

statements which are to him, the truth. With so many important issues facing the country today, I find it almost unbelievable that the Hon. Member for Skeena continues to waste the time of this House on this particular matter.

The simple facts are that, in response to the Hon. Member's earlier request, correspondence relating to the granting of the Amax licence has been tabled in this Chamber. Other correspondence which the Hon. Member asked to be tabled are classified as internal departmental memoranda and, as is generally accepted, are not made public. This position was stated quite clearly at the time by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The situation has not changed and the Department's position has not changed.

The Hon. Member, who is so interested in acquiring new information, has left his seat and gone from the House. Having had his little 30-second news clip for the day, having milked the issue, he has gone off into another chamber outside the House. However, for reasons—oh, he is back. For reasons best known to himself, the Hon. Member for Skeena intends to—

**Mr. Fulton:** I rise on a point of order. An Hon. Member wished to speak to me, Mr. Speaker. I just went to the door and spoke to him. I think the Hon. Member might be well advised to put some of his facts on the record. I think that is why we are here, to find out why his Government will not table the documents.

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, it is best known to the Hon. Member for Skeena.

**Mr. Blaikie:** Why don't you quit this juvenile debate and say something?

**Mr. Tobin:** That was about as intelligent as anything else he has said in the last little while. He seems intent on chasing shadows, insinuating all kinds of collusion and underhanded deals in the granting of the Amax licence.

**Some Hon. Members:** Table the papers!

**Mr. Tobin:** When this matter was debated back in October of 1981, the House was given a full account of the manner in which Amax was permitted to dispose of tailings from the Kitsault mine beneath the surface waters of Alice Arm. The House knows there was a very detailed examination of the environmental risks made by the Department of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. If the Hon. Member came to committee, he would know that.

The House also knows that there was a special review of all the data on which the decision was based. The Minister held a review within the Department and he then went to the University of British Columbia and to the University of Victoria. Three very esteemed scientists from each of those educational institutions in British Columbia reviewed all the data and they concurred with the Minister's decision. The results of the panel's review were clear. There would be no significant impact on the fishery at Alice Arm.

### *Amax Limited*

One must wonder what the Hon. Member for Skeena wants. Even a cursory look at the record would tell him that the approval was straightforward and proper. It was not that different from a great many other decisions. Obviously, the Hon. Member does not want to look at the record. He has obtained for himself a lot of ink, and lot of earplay out of this issue. He was really elected as a man of no imagination. He cannot find another issue in order to let this one go, because it has worked for him so long. He is prepared to waste the time of this House on an issue which should have been laid to rest a long time ago on the basis of the facts of the case and on the basis of simple logic, something the Hon. Member has obviously demonstrated again today that he does not understand.

**Mr. Althouse:** Table the documents.

**Mr. Tobin:** The Hon. Member was quoting newspaper editorials. Let me quote one as well. Some time ago the *Vancouver Province* described the Amax decision as "a storm in a teacup". After listening to the rhetoric of the Hon. Member for Skeena and then considering the work and report of the review panel, the *Province*, and I am quoting directly from the editorial, stated:

We now learn that the Amax tailings are less poisonous than our tap water.

• (1600)

That is the editorial of the *Vancouver Province* after his first round of sensationalizing this issue in this House of Commons.

One thing that critics of the marine disposal decision have consistently forgotten is that Alice Arm is far from being a pristine, untouched inlet. The Kitsault mine was operated from 1968 to 1972 by a previous owner, the B.C. Molybdenum Corporation. During that period, 10 million tonnes of raw tailings were deposited directly into Lime Creek near the head of Alice Arm. These tailings spread five miles down the bottom of the arm. In addition, rivers flowing into that arm deposit hundreds of thousands of tonnes of silt every year.

There was at that time no attempt to restrict where the tailings were deposited. While we do not, of course, today regard this practice as environmentally sound, it is interesting to note that there was no public outcry at that time. Not a single letter was received which objected to the dumping of crude tailings in this manner.

More important, during those five years of operation there was no significant change in the numbers of salmon migrating through Alice Arm up into the Kitsault and Illiance Rivers. In other words, the completely uncontrolled discharge of tailings had no apparent impact on the major fishery in that body of water. Certainly there was a detrimental effect on the life forms on the bottom of Alice Arm, but the salmon suffered no apparent harm.

Economic problems forced the closure of the B.C. Molybdenum operation in 1972. In 1973, the property was purchased by Amax. What did Amax have to do in order to reopen the mine? In September, 1975 Amax made an application to the provincial Pollution Control Branch for a permit to reopen the