

in contact with the environmental working group of employees who are working on Parliament Hill so that they are fully apprised of the progress as well.

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle):** Mr. Speaker, I also rise on this same point of personal privilege. I was dismayed when I heard your report, Mr. Speaker, that the board of internal economy, if I heard you correctly, discussed the matter of asbestos in the West Block in the spring of 1989. I am dismayed because as an occupant of West Block certainly I was not informed, nor was my staff, that there might have been potential problems concerning asbestos in the West Block. I would have appreciated had I known that.

This morning we received a copy of a report that was made and submitted to the government in December 1988. I quote: "In the presence of strong lights necessary for the videotaping it was possible to see large particles of asbestos fireproofing adrift in the air stream. These particles were moving toward mechanical room No. 6 at the same rate as the smoke particles."

Another part of the report states: "There exists a strong possibility that airborne asbestos migrates from the attic to occupied areas of the building via the air handling system".

If this was the same report that the Board of Internal Economy was looking at in March 1989, I am wondering what has happened in the meantime.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have probably bent the rules a little to allow this matter to be dealt with now because frankly I think it is an important matter. So does the board and so do hon. members. But we are not here to debate what particular piece of paper the board was looking at at that time.

I am sure the hon. member realizes that the board is retaining independent outside advice to advise us. Beyond that and beyond bringing to the attention of the hon. members the fact that the matter was discussed with great seriousness a week ago, action is taking place, but I do not know that I can transgress the rules by turning the afternoon into a debate on asbestos. I think that is going too far.

### *Privilege*

## PRIVILEGE

### PRESENCE OF ASBESTOS IN PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

**Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, in line with your earlier remarks I do not intend to pursue it at any length. However, in the light of exposure of this two-year old report today, a three-volume report prepared by independent consultants and released presumably through the Department of Public Works in December 1988, I do believe that at least the members of Parliament and their staff who work in the conditions outlined in that report in the conduct of their duties as members of Parliament and their staff have a right to know what the Department of Public Works knew two years ago about the deterioration of asbestos. On a six-hour videotape which accompanied that report it is shown flowing through the air ducts and throughout the system into the control rooms and throughout that building.

• (1520 )

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that you are taking strong and early action now, but the fact remains that there was an independent consultant hired who reported two years ago to the Department of Public Works. This report laid out, in broad terms, a plan of action that sounds remarkably similar to the plan of action that you are now requesting another independent consultant to draft a report on and to make recommendations.

I believe it is a matter of privilege in that no members of Parliament and their staff with offices in the West Block—and there are many of them, particularly on the fourth floor—are in fact prevented from carrying out their duties as MPs and staff of MPs without placing their health at what appears to be serious risk. The tone that is placed in that three-volume report is of a nature that any school building in the province of Ontario would have been closed down months ago if they had known that their buildings were in the same apparent state as the West Block.

The least these members of Parliament and their staff require now is the release of that report and the accompanying six-hour videotape so they can form a conclusion for themselves in light of whatever experts they may choose to hire to determine whether or not