGT generates a profit, those profits are returned to the people of Alberta and benefits enjoyed in other ways, through improved services that are offered to the people rather than having the profits funneled through some subsidiary Bell telephones down into the United States or whatever. It's money generated in Alberta, working for Albertans, and I think AGT has done a marvelous job.

I'm concerned, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, when I know that a government that has only 44 percent of the support of the people of Alberta has a majority of the seats and would be able to bring in some sort of a hidden agenda like privatization of public assets without giving people in Alberta a chance to have a say on that in advance. Again I refer to the Devine government in Saskatchewan doing just that. It wasn't until the opposition put a halt to proceedings that the government had to acknowledge that an overwhelming majority of the people in the province of Saskatchewan opposed this mindless privatization agenda. You know, there may be room for the privatization of some government assets. I'm not coming out with a blanket statement here, but I don't want the government to have a blanket response either, that privatization at any cost is always good. It's foolish. It's a triumph of ideology over common sense, and it's that kind of attitude, I submit, that has helped the Provincial Treasurer and his beloved Premier drive this province \$10 billion in debt. It has caused Saskatchewan to go deep in debt, and everyone knows what's happened in Ottawa.

We want this government to come forward, show us the report. Let's debate it, and let's work together as all hon. members of this Assembly to try and address the fiscal concerns of the people of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking on the motion, I am a bit mystified why the minister would deny the House the fruits of the labour of Dominion Securities. He's being rather picky if he says it's not Mr. Alexander, it's Dominion Securities. Nevertheless, I'm sure that we would be able to amend the motion, if he would go through and give it out, by changing it to Dominion Securities.

There was no question, Mr. Speaker -- and I think an examination of *Hansard* would prove this -- that the former minister, when he announced to the House that the study was being commissioned, gave every indication it was a study done by this government, by the House. So I'd be very interested in understanding what happened between leaving home and before they arrived at the forum. [interjection] Yeah. I'm just wondering if he got a look at the report and decided suddenly that it's not to be paid by the people of Alberta. It does arouse one's curiosity, because certainly -- maybe we'll be able to table tomorrow in the House the statement by the former minister that it was com-

missioned by the government. So this weaseling and changing at the last minute is a bit mystifying.

Second, Mr. Speaker, if it was done by AGT -- Alberta Government Telephones, as the minister likes to refer to it, but they now refer to themselves as "advanced growth technology," which in a way I suppose is doing what many people are doing in Alberta now: trying to disassociate themselves from the government. And I can't blame them for that. I would hide and change my deodorant, too, if I was identified with the people over there. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, being that AGT, whatever name you want to call it, is split really in two, the utility part where the Public Utilities Board sets the rates, takes into consideration and all that -- I would think, then, that if the minister is correct over there and this was commissioned by AGT, we could then move that the Public Utilities Board ask that this be tabled and brought forward, because in effect they're using money to go out and do a business analysis that would come back in the rates.

So I would be very interested in how the minister covers his . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you can think of a nice word for it.

MR. WRIGHT: Posterior.

MR. TAYLOR: Posterior. Thank you very much. The NDP can always come up with a correct, pleasant word.

. . . how he covers his posterior by coming out and saying the government commissioned it and now saying it belongs to AGT, and how he's going to cover it if the Public Utilities Board says it should be brought forward. So I would suggest to the minister that he 'fess up now and quit doing the Nijinsky type ballet that he's doing mentally -- it's more reminiscent of the Member for Lethbridge-East -- and come out and let us know just who paid for that and who we have to ask to have the thing tabled here or have the thing brought forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this motion and would like to make an effort to request and encourage that the government provide the information that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway is so reasonably requesting in this motion for a return. I believe there is ample indication that this government is moving to privatize AGT. They haven't been shy about talking about it, and certainly it would be consistent with their ideological perspective that AGT should be privatized.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

It isn't a decision that should be taken lightly. It is a decision that has with it some profound consequences for the fiscal management of this province and for the delivery of fair and equitable and efficient telephone service, not just in large urban concentrations but across this province. It wasn't, I'm sure, on the basis of some whim that AGT was structured some 60 years ago as a Crown corporation or as an arm of government. It was done because there was a valid reason for it then. That's not to say that the reasons shouldn't be re-evaluated from time to time; certainly they should. It's not to rule out the possibility of privatization out of hand. However, it is a decision that is of

tremendous magnitude, and the concern that I have, in observing how this government has tended to decay and atrophy over the last number of years, is that this government will make a decision to privatize AGT on the basis of some ideological obsession that was developed in the late 1800s. We've seen that in many cases: decisions on a variety of things in the past that have been boiled down to an ideological obsession, a right-wing, Conservative obsession. In this case, I think it probably generates from this government's clear enamourment with Margaret Thatcher, the great Conservative in Britain. [some applause]

Yes, but I want to caution the members of the back benches, as I want to caution the members of this cabinet, that while Britain could pursue privatization of its Crown corporations with certain benefits, not all of those benefits are available to Alberta, for one fundamental reason. Britain does not carry its Crown corporations on the books at a value. The value for its Crown corporations on the books is zero, and therefore nothing is factored into its net debt. Therefore, when it sells a Crown corporation, if it gets some money for it, it can take that money and put it against the debt and write the debt down.

If I'm not mistaken, AGT is carried on the books at \$3.2 billion. That has been consolidated into this government's net debt position. It's done. That \$3.2 billion is taken out of debt or liability because it is an asset. If the government sells AGT for less than \$3.2 billion, in fact we will increase our debt. On the off chance that it sells AGT for more than \$3.2 billion, then we might be able to reduce our deficit.

That's not to say, however -- contrary to what Vegreville says -- that there aren't some other economic benefits. There may well be. Again if I'm not mistaken, AGT made about \$50 million to \$60 million two years ago, and the year before it lost \$11 million. Let's say it could make \$50 million or \$60 million in consistently good years. If we could sell AGT for \$3 billion, taking out the debt -- I believe it to be about one and a half billion, at least the debt to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. If there isn't other debt, you'd have net cash of one and a half billion. Put it in the bank at 10 percent; that'd be \$150 million. That's more than AGT is earning even in a good year, and there might be something to be said for doing it. But that has to be weighed against the potential for reduced service efficiency. It has to be weighed against the potential that this government might actually sell AGT to AT & T in the United States and give up our communications to an American firm.

All those things have to be considered, and that is why this request for information and analysis that this government has made in asking AGT, because AGT wouldn't make this decision itself, to in turn ask Dominion Securities to do an evaluation -- that is why this request for that evaluation is so eminently reasonable. All we're asking is that some of the questions that have been raised in the debate by my colleagues, that I have just raised in the last few minutes in my debate, questions of what are the benefits, what are the potential costs -- all we want to know is: have those been studied, and what are the conclusions?

The minister can say, and I think he is stretching a point to say, that this is not a government study. The fact of the matter is this: Dominion Securities has done that study. The cost for Dominion Securities' study would probably -- let's give the benefit of the doubt to the minister -- be taken out of the money raised in the share issue. The money raised in the share issue will come to this government because they're selling AGT. It

will come to this government less the money that is taken out for Dominion Securities to do this evaluation, to do its study, and to do whatever other costs there are in doing that issue. No matter how you say it, A equals B equals C, and this study is therefore costing the people of Alberta, in the long run, money. We have a right to see it not only because we have a right to see how this decision has been evaluated; we have a right to see it because ultimately we're paying for it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this government respond favourably to Motion 171 to release this document or any document analyzing the process of privatization of AGT.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to add just a couple of comments in support of the motion calling for this information. In the first instance, I do believe that Dominion Securities has already been paid with taxpayers' dollars to make this report. I think that by itself argues that it should be made public. It already belongs to the taxpayers of Alberta. If it belongs to us, then certainly the taxpayers have a right to look at it.

The second issue relates to, I think, what will be a 180 degree turn a year from now when the Conservatives decide that it's time to come up with some money to cover for the deficit, to cover for the bungling and mistakes, the hiding of financial errors and misguided efforts of certain financial institutions. When they realize that they're going to need a lot of money to cover their own mistakes, by God, they're going to find a way to come out with a report that says: "Hey. Easy, instant cash. Look at this. Here's a report by Dominion Securities involving our former MLA, that wonderful, respected man the former Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, who says, 'Wouldn't it be a smart move to privatize AGT?'" We won't have any problem getting the information then. There'll be more than enough of it, Mr. Speaker. What we want is this in advance of the Conservatives moving on their hidden agenda of privatization and cut-backs so that they can find a way to pay for their own history of bungling and financial errors.

And the people of Alberta have already paid for this report. It belongs to the people of Alberta. Even if the minister -- although I don't believe he would do this -- wanted to argue that it's the property of AGT, I remind the minister that AGT is the property of the Alberta government. The Alberta government is not the property of the Conservative Party of Alberta; it is the property of the people and the taxpayers of Alberta. Ergo, they owe the delivery of this to the Assembly and to the people of Alberta so everybody can get an advance notice and advance debate on the hidden agenda that these guys have in mind.

Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: Just a brief comment, Mr. Speaker, with regard to Motion 171. This is a matter that arose during the election campaign in Edmonton-Jasper Place because of the identity of the former MLA as the minister responsible for that Crown corporation. It turns out that in our district there are quite a few people who work for Alberta Government Telephones, even though that's not the primary telephone company for the area, and they all had questions about the future of their employer. They would like to know whether it would be sold, to whom it would be sold and when, what's the game plan on the part of the government. Unfortunately, the answers provided by the former

MLA weren't very satisfactory, and I think part of it had to do with the existence of this document. The employees of the corporation, to be sure, are aware that such a study was done, and it provides, at least according to the understanding that many of them have, a type of game plan that could be implemented to privatize the corporation on relatively short notice. To that, I gather, some of the employees of the corporation have been told by the management that some type of move will be made to sell shares sometime within a period of months rather than years. That was apparently said last year.

Now, the government's thinking may be unclear in this area. I suspect it's unclear in a lot of areas, so why should this be an exception? However, we do have a case where there's a document prepared regarding the future of a major Crown corporation. This isn't the place to debate the future of the Crown corporation, but it is the place to debate access to information. A report exists regarding the future of a corporation which has served our province fairly well. I haven't heard any overwhelming reasons why it should be held secret; nonetheless, that appears to be the position that's there. It seems to me that we as members have the opportunity to seize the initiative from time to time when the government is confused as far as direction. Perhaps having this report out in the open would help to generate a useful debate on which way we should go with respect to the ownership of AGT. It would certainly be a relief to some of my constituents to have access to the information. They've asked me about it, so I'm here on behalf of them to suggest that we make this information available so that we can have a look at it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is amazing that they don't have anybody over there with the courage to stand up and speak on behalf of why they should not release this document. The excuses put forward by the minister were pitiful. I can't believe that a new minister of the Crown could already have absorbed the Tor} attitude of secrecy so fast and so well, before he's even had his first estimates. Unbelievable. I had expected more and better of him. It is the most shoddy explanation I've heard in a long time, as to why he didn't want to release the document.

Mr. Speaker, any way you look at it, the taxpayers paid for that document, whether it was done through AGT or whether it was done through the government directly. They are responsible for Crown corporations, and they should be accountable for Crown corporations in this Assembly. All we are doing is asking for the information that is the rightful information that the members of this Assembly and the people of Alberta should have.

I do want to address a few other aspects of this question, however, and I would point out to the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark that the assets of this government in AGT are really a billion dollars now, not a billion and a half. Over the last couple of years they have allowed AGT to purchase debenture money elsewhere and have reduced the heritage trust fund debenture money in AGT down to about a billion dollars. The government would get small relief from releasing that other billion dollars, and they can do that without selling the company, without privatizing the company. They can just not renew the debentures to AGT as they come due, and allow AGT to borrow

its money on the open market. In fact, that's what they've been doing. They could do some more of that if they wish, if they really need to free up some of that money. That doesn't really change anything much in the long run. It would help a specific deficit situation, I guess, if you wanted to take that capital back in and put it into the general revenues for a specific year, but it would be a shortsighted thing to do that would not really gain very much. If you had some other particular use you wanted to put that money to and needed it for it, then let AGT get its money on the market and use that money for the particular purpose you need or wish. But do it up front and let's be open about it, and you do not need to privatize AGT to do that.

I suspect that the government's AGT privatization direction has been somewhat stalled by the city government of Edmonton. AGT is not all that attractive a purchase from the point of view of a big corporation like, say, Ma Bell, given that Edmonton is sort of like the hole in the middle of a doughnut. The city council obviously has decided that privatization at this time is not in their best interests, nor do they seem in a hurry to sell it to the provincial government. So perhaps we're going to be saved from the kind of direction this government would obviously like to go but doesn't have the courage to go by a local government that has more sense than the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, this government has an obligation to make available to the people of Alberta the information it gleans by using tax dollars. Whether you took those dollars to pay for this study directly from the Treasury of the province or whether it came out of a Crown corporation which this government is responsible for is really not relevant. We don't know which the case is. As usual, this government has been very secretive about what they were doing and why they were doing it and what they intended. So we don't know the answer to that question, which is scandalous in itself, that we don't know that. They aren't up front enough to say this study was commissioned by AGT and they paid for it. If that's what the minister was saying, then he should have spelled it out a little more clearly than the gobbledegook he gave us that was trying to weasel out of being responsible for releasing that document. AGT operates in Alberta, and the taxpayers are the ones that pay the rates that make AGT a going concern, so it is our money in any case. This government is responsible for AGT as a Crown corporation, so therefore there is no reason that report should not be released as requested.

I would ask the minister to reconsider, and I would ask the members of this Assembly to release that document as is only right and proper.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question? All those in favour of Motion 171, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed will please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: In my opinion, the noes have it.

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

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

| | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| Barrett | Laing, M. | Pashak |
| Bruseker | Martin | Roberts |
| Doyle | McEachern | Taylor |
| Ewasiuk | McInnis | Woloshyn |
| Fox | Mitchell | Wright |
| Gibeault | | |

Against the motion:

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Adair | Fjordbotten | Musgrove |
| Ady | Gesell | Nelson |
| Anderson | Gogo | Oldring |
| Betkowski | Horsman | Orman |
| Black | Hyland | Osterman |
| Bogle | Isley | Paszkowski |
| Bradley | Johnston | Rostad |
| Brassard | Jonson | Severtson |
| Calahasen | Klein | Shrake |
| Cardinal | Kowalski | Sparrow |
| Cherry | Laing, B. | Speaker, R. |
| Clegg | Lund | Stewart |
| Day | Main | Thurber |
| Drobot | McClellan | Trynchy |
| Elliott | McCoy | Weiss |
| Elzinga | Mirosh | West |
| Evans | Moore | Zarusky |

Totals: Ayes — 16 Noes — 51

[Motion lost]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that the motions for returns on the Order Paper stand and retain their place on the Order Paper.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard the motion of the hon. Deputy Government House Leader, all those in favour please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

MS BARRETT: It's a debatable motion. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I'm sorry. It is debatable? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion is a debatable motion as it is on any occasion when the government moves to either deal with issues or requests that they stand and retain their place.

In this instance I just want to make a brief argument. I don't understand the change of attitude here. A few moments ago -- well, perhaps more than just a few moments ago -- we were advised that it was the government's intention . . . In fact a motion was approved to let the following motions for returns stand and retain their place. They were 191, 192, 194, 195, 198, 200, 201, 202, 204, 206, and 210.

Now, I think we certainly have the right to information that we're asking for on the Order Paper. The Deputy Government House Leader wanted to explain why it is that he's moving such

a motion. That's fine, if he's got a good reason. But we were under the impression that we were able to deal with the other ones. Some of us have been waiting for months now for this information. Perhaps the Deputy Government House Leader has an explanation as to why it is that having already with their majority vote in this House got one motion approved that said that some of them should stand and retain their place while others would come up for consideration, he now wants to change his mind.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, in closing debate on the motion that the motions for returns stand and retain their place, as the hon. leader of the New Democrats is aware, the motion is in order. The government earlier was of the view that many of the motions for returns were not prepared to be dealt with today. Others, in the judgment of the government, were. However, recognizing that this is Tuesday, recognizing that hon. members, it being private members' day, have other business to come before this House, it is now the judgment of the government that perhaps other business of private members should be dealt with.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I move that all motions for returns standing on the Order Paper do stand and retain their place.

[Motion carried]

head: **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

208. Moved by Mr. Gesell:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to undertake an assessment of the disposal of garbage other than by the use of landfill operations, such methods to include but not be limited to recycling, composting, gasification, incineration, processing, and compaction.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this particular motion is to stimulate extensive investigation of alternative waste management methods other than regional landfills. Presently each Albertan discards approximately 766 kilograms of municipal solid waste per year. I quote here from *Environment Views* of June 1989. This refuse is 46.7 percent organic material such as food waste, grass, and wood, 35.4 percent paper, 10 percent plastic, 3 percent metals, 2.6 percent textiles, 1.5 percent glass, and the remaining .8 percent includes dirt and rocks and other noncombustible materials.

Mr. Speaker, the per capita output of solid waste in Alberta is increasing. It is increasing at an annual rate of 4 percent, a substantial growth of the waste product that is being generated. Now, Alberta is currently on the leading edge of waste management in Canada. Its environmental standards and assistance programs surpass the majority of all other provinces. I want to stress that, Mr. Speaker. Our environmental standards and assistance programs surpass the majority of other Canadian provinces. Prime examples of that leadership are the resource recovery grant program and the Beverage Container Act. With provincial and municipal governments' assistance, waste recycling programs such as the oil drop program, the Paper Chase paper recycling program, the city of Edmonton's curbside recycling program, and the pesticide container collection program are all helping to reduce the volume of waste going to landfill.

The recycling industry in Alberta has grown substantially over the past several years and is becoming a significant component of the Alberta economy, Mr. Speaker. The recycling industry in the province currently comprises some 650 firms and employs some 5,000 individuals. The total value of the products produced through that recycling is estimated at \$425 million in 1987. Relative to the total Alberta economy, recycling appears somewhat small. But I'd like to just give you some statistics on recycling as it relates to the Alberta economy. The recycling industry comprises .4 percent of provincial employment, and it comprises .7 percent of the gross provincial product.

I would like to relate that particular industry to other economic sectors in Alberta, and there I believe recycling is very significant. The reference is to the Economic Development and Trade statistics for October 1988. In terms of value of products produced, the recycling industry is six times larger than the Alberta primary forest products industry. By the same measure, it is 14 percent as large as the construction industry, 20 percent as large as agriculture, and 60 percent as large as the mining sector. A total of 439,000 tonnes of materials are recycled in Alberta annually. The value of these recycled materials is estimated at \$61.5 million. The volume of waste materials available in the province is estimated at 2.3 million tonnes annually.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

A significant portion of this waste stream, however, is not recoverable, due to consumption or contamination. When non-recoverable materials are excluded, the total volume of materials available for increasing recycling activity is in the neighbourhood of 1.2 million tonnes annually. The major material categories suitable for recycling which generate this economic activity are paper, glass, metals, plastic, oil, rubber, and organics. Each category, each commodity, has a distinct identity and must be assessed individually.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give you a little bit of background, a sort of historical perspective, of the landfilling operation prior to going into recycling. In respect to landfilling, I'd like to say that some 30 years ago garbage dumps were located on the edge of most Alberta towns. Typically their locations were wherever garbage could be thrown out of sight, with very little concern for the environment. Dumps weren't fenced; garbage wasn't covered; animals and insects were abundant. Piles of garbage were burned, and there were virtually no regulatory controls. At that point in time, Mr. Speaker, I think garbage dumps were referred to as nuisance grounds, and they certainly were.

During the 1960s more sophisticated concepts of environmental health found their way into Alberta. A series of changes followed in the Alberta waste disposal regulations, and the first modified sanitary landfills were developed. About the same time -- and that's April 1971 -- the Alberta Department of the Environment was created. In 1975 and '76 the waste management branch of Alberta Environment was formed and it started one of its first projects, the demonstration regional landfill at Crowsnest Pass. That waste management branch also developed the regional waste management assistance program. This program is one of the factors which has made Alberta one of the most progressive areas in North America in the field of waste management. Under that program assistance is provided to two or more municipalities, generally the urban municipalities in association with the rural municipalities, that combine to form a

regional authority and develop a sanitary landfill on a regional basis. They operate that landfill and assume all the operating costs of that landfill. Under that program \$23 million has been put into those regional landfill programs between the fiscal year 1976-77 to the fiscal year 1988-89.

There are 23 regional authorities that are operating right now throughout the province. Five of those authorities have landfill projects on the go. My constituency, Mr. Speaker, has one of those regional authorities, the Strathfort Waste Management Authority. I will speak a little bit more about that later. It's been proposed that funding under this program continue at its present level until 1995-96, and then it should be reduced to only technical services.

Alberta Environment is also involved in the site selection, Mr. Speaker. The site selection is concerned with the environmental protection of these areas. The elements that are considered in that environment protection are the soils, the groundwater, groundwater resources, bedrock, topography, transportation access and, one of the more important ones, the present land use development. The potential operating efficiencies are also considered as part of the assessment process.

Some time back the government, prompted by concerns from municipalities, commissioned an MLA task force to review the regional landfill program. The task force mandate was to investigate possible streamlining of the program to reduce the department's involvement and expedite applications under that program. The MLA task force was set up under the then Environment minister, Mr. Fred Bradley. The committee was chaired by Alan Hyland, and other members were Nigel Pengelly, Frank Appleby, and Butch Fischer. Most of the recommendations of that task force -- and there were 11 of them, Mr. Speaker -- dealt with streamlining of the program, but there were two that dealt specifically with the provision of waste reduction and resource recovery and incineration. I'm referring specifically to recommendations 8 and 9 of that task force report.

Let me finish that historical overview of landfills and let me say in respect of landfills, Mr. Speaker, that there was previous discussion on a similar motion in this House on September 11, 1986. I refer to *Hansard*, page 1607, where the Member for Edmonton-Beverly spoke on this matter in support of that similar motion. Let me quote:

We can't continue to put it in the ground . . .
He's referring to garbage.

. . . bury it, and assume we've taken care of the responsibility.
Further,

The other major problem relative to landfill sites that the municipalities face happens to be the objections of citizens who just will not accept a landfill site any longer.
That was in '86, Mr. Speaker. That sentiment by the population -- and I speak for the constituents of Clover Bar -- has grown and escalated, and in my area, as I'm sure in other areas, the landfill site is not an acceptable solution to waste management.

Now, on to recycling, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of opportunities and programs the government has developed, and I need to stress some of those. They deal mainly with the commodities of glass, metals, rubber, lubricating oil, plastics, and paper. This recycling originated in the 1960s as an environmental concern, but there were problems with the recycling programs that were initiated at that point in time. There were three basic problems. There was competition with existing companies like scrap dealers that precluded some penetration of the estab-

lished markets. The second reason was that there were some fluctuations in the market in demand and in prices for recycled materials. Thirdly, the markets for the recycled goods tended to be in locations that were far removed from the producer of recycled goods, and the transportation costs were excessive. Those unsuccessful ventures at that point in time provided a poor image for recycling.

That situation, Mr. Speaker, has turned around significantly, and volunteer recycling commenced basically in the 1970s and is gaining more and more acceptance. It has been prompted by some of the government reports that have pushed recycling forward and educated industry, businesses, and individuals about the benefits of recycling. There is a resurgence of the motivation under the cash-for-trash programs. Let me just quote the reports that have assisted in these programs: *Resource Recycling in Alberta*, a document produced by the Environment Council; *A Social Perspective of Recycling*, again a document produced by the Environment Council; and *A Bibliography of Recycling*. The Environment Council also published a final report in March 1987. That report is titled *Recycling of Waste in Alberta: Technical Report and Recommendations*. In that report, Mr. Speaker, there were 68 recommendations, and they addressed some five major issues. I think we need to keep those issues in mind when considering this motion that's in front of us: one, the need for a level playing field for recycling relative to landfill disposal; two, the development of a priority sequence for dealing with waste materials -- the four Rs of waste management: reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover; three, the requirements for information and education in many parts of the economy; four, the desire for equitable treatment of the recycling industry relative to other industrial sectors; and five, the market development both through increasing supply and stimulating demand.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to briefly reference some of the programs that aid this recycling that is presently occurring. The beverage container program is an important program. Recent changes to the program now provide for a 5-cent deposit on containers of less than one litre and a deposit of 20 cents on containers over one litre. I should stress here that this program is so effective that in 1988 Alberta Environment estimated that Alberta recovers 80 percent of all the beverage containers under this program, a substantial percentage. Under the Alberta waste materials exchange program, the Alberta Research Council, with funding from Alberta Environment, provides information, a matching service of producers of recycled goods to industries and businesses that utilize those goods, an excellent opportunity there to provide for the demand/supply consideration. Some of those waste materials are packinghouse waste, potato processing waste, used computer paper, used textiles, used foam, aluminum scrap, and so on. Under Alberta's oil drop program there is an opportunity to recycle oil individually and collectively. Under the pesticide container collection program there have been 90 sites established throughout Alberta that provide that collection service. Under the resource recovery grant program, grants usually in the range of \$8,000 to \$10,000 are provided to nonprofit organizations and municipalities to help them provide some components of recycling such as storage tanks for used oil or trailers for paper collection and so on. Under the 1988-89 funds allocated under this particular program, a total of \$686,000 was provided.

Also, the city of Edmonton curbside recycling program is of importance, Mr. Speaker. The Edmonton Recycling Society

provides that service to approximately 54 percent of the city households within north Edmonton, while BFI Waste Systems manages that program for the south side and accesses approximately 46 percent of households on the south side.

Now, I'd like to give you some information about the effectiveness of that program. From October 31, 1988, to May 26, 1989, the Edmonton Recycling Society reports that it recycled 2,388,297 kilograms of paper, 594,732 kilograms of metal, and 338,786 kilograms of glass. On the basis of the city projected recycling diversion of some 15,500 tonnes of waste from the system, it is estimated that the savings to the city are in the neighborhood of three-quarters of a million dollars on an annual basis.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to get on to some of the other alternatives we should be considering, and I view those other alternatives in the same sense that we have approached recycling and in the same sense that we've made some headway with respect to recycling. There needs to be exploration of those alternatives, because it's my opinion that an effective waste management system is not comprised of just one alternative; it is a combination of a number of different alternatives. True, in some cases it may require some landfilling of some of the residue, but the alternatives in combination should reduce the waste stream significantly.

Let me deal with composting organics. The village of Ryley has a pilot project, and I referenced that in my maiden speech. It's an experimental project in a research development stage, and we expect some excellent results from that. It's close to my constituency. I'm looking forward to seeing the results of that pilot project. The Medicine Hat composting project is a unique project, Mr. Speaker, since it utilizes the leaves and the organic residue from the city's parks and then infuses them back by way of fertilizer in the public lands throughout Medicine Hat: a very unique program and very successful one, as far as I know.

Refuse-derived fuel is another alternative we need to seriously consider. Refuse-derived fuel produces a clean-burning, low-sulphur fuel. While it does produce some ash and smoke, it does not produce polluting gases, and that's an important aspect. There are presently no such systems operating in the province.

Pyrolysis is another system for waste disposal. It's basically the destructive distillation of materials, basically organic materials. The process involves the chemical decomposition of those organic materials at high temperatures in the absence of oxygen. UMATAC Industrial Processes Ltd., a Calgary firm, utilizes this process, this pyrolysis technique, primarily for thermal processing of oil sands. It appears to be effective to produce partially upgraded oil in that application. The system has also demonstrated that it is capable of handling the treatment of oily waste solids and other inert wastes.

Incineration, Mr. Speaker, is another alternative that needs to be considered seriously. The attempt to develop large-scale regional incineration projects has been hampered by the problems of environmental control of emissions that are generated, the scrubbing technique to clean up the emissions from those incinerators. In 1981 Wainwright built an incinerator, but it has experienced some technical problems and is not presently in full-scale operation. But once in full-scale operation, it is intended and projected to reduce the waste stream material by 90 percent, a significant reduction in the waste stream. It is also predicted that the burn factor may be as high as 95 percent within that facility.

Compaction is an additional alternative that needs to be con-

sidered. Compression of materials tends to change the odour, perhaps even the composition, so that the smell does not attract birds or animals. It's also been used to some degree to generate an aggregate that is used in Australia, I think, and Switzerland to produce a cement block that is utilized in industrial/commercial applications. There's a problem there with consumer acceptance, but I think in those specific applications it may be beneficial.

Shredding is another alternative, Mr. Speaker, and Edmonton uses that technique in an insulation-type sense. It spreads the shredded material over the landfill operation to keep the ground from freezing and removes that material progressively in order to utilize that landfill.

Mr. Speaker, I'm getting about four minutes away from my allotted time. I think what I would like to say to close off my remarks is that the way I understand it, the key to managing wastes is separation into component parts as soon as possible. Alternate waste processing methods should begin long before we're looking at the landfill site. Changes in waste management must begin at the individual household. There is an education process involved in that waste management process. It's a situation where we have to separate useless and useful garbage when it is actually collected.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just briefly outline some of the positive parts the motion entails and leave those for discussion with the members. Garbage is a resource, not a nuisance, and we need to look at it in that fashion. Every effort should be made to use this common and plentiful resource to its maximum potential. Alberta has been a leader in waste management, and we should stay there. We should work and aggressively pursue policies that would keep us in that leadership position. Refuse, as I mentioned, is increasing by 4 percent. Those alternatives need to be examined before we are forced into a situation to find solutions. We should plan ahead. There's also no comprehensive legislation to promote better waste management. I include in that overall phrase "waste management" hospital wastes that have been talked about in this House. This is an opportunity to enact such legislation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that to be effective waste management requires again the integration of a number of different techniques to deal with specific solutions and specific waste flows. This motion attempts to investigate those alternative techniques and provides for that co-ordination.

I would urge all members of this Assembly to support my motion. Thank you.

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

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to rise to make a few comments on motion 208. I'd like to congratulate the member for recognizing that Albertans are tired of the idea of continually digging up pieces of our province and pouring our garbage therein, covering it over and moving on to the next site. I think you see these problems come up from time to time when somebody's landfill becomes full. All of a sudden it's a matter of looking around for a new site and all the issues come to the fore. You have very intense local discussion about what we are doing with all our garbage until they find a new landfill operation, and then it seems to be convenient for the people managing that part of the system to just let it go for a period of time.

I think it's noteworthy that this marks a point at which all

three political parties have had members bring forward environmental issues in private business before this Assembly. I think there's a message there for people who run the government that people who talk to us out in the community think we should be doing something about environmental issues. Solving the landfill problem is probably as good a place to start as any. In my conversations with people around the province, it seems like a lot of people are having trouble distinguishing the modern, modified sanitary landfill from the old nuisance ground in rural areas, because they have in common the fact that all kinds of things are dumped there, that the supervision isn't what it ought to be and often there are uncontrolled or apparently uncontrolled fires burning on these sites.

Now, an awful lot can be said on the subject of waste management, and I suppose if I have a criticism of this particular motion, it is that it doesn't head us in any particular direction. It says there are all these ways we can go to reduce the amount of garbage, including recycling, composting, gasification, incineration processing, and compaction: a whole sort of grab bag of different directions. I think that probably is reflective to some extent of government policy. I don't think we have a very clear direction in terms of waste management. I know people in Edmonton are experiencing this problem right now with the proposed commissioning of the Aurum dump site. City taxpayers are looking at a cost of somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$100 million over the next 40 years to construct and operate this particular landfill site. Even if we weren't a hundred percent successful in getting rid of the problem of solid waste to be landfilled, if we could cut in half the amount of material landfilled, that would have an 80-year life span rather than a 40-year life span and would be a very big contribution.

I think the various comments the members made all fit within a similar framework, and that is that we have to find a way to move in our society toward a more sustainable type of economic growth. For sure whenever you quarry a nonrenewable resource material, use it up and dump it into a landfill, you have an activity which almost by definition can't be considered sustainable. You can't possibly continue to dig up nonrenewable resources, use them on one go-around and landfill them and expect to sustain that type of activity. That can't be done. So moving to a more sustainable type of economic activity means first of all substituting renewable products wherever possible for nonrenewable products. It includes conserving nonrenewable resources in whatever ways you can so they will be available for the next generation and the generation after, and it means above all recycling.

Now, I would be much happier with this motion if it did focus on the four Rs of waste management which were mentioned by the member. I think I would like to just explain that very briefly, because if you practise the four Rs with a great deal of desire and a great deal of ambition, then I think you're not going to have so much of a problem to deal with. The four Rs were, as mentioned by the member, reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery.

Now, reduction is a very important concept. It's often overlooked in this discussion. We can reduce the amount of waste that we produce in our society quite easily. The amount of waste we produce is a partial index to the extent to which we waste our resources. It's less likely to be an accurate index to the value received from the goods produced since the production consumption of the goods might be extremely inefficient resource utilization. That is, they entail a huge expenditure of

natural resources with very little return in terms of human fulfillment and well-being. Printing a piece of paper on two sides instead of one, for example, uses less resource and produces less waste than using one side of a sheet of paper. If that paper were made with 50 percent recycled paper, which is an option I think we have in our society, we would consume only a quarter of the virgin resource. So if you write a two-page memo and you send it on two sheets of paper -- were you to run it on both sides of the paper and use only 50 percent recycled paper, only one-quarter of the virgin fibre will be used.

A car built with a more efficient design uses less metal, has a lighter weight, is more durable, and runs with greater fuel efficiency while preserving other desirable characteristics like safety and comfort uses. It uses much fewer natural resources in its original construction, in the operation -- with fuel economy -- and will likely forestall the need for replacement down the road. So wherever possible we should reduce the amount of waste that we consume in the first place.

Secondly, we can reuse items where possible rather than acquiring new ones. I think the most common example of reuse that people would be familiar with is reusable beverage containers: beer bottles, pop bottles, this kind of thing. We're in the process of losing a glass industry in our province which creates products that can be reused for their intended purpose. Anytime a product is reused for its intended purpose directly, you don't have to have expensive separation systems, expensive reprocessing systems, and all these other things. Yet I submit, and I have, that many of the incentives that are built into our system are in the direction of using containers that aren't reusable. More and more soft drinks are sold in cans, as is beer. Milk is sold in paper cartons. We're moving away from using refillable bottle containers, and at the same time, and I think perhaps as a consequence, we're losing the glass industry in our province -- an example where an environmentally sound idea has an economically sound aspect to it as well. Reuse is normally preferable to scrapping and remanufacture because although the material incorporated in the reuse in remanufactured items may be the same, generally there is a lot more energy consumed and environmental emissions produced in remanufacturing than simply reusing the product.

Recycling, of course, is a very important part of this process. It has been talked about quite a lot in the Assembly. I'd like to refer members to my discussion in the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services [estimates], which I don't have to repeat right here right now. But it does seem to me that one thing we have to do for the recycling industries in our province is develop markets to make it possible for them to sell their products. I think it begins right here with the provincial government. The provincial government has a fleet of some 18,000 motor vehicles. They could use recycled oil. The oil product that's available on the market today is as good as virgin oil, but the companies that manufacture automobiles don't see it that way, and for whatever reasons they don't allow you to use recycled oil on warranty.

The provincial government should follow the lead of the Legislative Assembly in making recycled paper products available throughout the government. I think most of the tests that have been done show that recycled paper is capable of performing in business machines and providing a look and a feel which is acceptable to people who receive the material, and it's available in the market today. It's not manufactured in Alberta, but I submit that if the market is there, it will be.

I also submit that if we have a government that's prepared to allow international pulp companies to come here and mow down our forests to produce pulp for their industries back home, we should be requiring those international pulp companies to make paper here in the province of Alberta, and if they're going to make paper here in the province of Alberta, they should use recycled paper within the papermaking process. We, of course, produce paper at a tremendous rate. I believe the member said that 35 percent of the waste stream from Alberta households is paper. I recall one study that said that every tonne of paper thrown in the garbage uses three cubic yards of landfill space, which is totally unnecessary. We have the technology and I think the desire in our society to use recycled paper. We don't have to continue to fill our landfills with paper at the same time that we continue to mow down our forests to produce pulp.

Plastics. We have a beginning of a recycling industry here with Applied Polymer Research, but there's a tremendous amount of plastic material that's consumed and available for recycling in a variety of formats, and I think that industry is yet to be developed in our province. The list is enormous, and I think it doesn't need repeating here, but it's a very important element in the four Rs.

The third one is recovery. Now, recovery can include a number of things, many of which were mentioned by the hon. member. Composting is a type of recovery. It's where you recover plant nutrients from the organic elements of garbage. Pyrolysis was mentioned. Energy from waste incineration is mentioned as well. What they have in common is a more radical material transformation than the typical recycling process of the other categories which I've mentioned.

Now, there are some problems in that area, especially in the area of incineration, and it's the reason why I don't want to see the provincial government adopting incineration as a large-scale solution to these problems. Mention was made of the problems that have emerged in hospitals with incineration. Most hospitals operate an incineration type of disposal because the material they carry is infectious; it has a lot of unnaturally dangerous material in it. But it's quite possible for these things to fail to operate in their designed capacity if the temperature isn't exactly what it should be. There have been numerous cases recorded of incinerators producing very unpleasant things -- not just sulphur dioxide and other types of combustion gases but dioxins and PCPs, other more deadly types of effluent that come out of incineration.

I think the emphasis that's put on incineration in this resolution essentially makes an otherwise very useful initiative something that I have a concern over, and I wanted to register that with the hon. member. I think incineration is something we have to approach with a great deal of care and deliberation to make certain that the problems we have already experienced with incineration plants in our province won't be repeated in the future.

So I welcome the initiative. I think it responds to the concern in our society that we're burying too many of our problems rather than confronting them, rather than dealing with the economic opportunities that are there if we practise the four Rs of waste management. I congratulate the member for taking that initiative. I hope the good parts of his presentation will not go unnoticed in the government.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-

Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support Motion 208. I encourage the member in his efforts to argue for this motion. I encourage him for bringing this motion forward, and I hope it reflects a new age of enlightenment in his caucus. I guess we will see whether that's the case at about 5:25 this evening -- whether this comes to the question and whether in fact his caucus is with him and will vote for this somewhat enlightened motion. He should be encouraged and congratulated on having brought it forward. Clearly, this motion is not a complete answer by any means but a step in the right direction in dealing with a very serious need in our society today. That is the need of handling waste properly, in an environmentally sound way, in an efficient and effective way.

Each Canadian produces about 650 kilograms of waste per year. That amounts to 45,000 kilograms of waste in a lifetime, which is somewhere on the order of 40 tonnes. We spend in Canada about \$1.5 billion a year in landfill. These statistics in and of themselves I think argue very strongly for the kinds of initiatives this motion considers.

There's another component to the issue of landfill, and that is: where do you put them? I've had that brought very vividly to my mind in recent weeks. Of course, it's been an issue in Edmonton for some time, trying to find a site that would be acceptable. But it's not only in major urban concentrations where this is an issue. I have been approached by people from Pine Lake. That's a small community. Some people live there year-round. Others, of course, holiday there. The municipal authorities there have determined to put a landfill site about two and a half miles from Pine Lake.

Owing to the weak environmental impact assessment process requirements of this government, the residents of that area have no assurances whatsoever that the site has been properly assessed. In fact, they have indication to the contrary. The problem is that somewhere, under current circumstances, a landfill site has to be found. On the other side, it's the kind of issue that seems inevitably to get driven down somebody's throat. That process is exacerbated because this government doesn't have an enlightened policy to assess the environmental implications of landfill sites and other projects of environmental impact. Pine Lake is a small community. The landfill site is a small landfill site, but it will affect directly and in a serious and substantive way the lives of people who live in that area and in that community and who want to utilize the lake facility for recreational purposes when those purposes can be jeopardized because of runoff and leakage from a landfill site. It is therefore the case that the kinds of initiatives this motion considers ought to be supported. It is extremely important that we reduce in environmentally sound ways the amount of waste that ultimately has to be disposed of in a landfill site.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

I would like to discuss first of all the member's point concerning recycling. Recycling, of course, comes to mind immediately as a way of reducing landfill capacity and the requirements for landfill capacity. And, credit where credit is due, the Minister of the Environment is beginning to talk about recycling. He did so today. He has in the past in the public mentioned that his government is looking at it and doing things about it and so on. I encourage him in that. Once again, I have

some concern that it may not materialize. The minister is noted for saying the right thing. We all know what the right thing to say on environmental matters is. He has always been hampered by trying to get the support of his caucus and his cabinet colleagues to do the right thing.

But even if recycling itself is the right thing, and it is, my concern is that the way that minister has construed doesn't go far enough. It may be that the way the member is considering it doesn't quite go far enough. It is one thing to pick up recyclable materials, extremely important. But if we view experience in this area, we find that it's always difficult to get that going, and I believe the circle of recycling breaks down in that regard because there are insufficient markets for recycled materials.

Today estimates vary but range that from 34 to 40 percent of all landfill waste is paper. If we look at the Paper Chase company in Edmonton today, they do a tremendous job in picking up paper. They are to some extent hampered by markets. They send paper to Korea to be recycled into insulation; they sell paper elsewhere to be utilized in certain kinds of roofing. But as is the case in Ontario in many cases and as will become increasingly a problem in Alberta as the recycling blue box program is extended -- and it should be -- we will see that paper will begin to pile up and pile up and pile up. What we have to do is create more markets.

The Minister of the Environment apparently today said that we're going to work with the private sector to create and promote markets. That's good, but it's not enough. He misses one very important initiative that his government could take. They could buy recycled paper as a matter of policy. My information is that about \$8.5 million worth of paper and envelopes are purchased every year by this government. Eight and a half million dollars is a huge market. If the government made the commitment to spend that \$8.5 million, they would create the core of a market for recycled paper. That would be a first step.

Secondly, they should review the possibility of extending the requirement to purchase recycled paper to government institutions or government-funded institutions -- I'm thinking of universities and hospitals -- and ultimately pursue the possibility of requiring or encouraging municipalities to do the same. My research indicates that the price differential is very, very minimal, if it exists at all, and much of any greater price to purchase recycled paper is related to transportation costs because the bulk of this paper is made in the United States and there is a distance over which it needs to be transferred.

There is some concern that perhaps we can't xerox on recycled paper. Wrong; we can. I've done it. The paper exists. It really is a question of the government taking an initiative which would be supported wholeheartedly by the people of Alberta. It is not a very difficult thing to do, making a statement and a policy commitment that says we will buy nothing but recycled paper. That will be the core of the market, pursuing the other two possibilities or features of that market, which are government-funded institutions and, ultimately, municipalities -- not only would that create a market in and of itself of substance, but it would also create leadership. It would elevate the issue and the idea in people's minds, in the private sector's mind, and that in turn would enhance and expand and extend the market for recycled paper.

Once that's been created, I believe the recycling circle would be complete and initiatives to create an industry around deinking of paper and producing paper from recycled fibres would simply be a matter of course. It's not as though the government would

have to push or pull anybody to do it. They'd have a tough time keeping up with the private sector as it began to do that.

The exciting feature of that kind of initiative is that I believe one day in this world there will be very, very few jurisdictions that will accept kraft pulp paper. They simply will no longer accept it, whether the pulp is made in their jurisdictions or whether the pulp is made somewhere else in the world, because the awareness and the sense of the environment is enhanced so greatly, and that will continue. Ultimately, therefore, kraft pulp production will become discredited. We could fill that gap if we have nurtured and engendered a recycling of paper industry in this province based initially upon this government's procurement policy to buy only recycled paper. It is so obvious a thing to do, it is so easy a thing to do that I note with a great deal of frustration that this government simply has been not inclined to do it. I hope that this motion by this member reflects a desire to undertake creative, innovative initiatives, leadership initiatives in this country by this province, that that is indicated in this member's decision to present this motion.

Clearly, we can't forget the importance of picking the recycled materials up. The blue box program in Edmonton has been met with a great deal of success, and it should be encouraged around the province. Again, the province is talking about that. I'm not convinced of its commitment. If you look at Ontario, Ontario is spending \$60 million over a four-year period to promote recycling. This minister has committed \$1.4 million this year to promote recycling. It's not on the scale of the initiative being taken elsewhere, in that jurisdiction in this country.

Gasification and incineration I believe have a tremendous amount of potential. I am concerned that this government may find itself in a conflict of interest, not wanting to pursue gasification or incineration because it has implications for the production of energy. In fact, one of the benefits of burning garbage could be that we could produce energy for a community, for example, such as Spruce Grove. I know Spruce Grove has been considering that possibility. There are small firms in this province today that have incineration and gasification technology that is only now becoming recognized as feasible by this government, and they are to be encouraged and to be congratulated that they are beginning to recognize that.

another concern I have is that they may see that gasification or incineration runs contrary to their Swan Hills plant investment, because this could be mobile incineration technology that could go to communities, go to industrial sites, burn the materials on site and not have to risk transporting it up. I encourage the government to look beyond any short-term conflict or any short-term concern that it might run counter to some other initiative and pursue these kinds of initiatives.

I think it is also very important that the government set objectives for the amount by which they will reduce garbage that's going to landfill destinations at this time. I note that in New Jersey and Oregon they have set an objective of reducing their garbage that isn't recycled or incinerated or burned by 25 percent. I note that in Rockford, Illinois -- this may be a bit extreme, but it does point to a creativity dial's being considered elsewhere -- prizes of up to \$1,000 are being given to homeowners whose garbage is found to be free of recyclable cans and paper.

AN HON. MEMBER: Free trade.

MR. MITCHELL: I would welcome initiatives that

demonstrate . . . [interjections] Certainly the Americans have some very good ideas. And yes, to the minister of culture, it would create jobs for unemployed Tory backbenchers after the next election perhaps.

In any event, that is another initiative that might be considered.

I won't take up any more of the House's time, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate once again the member for presenting this motion, and I encourage and ask his back bench to see beyond the short term, to take an enlightened step: to call the question on this motion and to vote for it.

Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar wishes to conclude debate.

MR. GESELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I should mention to the hon. members that have spoken that I will pay very close attention to the comments that have been made, and I really appreciate those comments. I would want to thank specifically the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place and the

Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark for speaking in favour of this motion, and I do hope the members of the Liberal and ND parties will support this particular motion.

Question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Member for Clover Bar, all those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show that the motion was carried unanimously.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, as hon. members know, tonight's business is Committee of Supply dealing with the Department of Education. I move that when members reassemble at 8 p.m., they do so in Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

[The House recessed at 5:26 p.m.]