

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Nineteenth Legislature

April 24, 1980.

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to the Assembly a group of 43 students from Bishop Roberecki School in the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount. They are situated in the Speaker's gallery and they are accompanied by teachers and chaperones, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Fielden and Mrs. Cicman. I know all members of the Assembly will join with me in welcoming these students from Saskatoon to the Assembly this afternoon. I hope to be able to have the opportunity to come out afterwards to speak with them and to answer any questions they may have. In the event I am not able to make it, I know the students will understand. Of course, I would be pleased to attempt to answer their questions about the Legislative Assembly at any time.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly a very distinguished group of visitors. I would like to introduce to the House the Ambassador to Canada of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Mr. Wang Tung and his wife Madam Liu Feng who are sitting in the Speaker's gallery. I would ask them to stand please so they can be recognized.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, the Ambassador is accompanied by two members from his Embassy, Mr. Liu Tse-pu and Mr. An Wenbin. I hope I did not mispronounce those names too badly — I am a little easier on Ukrainian names.

Ambassador Wang Tung has been in Saskatchewan since Tuesday and will be here until Monday. During this time he will have visited a potash mine, a uranium mine and a farm and he will have held meetings with members of our government, members of the opposition and the Chinese community in Saskatchewan.

I think it is particularly fitting that Ambassador Wang Tung has decided to make his first official visit to our province of Saskatchewan during our 75th anniversary as a province. The Ambassador's visit serves to confirm and strengthen the close and friendly relations between our province and the People's Republic of China. We look forward to the further development of trade and economic co-operation in the years ahead.

As I say, I am sure that all members will join with me, on behalf of the Premier, the government and all members of the House, in welcoming Ambassador Wang Tung and his party to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan this afternoon.

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HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to join with the Attorney General in welcoming the Ambassador and his group to the Saskatchewan legislature and to Saskatchewan. I, and Mr. Swan (the member for Rosetown-Elrose) and our leader, Mr. Grant Devine, look forward to meeting with you this evening and again tomorrow. I do sincerely hope you enjoy your visit in Saskatchewan.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I have a further introduction which I would like to make. I take great pleasure today in introducing to you two distinguished visitors presently seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are Sir John Ford, the High Commissioner of Britain and Mr. Stephen Day, the British Consul General from Edmonton.

Sir John Ford's career in the service of his country has been an illustrious one. He began his career as a diplomat in Budapest in 1947 and since then has served in various capacities, not only in England with treasury and foreign office, but also abroad in such places as San Francisco, New York and Jakarta.

Sir John Ford's visit to Saskatchewan is a welcome one. During his time here he will be visiting with members of the business community, the academic community and representatives of the provincial government and the city of Regina. I am sure all members will join with me in wishing Sir John a very pleasant stay in Saskatchewan.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I would ask him to rise. It appears that I am ahead of Sir John with the introduction of the Speaker's gallery.

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, when Sir John arrives I will ask the House to allow us an opportunity to greet him.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Humboldt): — Mr. Speaker, I too, would like to introduce to the House and ask the members to join me in welcoming a group of students from the fine community of Meacham. They are 33 students from Grades 3 to 8. They are a very good friend of mine and is a gentleman with whom I taught seven years when I taught in the Humboldt Separate School system in the community of Humboldt. The students are accompanied by Mrs. Brochu, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Norbury, Mr. and Mrs. McLaren and Mr. and Mrs. Kozak. They are here as part of a Celebrate Saskatchewan project. They will spend some time in the legislature. I hope to meet with them around 3 p.m. to spend some time with them and answer any questions they may have. I know that members will join with me in extending to them our welcome and our best wishes for a very enjoyable and educational visit and a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. B.M. DYCK (Saskatoon Mayfair): — Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to introduce to you and to this legislature 64 students from St. Paul's School in the Saskatoon Mayfair

constituency. They are Grades 7 and 8 students and are accompanied by Mr. Rieger and three other teachers. I have not met the other teachers before and I think it prudent for me not to try to pronounce their names; they seem very difficult. I hope you will accept my apologies for not introducing you personally. Their bus driver, Mr. Cyr, is here as well. I would like the members of the legislature to join with me in welcoming this group of students from St. Paul's School. I hope their visit to the legislature is informative this afternoon. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you later on today.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

OVERDELIVERY OF GRAIN TO PURCHASE FARM PRODUCTS

MR. R.H. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the financial difficulties facing western farmers, due to small quotas and high interest rates, many farmers are unable to afford chemicals, herbicides and fertilizers this spring. Every crop year each bonafide farmer is eligible for an overdelivery quota to purchase seed in the amount of approximately \$3,000 by delivering any grains marketed by the Canadian Wheat Board. Would the minister immediately make representation to the federal Minister of Agriculture and the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to allow all farmers to use this overdelivery for the purpose of herbicides, chemicals, fertilizers and perhaps even farm fuel?

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I report to the hon. member that I did in fact meet with the federal Minister of Agriculture, yesterday. At that meeting we dealt with the issue of interest rates; we dealt with the issue of the grain embargo and the problems which relate to the grain embargo with respect to price. We dealt with him about the issue of marketing and stabilization. We dealt with him about the issue of a moratorium. We dealt with the two-price system for wheat. We did not deal, Mr. Speaker, with the quota issue. I have, in discussing with farmers, received some reasonable satisfaction with respect to the quotas and the level of grain movement. Albeit, it's not perfect but so far as quotas are concerned I think there's a pretty positive response to existing wheat board quotas and I think that the farmers are much happier than they were a year ago with respect to quotas.

MR. R.H. PICKERING: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It is rather obvious that the minister didn't answer my question. Due to the fact that these are interest-free funds, Mr. Minister, would you further suggest, to ensure that the benefits of such a policy amendment are shared equally among farmers who have already made purchases of these items in the current crop year, that the effective date of such an implementation be January 1, 1980?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm attempting to inform the hon. member of what I believe the farmers of Saskatchewan and the farmers of Canada see as their priorities. I think the farmers of Saskatchewan see as one of their priorities, addressing the issue of interest rates and I'm sure they support the policy put forward by the province to the federal government with respect to interest rates. I think they support the position of the cash issue, the grain price issue. I think they support the two-price system. I think, Mr. Speaker, they're in support of a quota system and they're in support of the cash advance system. Those options which are already in place are to the advantage of the producers and will be available to them. I'm not clear, Mr. Speaker, on the hon.

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member's question. I will look at Hansard to see what it contains and based on what it contains I may well pursue what the hon. member has suggested.

MR. PICKERING: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It would seem that the minister does not want to try to implement such a program. Would the minister not agree there isn't a large enough quota for many farmers to operate throughout the province and this would certainly be of great benefit to many of the farmers within the province and western Canada?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, we're attempting to approach the federal government requesting it to implement programs that we feel are necessary to strengthen the situation on the farms this spring which the farmers feel are necessary, as identified by the NFU (National Farmers' Union) brief presented in Ottawa, Regina, Edmonton and Winnipeg on Tuesday. That's the area we're pursuing and we will continue to pursue on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and on behalf of the farmers of Saskatchewan.

AGRICULTURAL INCENTIVES

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. The farmers of Saskatchewan need money to put a crop in. But, Mr. Speaker, according to StatsCan, over the last two years Alberta has had an increase of net farm income of over 200 per cent. They have 15 per cent of the arable land in Canada. Saskatchewan over the same period had a 12 per cent net farm increase. They have an arable land base of 40 per cent of that of Canada. Last year Alberta had an increase in net farm income of over 57 per cent while Saskatchewan had 2.5 per cent. Mr. Minister, would you not agree that it is time to redirect your priorities to offer some incentive to agriculturally-based, secondary value-added industry, to intensified agricultural operations and to diversification and to get Saskatchewan agriculture back to the position in Canada where it belongs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I think our priorities with respect to agriculture at this point in time are right on. I will use, for the hon. member and for this Assembly, the figures from StatsCan. I use the figures for 1979, the average realized net income per farm at \$14,860 for Saskatchewan. I use Alberta figures for 1979, \$15,015. I admit that the net income in Alberta for 1979 is higher than the net farm income for farmers in Saskatchewan. Why was that, Mr. Speaker? It was because the grain wasn't moving and our initiative to get the grain moving (it's the Saskatchewan initiative that got the hopper cars into the system, no question about that) is going to turn things around. I give to the hon. member for Souris-Cannington the StatsCan figures for 1980.

Their projection is as follows: the average, realized net income per farm in 1980 will be \$18,715 for Saskatchewan (that is up); for Alberta, the average will be \$12,300 (down in Alberta). So I say to the hon. member that our priorities are right on at this point in time, and it's going to show up in the increased net farm income for farmers in Saskatchewan, contrary to Alberta.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, I recognize the document the minister is reading from, and that is the famous fudged figure document, the one where, if his figures were accurate, we would have somewhere around 40,000 — 53,000 farmers in Saskatchewan, as opposed to the 70,000 that you claim we have. The figures aren't

accurate, Mr. Speaker, it seems that the minister is continually placing the blame for this situation on the federal government. I would point out to the minister that (my question, Mr. Speaker, is coming right quick) Alberta faces the same federal pressures, high interest rates, transportation problems. Will you not now redirect your priorities and get Saskatchewan agriculture back on track? Because that document you're reading from is a crock of inaccuracies.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, the document that I'm reading from is the StatsCan document which came out in January when the Conservatives were in government in Ottawa. So, if those are fudged figures, if they are not accurate figures, then they come from a Conservative government, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order!

MR. MacMURCHY: — We're always ready to consider changes in our policy, but when I look at the projections which were put forward in the StatsCan figures, and I look at what they project net farm income to be in 1980 as compared to Alberta, as compared to Manitoba with their Conservative governments, I think we should stay on line with our policies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Yes, I am going to allow the member a supplementary, but I want to take this opportunity to say that we've had enough debate on this issue, and if we can have questions and answers, I would prefer it.

MR. BERNTSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would acknowledge that this is the first time in 75 years that Alberta has exceeded us in net farm income?

Secondly, assuming that your figures are accurate (and they're not) would you not agree that those projections don't hold any water at all, with the declining price of wheat which is the base of our agricultural economy in Saskatchewan?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize for my earlier outburst. In my first response to the hon. member I admitted that the net farm income in Alberta in 1979 was higher than in Saskatchewan. I indicated to the hon. member what the reason for that difference was — because of the problems of export grain movement. I think the hon. member knows that.

Mr. Speaker, I think if the hon. member would, with respect to the problems face din grain prices today, stand with his government on the embargo issue and call for the federal government to guarantee to the farmers pre-embargo levels for the price of grain, the \$18,750 would be a very conservative figure. I think we have the grain moving, we have the markets there. I think all we have to do is look at the price and we know the price is affected by the Russian grain embargo. I think the federal government should be called to task on this to make sure the producers of western Canada, particularly the producers of Saskatchewan who deliver more than 60 per cent of the export grain, don't get hurt.

ALBERTA COURT CASE RE QUOTAS ON NON-BOARD GRAINS

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of

Agriculture. Mr. Minister, you may have noticed in the past couple of weeks, a lower court decision in Alberta ruled in the case of 57 farmers (I believe it was 57) in the Stavely area who had over-delivered grain to an elevator, that the Canadian Wheat Board did not have any authority to impose quotas on non-board grain.

I'm sure the minister is aware of the ramifications of this decision; I'm sure the minister is aware that the judge involved ruled it was a provincial responsibility. Mr. Minister, the Canadian Wheat Board has announced it would appeal the decision and would again go after the 57 farmers in a court of appeal. My question to the minister is this: does your government, and do you personally support the Canadian Wheat Board decision to continue to go after 57 farmers — prosecute 57 farmers — or does the minister feel that the Canadian Wheat Board would be far better to spend its time moving the grain, particularly in order to get Saskatchewan's net farm income back to where the minister says it is going to be in the next year?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to comment on the court proceedings. I'm not sure where the proceedings may be. I noted, as the hon. member indicated in his question, that the Canadian Wheat Board has announced it is going to appeal, and that appeal process may well be under way.

I want to say to the hon. member, with respect to the position of the Government of Saskatchewan on quotas on non-board grains, if the hon. member will check the records of the agriculture ministers' meeting in New Brunswick last summer, Saskatchewan took the position that there should be quotas for non-board grains, that there should be quotas for domestic feed grains in support of the Canadian Wheat Board. I found it regrettable, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan was the only province represented at that meeting which took that position with respect to the Canadian Wheat Board.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Minister, I guess we must talk to two sets of farmers, since you have indicated that grain is moving so wonderfully well. I invite you to come to Thunder Creek and see the full bins.

My supplementary question to you, Mr. Minister, is this: would you not agree at a time when farmers, like every other section of the economy (and farmers are certainly not unique in this area), are caught by extremely high input costs and extremely high interest rates and caught like everybody else is in the present economic condition, that being able to make non-board deliveries without having to put them on their quota book would be a very positive step in alleviating their shortage of cash, at least on a short-term basis? Would the minister not agree that it would be advisable for your government to make representation to allow this to happen, because the minister knows this coming month is one of the highest cash input times that a farmer has to meet at any time of the year?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I have not said that I am happy, nor that farmers are happy with respect to the level of quotas. I said, Mr. Speaker, that there was a good deal of satisfaction in the minds of farmers to see quotas better this year than they were a year ago. My latest check with the grain handlers of the terminals of the west coast suggests that if the Canadian Pacific would do half the job the Canadian National is doing the quotas would be a lot better than they are today.

Mr. Speaker, I do not support the position that non-board grain should be off quota. Is

the hon. member saying to me and to this Assembly that we should have non-board grains wide open at the expense of the movement of board grains? Surely, he's not saying that. If he's saying that, we don't support it. We call for Quotas on all grains.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

URANIUM MILL TAILINGS

MR. P. PREBBLE (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — A question to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation. The problem of uranium mill tailings in northern Saskatchewan is rapidly mounting and poses radioactive problems for the next 100,000 years. My question is, will the minister commit a percentage of the profits coming from current uranium sales to solving the problems associated with uranium mill tailings and in particular for developing techniques to separate radioactive radium and thorium from the rest of these tailings?

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I want to say first of all that I don't agree with some of the earlier comments of the member's statement about the rapidly mounting problem of tailings from uranium mills in northern Saskatchewan.

I want to say first of all that at the newer mines built there certainly have been improvements in dealing with mill tailings, in Saskatchewan and in other parts of the world.

One of the purposes of the inquiry that's now under way on the Key Lake proposed operation is to ensure that the proposals made by Key Lake mining for the disposal of these tailings are adequate in the view of the province of Saskatchewan with respect to protecting the environment and the public that is involved.

While I don't commit the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation to put aside X per cent of earnings, etc., I fully expect the corporation, in the future as it has to date, to expend considerable sums of money making sure its mining operations are safe for the miners involved and the people who live in the environment and for future generations.

MR. PREBBLE: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Given the problem of disposing of high level radioactive waste and the fact that no country in the world has found a solution to this problem and that this type of waste is also building up rapidly, will the minister commit a percentage of profits obtained from current uranium sales towards research, international research, into solving waste disposal problems being caused by uranium after use in a nuclear reactor?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I think again, Mr. Speaker, our primary concern has to be in Saskatchewan with expending our sums on being concerned with the kind of environmental problems that we have in this province. Certainly, if there were international activities, which were being undertaken with respect to research of a broader nature, we would consider participation in them as a producer and with other producers in Saskatchewan. Because I think it's in the interest, not only of countries which are using reactors and having that waste problem but also countries involved in other phases of the nuclear cycle, to see that we can solve as best we can any problems that may result from nuclear generation.

FARM DIVERSIFICATION

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MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. In your article in the Financial Post you state that it is the first time in the province's history that its economy is diversified enough to take the strain of a large crop failure. Mr. Minister, can you explain to the farmers of Saskatchewan how indeed they can stand a large crop failure?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, may I say to the hon. member that if he asks me who I think Saskatchewan needs most between now and July 15, it is rain to provide for us an abundant harvest. Saskatchewan needs that; Canada needs that; the world needs that — no question about that. I don't recall at any time saying to anyone that Saskatchewan's economy is so diversified that it can stand a major crop failure. I think the economy of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is getting more broadly diversified and we can handle problems of weather and problems of rainfall and problems of harvest better than we could in the past. And I think the hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose should congratulate this government on developing that kind of diversification.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, I would just like to read you one paragraph from your article and this is direct quote:

Centralizing agriculture is desirable in the government's view because for the first time in the province's history its economy is diversified enough to take the strain of a large crop failure. MacMurch says:

That's a direct quote and that's the question that I was asking you. While you are standing to answer that one, what do you mean by centralizing agriculture is desirable?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I think if the hon. member looks at who wrote the story, it wasn't the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the hon. member in my earlier answer, I can only respond on the basis of that earlier answer.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. The report of the land bank commission indicates that land bank exceeded the budgetary provisions last year by about \$12 million in the acquisition of farmland, an over 50 per cent increase. Would the minister, who says we can weather a crop failure, not admit that the increase in expenditure last year, unauthorized expenditure, by land bank, is an action by the government to take advantage of the financial straits of the farmers, to grab more land out from underneath them and are using these tough times to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order!

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

STATEMENT MADE BY MEMBER FOR THUNDER CREEK ON CKCK TELEVISION

MR. SPEAKER: — I have reviewed a transcript of a CKCK television 6 p.m. newscast on April 22, 1980 which contains the following remarks made by the member for Thunder Creek, in part:

And frankly, as one member, I am getting sick and tired of the way we are

forced to go along with the illusion of impartiality on the part of the Speaker, when that's all it is — is an illusion. And further, the government has become . . . The use of force, the naked use of power against the opposition is just coming to the point where any example of impartiality coming from the Chair is simply an illusion.

I refer all members to May's Parliamentary Practice, 19th edition, page 161 which states as follows:

Alleged breaches of privilege of contempts committed out of the House or in the precincts of the House but not in its actual view may be brought to the notice of the House (1) by a complaint from a Member, (2) by a communication from the Speaker . . . (3) by a petition, or (4) by a report from a committee.

I have reviewed the above transcript and have examined recent precedents of this House dated November 17, 1977; December 19, 1977; and April 11, 1980, Journals of Saskatchewan. I hereby communicate to this Assembly that in my opinion this matter constitutes a prima facie case of breach of privilege and justifies giving this matter precedence over the orders of the day. It is not my function to decide the question of substance, whether a breach of privilege has in fact been committed, and therefore leave the matter in the hands of the Assembly to deal with as it sees fit.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Speaking to the point if I may, Mr. Speaker. Point of order. I believe that the ruling as to precedent is out of order in that I believe a ruling, page 1858 of Hansard, on the question of privilege, was that it must be brought to the attention of the Assembly immediately and as a matter of fact, one day later. A question of privilege was raised, I believe, by the member for Regina South about statements by the member for Regina North-West. They were raised two days after the statement or one full day intervening and they were ruled not brought at the proper time. The Chair ruled they were not brought at the proper time and so no question of privilege arose or could be dealt with. I suggest the same rule applies, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — I have reviewed the precedent which the member refers to and I thank him for bringing it to the attention of the House at this time. I find this situation different than the precedent the member refers to and I would not have brought this Speaker's statement to the Chamber had I not felt that I was justified in bringing it into the Chamber at this time.

MR. LANE: — A new point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would like to refer to page 12, chapter 1, on privilege of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fifth Edition, section 19 which reads as follows (and I suggest it very carefully to Mr. Speaker's consideration; it's rather salient):

(1) A dispute arising between two Members as to allegations of facts does not fulfil the conditions of privilege . . . (3) Statements made outside the House by a Member may not be used as a base for question of privilege.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that is the overriding rule and rather a clear statement of the rule as to privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I've made my statement. I've contained the appropriate citations and as a matter of fact I have included a citation from Erskine May's

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Parliamentary Practice which substantiates the statement I've made in the House at this time.

MR. LANE: — Speaking to the point of order. Is Mr. Speaker then stating that the ruling on page 12 of Beauchesne under the chapter on privilege, section 19(3) is no longer applicable and that a conflicting rule and former historic rule of privilege is no longer appropriate; the long standing rule is no longer appropriate and has no value? Is that what Mr. Speaker is saying?

MR. SPEAKER: — I stated and I'm quite clear and I don't want any members putting words in my mouth. I've stated what my statement is quite clearly. It will be in the record tomorrow and I further direct members to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 1958, Fourth Edition wherein it states (in referring to the Speaker):

He takes no part in debate and must be careful not to indulge in any argument with members upon the soundness of his rulings.

I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, as assistant House Leader, I wish to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — The point of order takes precedence. The member for Regina South.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, but for my clarification, could you explain to us why this case is different from the one I brought to the attention of Mr. Speaker last week?

MR. SPEAKER: — I've just referred the member to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, page 57 and I read the citation to the member that I can't debate the statements I've brought forward at this time. I have brought the statement forward. I have substantiated it with citations from the rules that this Assembly adheres to. I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. LANE: — Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — What's the point of order?

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm frankly confused in that the rather clear statement in Beauchesne seems to be contradictory to the ruling. Now, there's obviously a difference in the statements — one which Mr. Speaker uses as a precedent and another one from the same authority for a precedent.

Statements made outside the House by a Member may not be used as the base for a question of privilege.

A rather straight-forward statement of parliamentary rule and procedure and perhaps law _two (from what I gather) absolutely contradictory rules. I wonder how Mr. Speaker can choose one over the other, particularly when I suggest . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order, order! I've already told the member I'm not free to

debate my rulings with the House. I've made my ruling. I have the citations there and I stand by it. I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. LANE: — Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — What's the point of order?

MR. LANE: — I'm not attempting to debate, Mr. Speaker, I'm asking Mr. Speaker to take into account page 12, all sources, before Mr. Speaker makes his ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I've already dealt with that twice now. I don't intend to deal with it again. The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — What's the point of order?

MR. BERNTSON: — I'm just thumbing through here for the proper section. But Mr. Speaker has himself brought in on several other occasions in this House where notice is required for privilege to be brought and secondly, as a matter of common courtesy that notice is provided to the member that privilege may be brought to.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the rule is quite clear on privilege. I quote from the rules of the Saskatchewan, legislature:

A member who proposes to raise a question of privilege shall first advise Mr. Speaker of his intention so to do and the subject matter thereof, at least two hours prior to the regular daily opening of the Session. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Speaker shall have the right to waive notice. When a prima facie case of privilege has been established it shall be taken into consideration immediately.

MR. LANE: — Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — What is the point of order?

MR. LANE: — I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I will use that ruling you just made as a basis for the argument that in fact you are too late because where in a prima facie case . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I have already dealt with that. My citation is before the members. I made it. Order. I don't want to have the member put me in a position of having to deal with him repetitiously on a point of order which I have already dealt with.

Order, order. I have been more than fair with the member for Qu'Appelle. I have listened to his points of order at least three times; I have found them wanting. I am not prepared to listen to the member again. I'm making that decision on the basis of what he has done — rising on points of order — not in anticipation of what he might say, because he has demonstrated to me that he continues to raise the same point over and over. Minister of Agriculture . . .

MR. LANE: — A new point of order, Mr. Speaker. The ruling you have just cited makes it quite clear that where a prima facie case of privilege exists it must be dealt with immediately. I go back to your statement that you've reviewed the tapes of an incident

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two days ago. Now immediately, by The Interpretation Act, means in fact immediately; that's the overriding statute on interpretation and it means immediately. I suggest, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — The member is debating my statement and the ruling I have brought forward. I have already said I am not prepared to debate that and the rules do not allow me the opportunity to debate the ruling I have brought in. Order, order. If it is a new point of order, I'll take it.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — A point of order, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan rule book page 3, number 6(3), says the word immediately. The definition should have been yesterday, you're too late.

MR. SPEAKER: — I made my decision. The Minister of Agriculture.

MOTION

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I want to move the following motion, seconded by the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Messer):

That this Assembly: (1) deems the statements by the member for Thunder Creek on CKCK TV, on April 22, 1980 reflecting upon the impartiality of Mr. Speaker, to be a breach of privilege, and (2) request the said member to withdraw the remarks forthwith and tender his apologies to Mr. Speaker and the Assembly in respect of the said statements.

Mr. Speaker, I take it this motion is not debatable. Mr. Speaker, before moving the motion, I want to make . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. It is quite clear that any member can move a motion. He can repeat the motion at the beginning and at the end of his comments. He can repeat it several times during his comments. When the member is finished moving the motion, he will sit down.

MR. LANE: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — What is your point of order?

MR. LANE: — The point of order is that there are several rulings from the Chair which indicate that once the motion is moved the debate by that particular speaker must end. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the practice has been that speakers have said they will refer to a motion or they are going to make a motion at the end, and it has been a very careful practice of debaters in this Assembly to use that phraseology, because once the motion is made, that person's right to speak, except closing debate is in fact ended. That's a long standing rule of this Assembly.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I'll be fair . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — If the member will let me interrupt for a moment. I will cite from Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fifth Edition, Chapter 11:

No motion is regularly before the House until it has been read from the Chair.

I have not read the motion from the Chair. In fact, I do not know who the seconder to the motion is. I know who is about to move the motion but I don't know who the seconder is. I'll ask the Minister of Agriculture to continue.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, in putting forward this motion as I have done, I want to make just a few comments to all hon. members in this Assembly. I want to quote from Phillip Londre (?), the Office of the Speaker, London, 1964, some passages in this paper:

The Speaker of the House of Commons is so essential a piece of machinery that without him the House has no constitutional existence. It is the function of the Speaker to maintain order during debate and to enforce the rules which governs its conduct. The Speaker is the historic guardian of the privileges of the House of Commons and its spokesman in its relationship with the Crown, the House of Lords and other authorities and persons outside of parliament. He executes the orders of the House and inflicts punishment on those found guilty of offending against its privileges.

Mr. Speaker, I want also to quote for all hon. members in this Assembly — we are in a very serious situation here — the issue of privilege. I quote from Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, on privilege:

The privileges of Parliament are rights which are 'absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers'. They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members; by each house for the protection of its members and the vindication of its own authority and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, given those words by experts on our parliamentary system, I find it unfortunate that we once again in this Assembly face the situation which we today face. I find it unfortunate I have to move in this Assembly the following motion seconded by the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Messer):

That this Assembly: (1) deems the statements by the member for Thunder Creek on CKCK TV, on April 22, 1980 reflecting upon the impartiality of Mr. Speaker, to be a breach of privilege, and (2) request the said member to withdraw the remarks forthwith and tender his apologies to Mr. Speaker and the Assembly in respect of the said statements.

Debate continues on the motion.

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, about the only remark I can make at this particular point in time is that I resent having to debate this kind of motion in this legislature. The country in which we live is falling apart and yet member sin this legislature would rather debate and discuss this kind of issue, kangaroo courts, impartiality of Speaker, than to debate and discuss the real and material issues facing a country which is falling apart.

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This has happened before in this legislature when serious material issues are facing the province and facing the country and the legislature lowers itself to debate things which should never come before this Assembly, and never have had to come before this Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have had differences with Mr. Speaker in the past. I have had differences with his rulings; I have had concerns, but there is a line beyond which no member should ever go. You may differ with the rulings of the Speaker; you may concern yourself about how he is handling the House; you may in fact stand on every question and not be recognized on any, but there is a line beyond which we should go. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I have to say about a friend, a personal friend, that I believe on this particular telecast which I witnessed, he went beyond that line. He will, because of those remarks, lower all of us and lower this Chamber and the consideration this Chamber will have to all of the people of the province.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, although I resent having to debate it because of the serious problems which we should be debating in this legislature, I unfortunately will have to support the government on this motion.

MR. LANE: — It is interesting the debate doesn't arise until the House Leader returns from a conference in Lethbridge. I think it indicates that, if it was in fact an immediate question of privilege, it could have been raised yesterday. I suggest the reason it wasn't raised yesterday is because the House Leader was not here, and for no other reason.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. The member is obliquely criticizing the Chair at the time. He's saying the matter didn't arise . . . Order. He said the matter didn't arise until the Attorney General returned. It has nothing to do with the Attorney General. I stated in the statement why the matter arose, because it was brought to this Chamber by the Speaker. That is perfectly within the rules. I cannot allow the member to obliquely continue to criticize the Chair. He can speak to the motion but he cannot criticize the Chair.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I recall a couple of weeks ago when I was suspended from this Assembly, the role of the House Leader was very carefully argued by the House Leader, and he stated and attempted to show what he perceived his obligation to be. His obligation at that time, as she stated to the press and to the public, was that it was his duty to bring matters such as this before the Assembly. He obviously failed to do it. Again, I think the obligation was on the House Leader. He wasn't here. I think that indicates . . .

I'm concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the question of the Chair. I'm concerned because an opposition is well-served by an impartial Chair. The role of the Chair historically is not only to govern the operation of the House, but to protect minorities and to ensure freedom of speech, and to ensure the right to free debate, and to ensure access by all members to the forum. That strikes me as the primary function of the Chair. I certainly ask, Mr. Speaker, where does the role of a partisan member who becomes a Speaker, where does his partisanship end and then where does the speakership begin and, obviously in my view there should be no question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The question before the House is quite clear; that this Assembly deems the statement made by the member for Thunder Creek on CKCK-TV, April 22, 1980 reflecting on the impartiality of Mr. Speaker to be a breach of privilege

and requests the said member to withdraw the remarks and tender his apologies to the House. Now, I must keep the member on the subject which is before us. I can't allow the member to speculate about the partiality of the Chair which is exactly what he's doing now. If I have to call the member to order again, I will seriously consider whether I will allow him to continue to speak if his remarks are in the same vein, of being obliquely critical of the Chair.

MR. LANE: — You misunderstand. I'm trying, Mr. Speaker, to deal with whether the remarks made were in fact legitimate criticism on impartiality or lack thereof, and I think that is the subject matter of the debate, whether those words in fact either state a fact or impugn the Chair. I frankly, get extremely concerned when members say they are concerned about the impartiality of the Chair — and I think we all are — and hope that impartiality reigns supreme because I say it's the great protector of the opposition. I am concerned, and I found that I was restraining myself on the question of impartiality, when on one hand I see the Speaker in his legitimate role as a partisan member welcoming Ed Broadbent to Saskatchewan on Saturday television . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! If the member continues to indulge in this kind of speech which has nothing to do with the motion before us, I will rule the member out of order, and that is my final word on it.

MR. LANE: — I would like to state the problem as the opposition sees it, and I think I have indicated one of the aspects. Without going into debate I wanted to read into the records, a couple of rules dealing with the question — why we feel the matter should be taken into account, and that is from Beauchesne, Fifth Edition, section 19(3):

Statements made outside the House by a Member may not be used as the base of a question of privilege.

Secondly, the long-standing rule of parliament that matters of privilege must be made immediately. This incident took place some two days ago, and of course it must be read into the record that when . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I want to bring the member to order on another point, and I'm not belaboring the point he was following before. I want to refer to Beauchesne, Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, page 95:

A matter which is postponed to suit the convenience of the House or to secure the attendance of a Member implicated, or to give the Speaker an opportunity to consider it fully does not forfeit priority when eventually raised.

And it has appropriate parliamentary citations following those words. Now when the member continues, in fact, to follow the point of argument that he was following previously on points of order, he is not debating the question before us. He is debating whether the Speaker's movements prior to this were valid.

I have made my decision on that; I have given the appropriate citations, so the member cannot continue to debate whether the Speaker's statements and citations which were made at the beginning are in order, because that's debating the Speaker's ruling. It can't be allowed. I just read that citation to the member, which will indicate that the matter was brought to the House at the earliest opportunity — what I consider to be the earliest opportunity. I don't intend to debate that. That's settled.

MR. LANE: — Of course my recollection of that rule didn't deal with the matter of privilege, which is uniquely set out. However, that's not for you and me to argue, Mr. Speaker.

The matter raised in passing by the member for Nipawin has some validity. We see a country possibly breaking up; we see the farm economy falling down; we see a government that takes no action on behalf of the farmers, a government that takes no action on behalf of home-owners, a government that takes no action on behalf of small businessmen. It has spent more time bringing in motions on procedure and motions to supposedly get opposition members than it has debating what we believe to be the fundamental concerns of the people of Saskatchewan — inflation, farming problems, interest rates, problems of home-owners, cash flow, problems of the average taxpayer.

More motions have been brought forward to get the opposition by the Attorney General, and now the Assistant House Leader, than probably at any time in the history of this Assembly. There comes a time when I charge the members opposite with a failure in their elected duty to take some action on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan who are financially strapped. That is the real moral issue here and the one which should be the matter of debate. I question the priorities of the government opposite, that they would spend so much time . . .

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources): — On a point of order, are we not asking whether or not the privileges of this House have been breached, and if we are, I wonder why the member is addressing his remarks to the economic problems of Canada and Saskatchewan.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think it is fair for the member to contrast what we might be doing if we weren't doing this. I find that to be in order in a peripheral way. But I do not and will not allow (and the member for Nipawin did this and I felt it was reasonably within order) . . . That he would rather be doing something else than discussing this. I think that's what the member for Qu'Appelle is doing. I will not allow him to discuss those matters in detail, about whether we should be doing something else. I won't allow him to discuss that in detail because I feel it would be out of order. But I feel he can peripherally make reference to that as an alternative — that we might be doing that now instead of what we are doing.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I feel most strongly that really what we should be doing is debating what I believe to be the most pressing problem in the province of Saskatchewan which is the matter of the provincial economy — the effect of interest rates and inflation on home-owners, small businessmen, farmers, tenants and senior citizens. That's the priority the Conservative Party believes should be the priority of this Assembly.

I believe as well we should be debating the moral failure of the government opposite refusing to come to grips with the basic problems of Saskatchewan citizens. Those should be the priorities of this Assembly. Why have we been unable to debate what I believe to be a higher priority? Because the government opposite has refused in any material way to come up with assistance for the financially oppressed people of Saskatchewan. I believe they are looking for straw men and scapegoats and other issues to hide and cover up their inability (and as I say moral failure) to come to grips with the true financial needs of every-day citizens in this province.

I am frankly shocked that the Assistant House Leader has thus chosen his priorities. I find it shocking that the priority of the House Leader would be such matters and not internal problems with DNS, which the opposition isn't allowed to debate because the government wants to cover up. Priorities have been chosen by the government opposite, and priorities have been chosen by the House Leader and the Premier. Let it be clearly read into the record that this government would rather spend its time getting members of the opposition, than dealing with the true financial problems. They refuse to deal with the financial problems of the farmers and small businessmen and the home-owners. The priorities have been carefully chosen by the government opposite. I suggest to you that the priorities you have chosen will damn you in the eyes of the people of Saskatchewan, and I think rightly so.

Mr. Speaker, I question the motion itself. I've given my arguments that the motion, in my view, is out of order. I've been obviously overruled. I've given my views that the motion of the House Leader was not in order for the reasons of immediacy, the fact that I believe he had lost his right to speak because of the way he had handled it. I have raised those and I have been ruled out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The purpose of this debate is not to allow any members anywhere in this House to review decisions that have already been made. The parliamentary rules are quite clear on that, and to recite them over and over again is a review for the sake of my learned friend. Members are not allowed to do that in this debate. Those decisions have been made, rightly or wrongly.

MR. LANE: — I was prefacing my remarks by stating what had been the ruling, and I made it clear what my opinion was. I know I've been overruled, and I took it for that, Mr. Speaker. I carefully phrased that.

Again, if this government had spent as much time acting for the people of Saskatchewan and their financial problems as it had in attempting to get members of the opposition, the public would have finally been well served. I suggest again that your priorities are not in order, and that this government should in fact be taking concrete action for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, not spending its time getting opposition members. I say your priorities are wrong: firstly, in law; secondly, politically wrong; and I say thirdly, morally wrong.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Well, in speaking to this motion I want to first tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I make no apologies to you or to the members of this Assembly for the frustration I have as I stand to speak today, no apologies whatsoever. I feel exactly the same as I do when I'm sitting out on a stretch of highway with the RCMP car sitting behind me with the red lights going around and around, and he says, I clocked you at 70 or 72 and I had you on radar. I say, no, that can't be and there's no argument whatsoever in that case.

In this session, never have I seen such an attempt by government through whatever offices one might consider them to be through, to try to run roughshod over an opposition. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, never in the history of this province has there been an opposition that has stood up to a government, which has attempted to run roughshod over them, on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, I make no apologies. One member says, yes, shout. Yes, maybe I have to shout because as I said at the outset, I am frustrated. I see no

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validity in this matter of discussion in this Assembly today, none whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

The member for Nipawin (the temporary member for Nipawin I should say) stands in this Assembly to suggest that we should be discussing matters of more importance. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Nipawin, that we have been discussing matters of urgent importance to the people of Saskatchewan. Where was the member for Nipawin? In France, Arizona, or somewhere in between. But he was not in this legislature. No sir! Not the member for Nipawin.

He talks about friends, his friend the member for Thunder Creek. But for the first time, Mr. Speaker, since I have known the member for Nipawin (whom I, as well, consider a friend) have I seen the member for Nipawin stand with a socialist government on a matter, in supposed partial defence of the member for Thunder Creek. Some defence! Side with the NDP, side with the socialists. Then sit there and suffer because you know exactly that's what you've done to a friend. To a friend! I wouldn't want to be your friend if that's what you were going to do to me — side with the socialist government.

Mr. Speaker, I won't belabor the House any longer with comments relative to the member for Nipawin because the member for Nipawin and his sailor (or should I say his rower of little boats pulling ships — the member for Swift Current) are not worthy of discussion in the Assembly on this particular matter or on any other matter.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the motion. What have we? What have we really before us? We have again a situation where this government has had its feathers ruffled and it feels that it has been hurt in some way by a news report. Well, I don't mind telling you that when I'm out in my riding and when I'm speaking to groups, they question me about how things go in the House. Is there any bias from time to time by government in its motions or by the chairmen of committees or by the Speaker of the House for that matter? I say, certainly in my view it seems that way. It seems that way on many occasions.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that if we have freedom of speech in this country we have a right to express what appears to be the case, at least what appears to be the case. As I started out (and I use the analogy of being caught by radar on the highway) I've always been aware of the fact that the officer has always been agreeable to listen to my arguments and to hear me out. He was always courteous. I didn't find that to be the case in the House, not today, or in any other past argument. I have to reflect (just temporarily) on another case which is relevant to this one.

During committee, when the Chairman of the committee called upon the member for Qu'Appelle to withdraw a remark that he in fact had been charged with being biased, moved himself from Chairman of the committee . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I cannot allow the member to continue in this manner in his debate. I am concerned that we will be reopening decisions which are already made. For good or ill those decisions were made. I guess we're all stuck with them whether we like them or not. We cannot go back to talking about decisions which were made in this session. So the matters are closed.

It's a common parliamentary practice that members may refer to the debates in other sessions but they cannot raise matters which already were closed in this session, or are scheduled for discussion elsewhere.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, I recognize that ruling. I accept your ruling today. That's why I just gave you some notice, as I am addressing myself to this motion, that I wanted to use that as an analogy. But that's part and parcel of the frustration I feel. I feel trapped in here, Mr. Speaker. I feel that there seems to be a rule for us on this side of the House and a rule for the members on that side of the House, that you today — well, all right, I won't comment on that. I'll just have to use another hypothetical example where a ruling can be given. Beauchesne can be quoted and that is one opinion. Then another member may raise a point of order and that is one opinion. Then another member may raise a point of order and he may quote another direct statement from Beauchesne on whatever ruling we might have been discussing and it's somehow not relevant. Two very concise statements which of course Hansards of past debates in this House will show. Certainly, Mr. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The procedure in this debate is to debate the issue before us. Now, the matter the member is discussing is so thinly veiled that even I can see through it. I can see what the member is doing. The member is debating whether I'm in order to bring the statement before the House and the citations which I put in it. I think it's quite clear to any clear-minded person that's what the member is doing and I ask the member to cease and desist because what it amounts to is a criticism of the Chair, plain and simple.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, well, O.K. Again, Mr. Speaker, that is your interpretation of my remarks today and I'm going to say that is not what I was attempting to say. That is a matter which I have a right through freedom of speech to hold and I will hold. There are a number of examples that could be used. Obviously it's difficult for us to debate this motion. We can't use the examples to show the government is attempting to use its power through its numbers to railroad the opposition and to have members of this opposition expelled from the legislature, and to what extent I don't know. That's the issue here. Why are we coming up just about on a weekly basis with a motion to have a certain member apologize or be removed from the House? Who knows? It certainly isn't because of any great abuse of the rules that's being perpetrated by members of the opposition. Certainly, we on this side of the House from time to time get out of order. I'm certain that all people do in all things. We don't make any apologies for that.

I recall as well the member for Thunder Creek, and I don't mind rising, Mr. Speaker, in defence of our member for Thunder Creek. He is my seat mate. I have some concern for him. The member for Swift Current used to be my seatmate and look where he is now. I really have to fight hard for this one. I don't want to lose the member for Thunder Creek, not for a day, in this House. He is a good member and certainly, Mr. Speaker, it just doesn't make much sense because I recall having sat right here beside him when he stood up and he apologized to Mr. Speaker on another matter.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The member is obliquely criticizing the Chair. He is raising an issue that is closed because I can only think of one other time in this session when the member for Thunder Creek stood up and 'apologized to the Chair,' and that was a matter that's been dealt with. It's closed; it's done. The member cannot refer to that.

MR. BIRKBECK: — No. I won't refer to the time the member apologized and had to leave the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that ruling. I would just go on further to say that we are wasting our time in this Assembly and possibly my speaking today on this particular motion is a waste of time as well. (You know, I see the Minister of Finance nodding his head. He feels it's a waste of time.) Well, you know it might be a good opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for the backbenchers of this Assembly to come out of the

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woodwork and speak. I see the member for Nipawin has taken that opportunity and some of the other backbenchers in the Assembly should take the opportunity to speak on this motion. Maybe they feel some frustrations as well. Maybe they feel there are some things that need to be changed. Certainly, there are a lot of things which have been thrown into question in this Assembly. Certainly, they may be matters that we are going to have to deal with before this Assembly is out.

But, Mr. Speaker, the issues we should be debating are other kinds of issues, people-oriented issues, the ones the member for Qu'Appelle has outlined. We should be looking at those kinds of things, like interest rates being a problem as they affect our farm industry. Certainly, the whole agricultural industry has problems that we need to address ourselves to. I think there are some grave problems in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan which the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan has now recognized through our opposition and is starting to take a hand in changing. I know for my part, I recognize action taken by the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. Great things could happen in this Assembly but this government, being beaten from time to time I suppose on issues, having good alternatives and policies provided for them by the opposition, having to pick up on them and get their people busy putting them into place, is causing some frustration for the members of the government.

Therefore, in order to counteract that, they bring in these motions and these overriding of rules. Crown corporations wasn't any different — TV cameras, statements by the Chairman and so on and so forth. And, Mr. Speaker, that's where I'm frustrated on all these various rulings, without reflecting on any one in particular so I'm not made to sit down again. But all of these many rulings which have been brought in seem to be so dictatorial to me and I find it, I have to say it again, absolutely frustrating. If there were something I could do to change it, I certainly would.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would just suggest to this government, certainly to the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood . . . I don't see the Premier or the Attorney General here, usually it's the Premier who gets out of the House when the going gets rough. I see the Attorney General is gone today. But surely it would be incumbent upon this government . . . I wouldn't mind throwing this challenge out. I say this to all members of the House, if you withdraw the motion, I think I could almost guarantee our members on this side of the House would be prepared to get on with the business of the House. We might see the balance of the week run quite smoothly and hopefully in the next week we might get some work done, otherwise we're going to be here until the end of June, or who knows, the end of July.

So, Mr. Speaker, with all respect, and I say that sincerely, with all respect to the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, I think it's incumbent upon the government to recognize some of the concerns that we as individual members . . . I'm not questioning they may believe they're right and we may believe we're right. Well you know I don't know what the balance is there. But certainly, for my part, I would feel a lot better about matters and proceedings of this House if the government showed some leadership. I noticed (I think it was the beginning of last week) when the government made an attempt to be the good guys in the legislature and the Attorney General was turning around and hushing everybody up. Really he only had to start with the Government Whip and he calmed him down. Then he calmed everybody else down and got the Minister of Highways out of the House. That relaxed things over there and they tried to look like the good guys. Well, maybe you have an opportunity now really to look like the good guys and in fact be the good guys.

Be responsible; set an example; we'll attempt to keep pace with you. Keep stride for stride with you. Withdraw the motion. It's 3:30 p.m. Let's go on with the business of the House. Mr. Speaker, obviously I cannot support the motion. I cannot support this motion whatsoever. I feel the member for Thunder Creek makes a very valuable contribution to this Assembly — certainly, like myself, in a very boisterous way at times when we're affected by certain things this government is attempting to do that we disagree with wholeheartedly. Certainly we become emotional from time to time but we are human. So I would just recommend that the government withdraw the motion. It certainly is not going to carry any support for them out in the ridings among the electorate of this province. Certainly if you want to help me increase my plurality by another five times over the last election, just keep on going with the motion.

But, Mr. Speaker, you can obviously read from the comments I've made on this motion that I have to oppose the motion. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for my opportunity to air my frustrations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to echo the comments of my colleague for Qu'Appelle when he indicated there were probably better things this Assembly could be doing.

Mr. Speaker, since I've been in this Assembly since 1975, I think I can say without a great deal of fear of contradiction that this is not exactly the first day we have wasted with a silly government game. It is a silly government game, I might add, that they didn't have the nerve to perpetrate until their House Leader returned from Lethbridge. But none the less, we've all been through that silly charade of a couple of years ago, known as the Berntson letter. How many of you recall the number of days we wasted on that one? Was it three, four, five? You called that one over what? Over absolutely nothing.

Then you recall the kangaroo court in which two members from this Assembly were suspended, of which I was one, for comments, and frankly, valid comments made in the corridors of this Assembly. How many days did you waste debating that one in your silly political gamesmanship?

The member for Nipawin indicated that this country is falling apart. I don't know whether he's right or not. I noticed on an open-line show this morning someone by the name of Keith Spicer, whatever he does now, said this country is going to be rocked by the extent of the yes vote in Quebec on May 20. I don't know whether Mr. Spicer knows what he's talking about. If he is, he didn't say they were just going to win it. He said they were going to win it big. We watched the premiers' conference from Lethbridge and the undercurrent there, as you listened to comments coming from both Premier Lougheed and Premier Blakeney, was clearly a danger of western separatism.

So maybe he's right. Maybe the country is falling apart. Interest rates have just gone up like that. They are starting to drop a little bit. But nobody in the North American continent, with the exception of a few gigantic oil companies, are doing well. What have we chosen to do here in Saskatchewan? What are we doing in the Saskatchewan legislature? We are playing games.

Mr. Speaker, I have no particular desire to see repetition of the waste of taxpayers' dollars and time that we went through in the Berntson letter affair to for the government to

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accomplish its childish aims. And I have no particular desire to watch a repeat of the kangaroo court farce, which again was a waste of everybody's time and money. Mr. Speaker, frankly, and I say to you on a man-to-man basis, statements made outside the Assembly on the media, if there was something offensive to you, were made where there was no legislative immunity. If you have something against me for statements I made outside this Assembly, I don't believe you should be using this Assembly as a vehicle to get back at me. I believe you should do it on a personal basis. I had no immunity where I made those statements. They're free and clear. If there was something I said that I can't substantiate, man to man, outside this Assembly. The comments were made outside this Assembly. I really think it is inappropriate to be wasting this Assembly's time as well as taxpayers' dollars while this is resolved.

Mr. Speaker, I was named in this Assembly about two and a half to three weeks ago. I've forgotten the exact date. Mr. Speaker, the comment that I made that created such a great offence was (and I think I'm reasonably close when I say it was) isn't it wonderful how you inject yourself into the question period, Mr. Speaker. That's more or less what I said. Mr. Speaker, I started to make a comment and you asked me to withdraw it. I started to make a comment. The record shows that after four or five words, you cut me off.

MR. SPEAKER: — I find myself in the same position again. I think I stated this before on this debate, that I cannot allow members to go back and plough the fields that we've already ploughed. This particular instance the member for Thunder Creek is mentioning now was dealt with, I think, in the most satisfactory way that could be found, given the circumstances and we can't put ourselves in the position of debating it again. Regardless of this issue, we must draw the curtain down and discuss the motion which is before us, which I am sure the member is quite familiar with. It has to do with certain remarks the member had made and the member can argue that he doesn't agree with the resolution and give all his arguments, but he can't cite matters which are closed, in this previous session, as support.

MR. THATCHER: — With all due respect, that is what this resolution is all about and there has been a culmination of many things which have happened in this Assembly within the last month that perhaps have led to this.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I don't want the member for Thunder Creek to misinterpret what is going on here today. What is going on here today started on Tuesday. That is when it started. It was brought to the attention of the House today and we are debating it. It has nothing to do with anything that happened prior to this time. If it had been any other member than the member for Thunder Creek, any other member in the House who had not suffered some kind of a penalty prior to this time, I would be taking the same position in making my statement. The House may have even taken the same position in bringing forward the motion they brought forward if that member had not received some penalty prior to this time in this session. So I say to the member in all fairness, anything that has happened before, as far as I'm concerned, and as far as the rules are concerned, is a closed issue. It has nothing to do with that; it has to do with what was cited in the Speaker's statement as happening on Tuesday evening and the debate has to be limited to that.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, if I may make a point of order then. Since this interview happened some time ago, at least 48 hours ago, I don't recall the specifics of what was said. I was not talking in a prepared speech, but what I do recall was that the

interview covered a whole spectrum of instances which have come up in this Assembly in the past month. And, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully point out to you, in the form of a point of order, that when the interview covered this area, if we're talking about specifics out of that, then I would appreciate if you would provide me with a transcript of the entire interview. It happened some time ago and if we're going to talk about that interview then I believe the content of the entire interview should be brought into this debate.

MR. SPEAKER: — I will deal with the member's point of order. The concern of the Chair has to be with regard to whether certain things were parliamentary. I care not one bit about the political comments of the member for Thunder Creek, or the member for Regina North-East or Tisdale-Kelsey or Nipawin. I don't care what comments they make on television, radio, newspaper, that are of a political nature. I expect them to make those comments, and I think everybody here does.

But members and this legislature, I believe, expect that the remarks the member would be making in public have to be parliamentary. And questions about impartiality from the Chair being an illusion is the subject that is before us. That was the statement the member made and I know he made it because I listened to the tape and heard it and reconsidered it again and again. So therefore, the only subject we can deal with here is not political questions the member may have raised in his statement to the media, but only those elements of any statement he made which offend the privilege of this House. We are deciding now whether there is in fact a case of privilege here. I don't say the member's point of order is well taken. I think he can only deal with the parliamentary or unparliamentary aspects of the statement he made. He can't deal with the political issues. There were lots of other things the member talked about but that is not the subject before us.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, if I may further speak to that point of order. I made reference in that interview to my suspension about two and one-half to three weeks ago. I don't believe that was a political thing. That was a ruling of yours. I made reference to the suspension of the member for Qu'Appelle. I don't recall exactly how I did it and that's why I think I should have the benefit of a transcript which you apparently have. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair game since you refer to those statements in the interview which you have found offensive, which were direct rulings of yours. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that I should have the right to make reference to them in this debate. I believe they are valid and I believe they are well within the scope of what we are taking about, what is unparliamentary or not.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The member's comment on my ruling is merely debate. The member can't expect me to engage in debate with him. The debate in this Chamber is from there to there; it's not up here. The member can't engage me in debate. I don't intend to get drawn into debate on anything outside of the scope of the resolution before us. I'll have to warn the member I am going to make him stay within the subject matter of what is before us.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I guess what has to come into this is a question of respect. I submit to members in this Assembly that respect cannot be legislated. Respect is a commodity which has to be earned. You cannot legislate respect for something, anymore than you can legislate trust. You can't force somebody to trust someone. I heard one very prominent individual say trust is something which is gained by many, many actions and lost by one. I suppose there is some truth to that. But you cannot legislate commodities like trust or respect. You can't make it a law in order to make it happen, it has to be earned.

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I submit to this Assembly that there have been difficulties between the opposition and the Speaker in the past month. Certainly everybody, whether it be a judge or whether it be a speaker or whatever, thinks he should always rule his way. You always feel that way, Mr. Speaker. I think when we had an incident on a previous occasion (maybe it's one of the reasons we are at this stage today) when I was asked to withdraw and did so in an unconditional fashion . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! This is the last time I am going to warn the member for Thunder Creek, he cannot discuss issues which were previously settled. He may not like the way they were settled and other people may not like the way they were settled. I am not prepared to allow any members in this Chamber to get into discussion of rulings of the Chair or decisions which have been made by the House.

There is another outstanding and very important rule in the British parliamentary tradition which we follow and it is this: that members cannot save up their grievances; they have to deal with them as they arise. That is a very important aspect of our parliamentary system. If a point of privilege arises or if a point of order arises, it must be dealt with at the earliest possible opportunity. We cannot accumulate grievances in the hopes of building a bigger case; we have to deal with each one individually.

MR. THATCHER: — I think, Mr. Speaker, that one has already been dealt with because it has already been posed to you. Why wasn't it dealt with yesterday? Here we are dealing with it today and that one was already dealt with rather extensively by the member for Qu'Appelle, and I find that frankly, Mr. Speaker, a very, very strange statement from you at this time.

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — I have had the good fortune to be a member of this legislature something in the order of two decades, less a couple of months. I believed in 1960 when I was elected that my constituents conferred upon me a genuine honor which is represented by the presence of members in this legislature. I believe the profession, if I may refer to it as such, is an honorable one. I have believed the very roots of this Assembly rested and depended upon the respect of members of this House for the parliamentary institution. Anything sort of that, Mr. Speaker, I believe brings people in public life into disrepute in the eyes of the general public. I think that's what we're seeing happen in Canada today.

I'm a little appalled, I think, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure this viewpoint is shared with many others who saw a group of people represented by those opposite come to this Chamber espousing high ideals, suggesting that decorum in this legislature was to be paramount as presented by the Progressive Conservative Party of the province of Saskatchewan. They would sit bolt upright in their seats; they would not chew gum, attendance was to be of prime importance; they would all attend and attend regularly — those vacant seats were bringing the Assembly into disrepute. Since that time, Mr. Speaker, I have witnessed during the last number of weeks and months in particular, as a result, I'm sure, of the deliberate effort and conscious decision made by members opposite to portray to the public (if they could) something of the order of a very stern and well-disciplined opposition which is tearing away at the heart of an oppressive government. It's a conscious and deliberate political effort, Mr. Speaker, and disrespect for the Chair has been a fundamental part of that judgement which has been made by members opposite. I think, Mr. Speaker, we've seen this legislature sink to what I believe to be a new low, which saddens me a great deal . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — What's the point of order?

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — I resent very much the member for Moose Jaw making a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I think that's not a point of order. I think it's a part of the debate, and the member will have an opportunity to get into the debate. If it's a point of order then the member should state the rule which is abridged.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I understand that no member can suggest across this floor ulterior motives to any action of anybody without being able to prove them. That's a prior ruling by you, and that is what that member is doing. I believe those are unparliamentary remarks by your previous rulings in this House. I would ask you to have him withdraw them or prove them.

MR. SPEAKER: — I wasn't aware that the comments of the member for Moose Jaw were of the nature which would require them to be classified as unparliamentary, and that is what the member is saying; I'm not aware that's what the member for Moose Jaw was saying. I'm sure if the member for Moose Jaw feels that his remarks were unparliamentary (I'm saying this because I didn't see anything unparliamentary in them) and if there was anything unparliamentary in them, I'm sure the member for Moose Jaw would retract them.

MR. SNYDER: — Mr. Speaker, if anything I have said could be construed by fertile imaginations opposite to be unparliamentary then I would hasten to withdraw anything which might be construed in their wildest imagination to be unparliamentary.

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — I wonder if Mr. Speaker would just review the records to determine whether in fact the remarks of the member for Moose Jaw were unparliamentary and deal with it accordingly?

MR. SPEAKER: — I would be glad to do that and bring back my decision at a later time.

MR. SNYDER: — I just want to conclude my very brief remarks by indicating, Mr. Speaker, that I do find the attitudes which have been exhibited here and the attitudes particularly of a couple members opposite badly out of keeping with parliamentary traditions, and certainly those we would like to see brought to a halt to get back to the things members opposite have been suggesting are paramount; that is to say the business of this House. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I trust the motion can be put and we can dispose of this matter very shortly.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I share with the member for Moose Jaw South the concern on today's debate on this motion.

I want to read to the hon. member for Thunder Creek what in fact he said to the press and what is available to the people of Saskatchewan through the press.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — What's your point of order?

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I asked a short while ago for the comments you referred to in this House and the transcript. I was not allowed it. How come the member over there all of a

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sudden has a copy of it and is reading it?

MR. SPEAKER: — I have no reason to understand why that member has a copy of it. Order, order! The member for Rosthern has an interesting question, but it is not a point of order. Clearly it's not a point of order.

MR. MacMURCHY: — As one member, I am getting sick and tired of the way we are forced to go along with the illusion of the impartiality of the part of the Speaker, when that's all it is, an illusion. I have been thrown out of the Assembly for saying far less than what I said today. Mr. Lane was thrown out for five days. I think that was worse, the silliest thing that has ever happened, for calling a backbencher, a member of the NDP Party, biased.

Heavens, I'm biased. I'm a Conservative, obviously I'm biased.

He called a member of the NDP biased when he made himself the Speaker and threw him out. This is what is going on in this session.

The government has become all the users of force; the naked use of power against the opposition is just coming to the point where an example of impartiality coming from the Chair is simply an illusion. They can turf me out for as many days as they want. I have had enough of this.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to February 26, 1701. The House of Commons resolved:

That to print or publish any libels reflecting upon any member of the House or relating to his service therein was a high violation of rights and privileges of this House.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition members talk about debating the issues of the day, the economy, the farm citation.

I agree, but I think there is a more important issue to consider today. That is the issue of this institution and the respect that all hon. members should have for this institution. I want to see this institution in place, and respect for this institution, 20 years from now, 100 years from now, when the issues facing Canada will be different issues. That's what we are talking about today, the issue of respect for this institution of parliament. I listen and I look at the statements in the press. I think it is time all hon. members in the House have some respect for the institution.

I read what the hon. member said. There is no question he doesn't have the respect for this institution that I think hon. members should have. I call on him now, as this motion puts forward, to apologize, withdraw his remarks, so we can in fact, as all hon. members should, get on with the business of the province of Saskatchewan.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 36

Blakeney
Pepper

Shillington
MacMurchy

Koskie
Lusney

Allan	Mostoway	Prebble
Bowerman	Banda	Long
Smishek	Kaeding	Johnson
Romanow	Hammersmith	Thompson
Messer	Kowalchuk	Poniatowski
Snyder	Dyck	Lingenfelter
Robbins	Feschuk	White
Baker	Vickar	Solomon
Skoberg	Cowley	Collver
McArthur	Tchorzewski	Ham

NAYS — 13

Berntson	Taylor	Garner
Thatcher	Rousseau	Katzman
Birkbeck	Swan	Duncan
Larter	Pickering	Andrew
Lane		

MR. SPEAKER: — I declare the motion carried. The motion explicitly deemed that there is a breach of privilege and asked that the member for Thunder Creek withdraw the remarks referred to and tender his apologies to the Chamber. I would now call on the member for Thunder Creek.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, at a time of very chaotic farm conditions, I believe Thunder Creek needs to be represented in this Assembly. Therefore, in the interest of getting business back on track in this Assembly, I will acknowledge that a breach did take place, which the Assembly deems to be a breach. I will therefore apologize to the Assembly for what the Assembly acknowledges to be a breach.

Mr. Speaker, with leave I have a motion which I would place before the Assembly right now; that this Assembly no longer has confidence in Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. The member for Thunder Creek has tendered an apology. I find it difficult to determine whether that apology is generous, sufficient and adequate. Therefore, I think I will leave the matter in the hands of the Assembly. If they feel the apology is in accordance with the motion we have just passed, I suggest we will carry on with other business. If the Assembly does not feel that is adequate, whatever is necessary will be done.

We are still before orders of the day.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Mr. Speaker, with leave.

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the member have leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: — No.

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MR. SPEAKER: — Leave is not granted. Does the member have a new notice of motion to introduce?

MOTION

NON-CONFIDENCE IN THE SPEAKER

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — With leave of the Assembly, I propose to put forward a motion to be debated now, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor):

That this Assembly no longer has confidence in Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the Assembly give leave?

Leave not granted.

We are still on orders of the day. I want to take this opportunity to make an introduction.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: — I beg the apology of our guest who is with us today because of the fact that we had to take care of some internal matters and were not able to get around to him earlier.

I take great pleasure today in introducing to you two distinguished visitors presently seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are: Sir John Ford, the High Commissioner of Britain and Mr. Stephen Day, British Consul General from Edmonton.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Sir John Ford's career in the service of his country has been an illustrious one. He began his career as a diplomat in Budapest in 1947 and since then has served in various capacities not only in England with treasury and foreign office but also abroad in such places as San Francisco, New York and Jakarta.

Sir John Ford's visit to Saskatchewan is a welcome one. During his time here he will be visiting members of the business community, the academic community and representatives of the provincial government and the city of Regina. I am sure all members will join me in wishing Sir John a very pleasant stay in Saskatchewan.

Accompanying Sir John on his visit to Saskatchewan is Mr. Stephen Day, the British Consul General from Edmonton. Mr. Day has also had an interesting and varied diplomatic career with postings to such places as Beirut, Singapore and New York.

It is interesting to note that much of Mr. Day's career has been devoted to energy related matters, an area of concern in which we in Saskatchewan also have a particular and dedicated interest. I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming Mr. Day and wishing him an informative and pleasant visit in our province.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, may I join with you in welcoming Sir

John Ford and his colleague, Consul General Day. I know that as far as Sir John is concerned, this is not his first visit to Saskatchewan. We had occasion to have the pleasure of a visit from him some time ago. He has had, as you indicated, a distinguished career in the diplomatic service. I note the recital of his interests did not include the fact that he is a poet of some note and he publishes books of poetry. On one occasion, he was good enough to let me have a copy. I know we in this province have many close links with the United Kingdom and for that reason then and for the reason that we have a warm affection for him personally, we welcome Sir John Ford to our province and express the hope he will find his visit with us a useful one.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with you and the Premier in welcoming Sir John Ford and Mr. Stephen Day to this Assembly. I certainly hope you enjoy your visit to Saskatchewan. You did pick a time when we're having lovely weather in our province and I just hope you enjoy your stay here. Enjoy the weather and the hospitality and come back to see us at any time.

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
GOVERNMENT SERVICES
VOTE 13**

Item 1 (continued)

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — As we're about to proceed with DGS (Department of Government Services) estimates again, I wonder if I could have the page take across to the hon. member for Kindersley and the hon. member for Rosthern, five items I believe that were requested yesterday and provided today.

First of all a list of proposals. Lease space in Kindersley, office space specifications for standards, and third was office standards, sizes for offices and work stations, furniture standards, items for office and work stations and list of payees for leased space. I believe those were the questions that were asked by the hon. member which we promised to provide yesterday.

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Minister, I have a few questions here pertaining to the court houses that are being closed throughout Saskatchewan, particularly Moosomin, Arcola, and Kerrobert. Will these fall under the jurisdiction of your department, and if they will, what do you intend to do with these buildings, and with this space?

MR. SNYDER: — I think at this time it would be premature for me to be speculating about future use for so-called abandoned court houses when, as far as I am aware, the decision hasn't been made. It will be made by the Attorney General if such a decision is made. I'm not aware that such a decision has been arrived at.

MR. TAYLOR: — I understand from the questioning that has taken place in the House that they are going to be closed. You know these buildings are historical buildings. I notice the Minister of Culture and Youth has put out a paper on restoring heritage sites and so on. It would be a shame to see these well-constructed historical buildings not being utilized in some way, shape or form. I was just wondering if the government could use these.

You talk about decentralization, Mr. Minister, moving out various things such as crop insurance offices, various government departments, public health. There is need for

physiotherapists. There are a whole range of services which I know, and you know as well, would be welcomed in rural Saskatchewan. In this day and age we are facing high building replacement costs. Interest rates, labor, materials, and all of these things put the cost of constructing new buildings at rather a high level. I just wondered if these fine historical buildings could not be utilized by the government and do two things: one, save the taxpayers of Saskatchewan money because they wouldn't have to construct new facilities (they're out in the rural areas where if you're really decentralizing services you'd be); secondly, I suppose, an interest of mine would be to preserve this part of our heritage.

MR. SNYDER: — I think I agree with the hon. member. But it's highly speculative at this stage as to buildings which may or may not become vacant and have served their purpose for the last time as far as governmental activities are concerned. I think the government showed its good faith and its interest in the sort of thing which you draw attention to when the land titles office on Victoria Avenue was converted to the purposes of being assigned to SaskSport. A very beautiful old building was preserved in that way.

Obviously there will be an interest by the Department of Government Services in the event that these buildings become surplus. Then obviously the Department of Government Services will be consulting with culture and youth to determine what future use can be made of them and to make sure that buildings of historical significance will be retained.

MR. TAYLOR: — One other question. I've been led to believe that the government has leased one complete floor in the Toronto Dominion Bank Building in Regina and that floor has not been occupied for the past year. Is that correct?

MR. SNYDER: — We of course lease (in addition to the floor which the hon. member is speaking of where a major part of the Department of Labour is located) at 1150 Rose Street. The floor I believe the member is speaking of is to be occupied by the Department of Mineral Resources and a portion by the Department of Labour when renovations are completed. So it's not vacant space; it's being prepared for at least two departments of government at this time.

MR. TAYLOR: — How long have the renovations been taking place? Has it taken a year to renovate what is a relatively new building to move these departments in?

MR. SNYDER: — Obviously there will be different requirements for the departments which will be the tenants on that floor. I believe I quoted to the member for Rosthern yesterday some of the vacant space which was undergoing some structural changes — the moving of partitions and things like that to make it adaptable for the use of that department. I believe the suggestion was that it would be something in the order of a six-month renovation during which the preparation for the department would take place.

Yes, 300 square metres of leased space under renovation for labor, mineral resources and executive development. The duration estimated for that renovation to take place is in the order of six months.

MR. TAYLOR: — Again I repeat, it would seem to me with what I see in modern buildings and the way the partitions are made that six months is a rather long period of time to renovate. That is just my observation.

How long have you had this lease? How long has this floor been leased by government services?

MR. SNYDER: — This portion of the building, I am told, was made necessary because of the additional requirements of the TD Bank itself. The internal shuffle was caused by the Toronto Dominion Bank's need for additional office space for their own requirement. Accordingly, I am told that they are sharing in a major way in the costs of revamping. The move was originally caused by the Toronto Dominion Bank which is picking up the cost of relocation. I suppose in that way, the inconvenience does necessarily rest in terms of . . . The cost of the move will not be charged to the public purse.

MR. TAYLOR: — You didn't answer my question though, Mr. Minister. I just wondered how long you have had this empty floor leased? Has it been six months? Has it been one year? Has it been two years?

MR. SNYDER: — Our original lease arrangement with the Toronto Dominion Bank was in 1975. This lease space which you are speaking about is lease space which we have recently acquired and is being prepared and will be occupied very shortly. It has not been ours and we are not responsible for paying rent to TD Bank for this property until . . . I am not sure that I am communicating as clearly as I might. It has been an exchange of space between the Toronto Dominion Bank and government services for the provision of space. This space has been made available to us; we will be occupying it very shortly. The original lease was 1975. The internal shuffle that has taken place has been over the last six months.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. Mr. Taylor, I wonder if the hon. member for Shaunavon could have leave to introduce a group of students?

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. D. LINGENFELTER (Shaunavon): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity. I would like to introduce to the members of the Assembly a group of 28 students from the Mossbank High School who are here today to watch proceedings in the Assembly. I would like to introduce them on behalf of their MLA, Mr. Engel for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I am sure all members will join with me in wishing them an enjoyable stay here in the Queen City and a safe return after. I look forward to meeting with them for pictures and drinks after their sit here in the session.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE GOVERNMENT SERVICES VOTE 13

Item 1 (continued)

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, we don't want to get lost in the shuffle here. I think I can just find out my answer if you will give me a direct answer to this. You go back to 1975. Have you been leasing space in the TD Bank since 1975 that has not been occupied?

MR. SNYDER: — The answer is no. It has been fully occupied. Only recently we turned back some square footage to the TD Bank. We are in the process of acquiring some additional space to serve our purposes. But there has been no vacant space up until the

very recent past that we have been leasing that has been sitting vacant, if that's the question.

MR. TAYLOR: — Right.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Minister, going through the auditor's report, there is reference made to your department and the construction of a building which I believe is in Prince Albert. Who are you building the building for? Page 7 of the auditor's report.

MR. SNYDER: — I suppose this building you are speaking about, the McIntosh Mall, is something of a high-bred creature. It should be known we are building it and are going to operate it ourselves. The funding, I think the hon. member knows from public accounts this morning, was provided for by Saskatchewan Government Insurance. I think the member is drawing attention to the auditor's report in which he drew attention to a technical error related to the building being constructed by the Department of Government Services without the appropriation of the necessary funds for the expenditure. I think you have been through that in some detail in another forum.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I didn't want to get into that. I have brought it in for another reason. You are building the building. Your experts are building it for SGI, not SGIO any more, and then you will manage it am I correct? Are they actually just the money loaner? Is that really what you are saying?

MR. SNYDER: — That's right. The Department of Government Services will be operating, leasing and looking after the arrangements with respect to the McIntosh Mall on completion.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — O.K. My question is this then. Normally, the funds for you to build anything come from the Government of Saskatchewan, either one of two accounts, the working capital or the one that you build buildings out of. Am I correct there?

MR. SNYDER: — I think the hon. member has to distinguish buildings which are built in the normal course of events by the Department of Government Services. The money comes from the consolidated fund and is, under normal circumstances, found in our capital budget annually.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Is this the first time in which you have been involved in building a building where the funds do not come from that source?

MR. SNYDER: — If the member is saying involved in a building, I'm not quite sure what he says. If he is talking in terms of, for example, the building of the office tower in the Weyburn development, that once again is an involvement we have. But we are not involved in the manner which you are drawing attention to in relation to the McIntosh Hall building in Prince Albert.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — O.K., being very specific, this is the first time that a building will be built by your department. The money will come from a source other than the normal vote it comes from when you build them through the consolidated fund. You will then become the manager of the building and will allow government departments into it.

MR. SNYDER: — Yes, I think I can say to the member that this kind of arrangement is a new arrangement that has not been entered into before. But there are a number of other hybrid arrangements around also. For example, we are entering into an agreement with

a number of municipalities for the purpose of combining our needs with theirs and putting together what we believe will be an economic arrangement for a number of municipalities. I'm especially thinking of Canora, where the needs of that community will be blended together with the needs of the Government of Saskatchewan. We will then be providing, in advance of the event, capital moneys to the municipality in order that they may build. We will, in effect, be prepaying a lease agreement with them for a period of some 20 years. Accordingly we will have a building that we are involved in in that way, which is something different from what I think you are referring to, in terms of the standard arrangement where we have voted in our annual budget capital for our works program.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I think (and if I am incorrect, I stand to be corrected), The Public Works Act, as referred to here, would even be shaky and those arrangements I understand. But what is more frightening about this arrangement is that you control the building, somebody else pays for the building and we are now seeing government services not really showing the actual facts. If SGI built the building and then leased it to you that would be normal. You have experts on your staff and therefore they have decided to use them. I understand that. But you are getting yourself into a whole new field. Maybe tomorrow we are going to have somebody come to government services and say, I want to build a house. I'll pay for it; will your people look after it? Maybe you could help it get built. And I use my own personal case.

I built a home; I was my own general contractor. I hired all the services. I saved almost 40 per cent on the cost of my home compared to what I got for contract prices. I know what my costs were. I don't know and the Legislative Assembly will never know, if you charged for your man-hours and everything else against that building? Nobody will ever know. So it is a hidden subsidy into the building; into my home it was my time. I put a value on my time. What I saved by what the general contractor offered to build for me by being my own general contractor, I considered what my time was worth when I got paid. And I got paid well.

But on behalf of the citizens of Saskatchewan, do we know when you built the building SGI is paying for, and you are going to manage, that we have the true cost of the building? Tommy Douglas, the buildings over here — you were the general; you did a job; you came in on your budget.

Mr. Foley and other members had to be there constantly checking, spending days and days of their time, and months and months making sure it went right. That charge is not being passed back. Therefore, we see a false economy. This is the concern I have here. The facts are not coming out truthfully. If I am wrong, if you are charging a management fee, tell me.

MR. SNYDER: — It think the anxiety the hon. member has is something I fail to appreciate totally because the Department of Government Services is the Department of government for the very particular purpose of providing that kind of expertise. Mr. Foley, coming out of the construction industry, has that kind of expertise. He and his staff can provide that sort of expertise to agencies and departments which can make use of it. I think it is a legitimate use of the department in the provision of that service.

You are saying, for example, if you take on the job of constructing your own home you are in a position where you are able to effect some savings. Obviously it is possible for us through government services to effect those savings for other agencies and departments. Rather than costing them, I think in most instances it can be said we

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saved them large amounts of money.

This can be demonstrated, I think, in a very concrete way by the manner in which the Government of Saskatchewan, through this department, is able to provide the services and expertise that I guess probably only DGS has. Accordingly, it fulfils that service. I don't think it could be regarded in any way as a subsidy. I think it is an arrangement made with the purpose of providing expertise which in effect will be a saving to the taxpayers of the province.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Minister, you brought up something a few minutes ago referring to public accounts. It struck a nerve with me; I would just like to pursue it a little bit. I am not in public accounts, so I don't know what went on in there. However, going by the reports of the provincial auditor:

I am concerned that a public work is being constructed by the government department without the Legislative Assembly having had the opportunity to appropriate necessary funds for the expenditures. (It makes reference to a Crown corporation.) . . . the department was to construct a building, and upon completion of the building, was to sell it to the Crown corporation in return for a 30-year lease at which time title reverses to the department.

The department, I presume, is yours.

. . . approximately \$2.8 million have been expended and recorded in the corporation's account as an investment.

Could you elaborate a little bit on that because I would like to know a little more about what Crown corporation we are talking about? What is involved in this particular transaction?

MR. SNYDER: — I think, perhaps, the most opportune way of handling the question will be to give you something in the way of more specific background for it. Strangely enough, we anticipated that might be a question which would be directed to us today.

In September, 1974, Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation identified a need for office space in Prince Albert. At that time, through consultation with the Department of Government Services, a 60,000 square foot commitment for government office space was made to the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation. At the same time, the Department of Government Services offered to assist with the management and development of the project.

In June 1975, Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation proceeded with retention of a consultant and land assembly during the summer of that same year. In October of 1976, pursuant to the original offer of 1974, Saskatchewan Forest Products approached the Department of Government Services seeking consultation with regard to the design and the final disbursement of the properties under question. Following those meetings it was agreed by the Department of Government Services and the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation that the design was a costly design and the cost estimate was likely to exceed the intent when Saskatchewan Forest Products initially embarked on the venture.

Accordingly, it was further agreed the Government Finance Office should be approached with regard to alternative investment possibilities. That decision was

subsequently taken by cabinet and it was agreed that the Government Finance Office would review and report back on their investment possibilities.

In September of 1977 the final revised design was agreed and approved by the departments involved and by treasury board. Subsequent to that in April of 1978, negotiations with Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office began with the intent of having Saskatchewan Government Insurance invest surplus insurance funds in the construction of an office building to be owned by the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office. As a result of the efforts by the agencies involved in finalizing the agreement referred to, a lease purchase agreement was finalized. As such the title to the land previously assembled by the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation was transferred to the Department of Government Services.

This I am advised was done as a matter of simplification in the contract administration between the Department of Government Services and the contractor, Builders Contract Management. Further to the finalization of the lease purchase agreement, the second administrative problem that resulted with the agreement was that the eventual ownership of property was to be with government services. Accordingly, the final agreement gives every appearance of being a lease purchase agreement which affects nothing more than a 30-year mortgage for the purpose of constructing a public work.

As stated earlier, this was not the intent of government in designing and designating Saskatchewan Government Insurance investment in the office building. The intent was to have Saskatchewan Government Insurance own a capital asset in the province of Saskatchewan at a secure rate of return for the purpose of funding its insurance operations. As the members opposite know, Saskatchewan Government Insurance is involved in investments throughout Canada for the purpose of funding its insurance operations. The intent clearly was to do nothing more than to channel that investment into the province of Saskatchewan. I believe members opposite would agree with me in saying that clearly all that really occurred here was an administrative oversight which resulted in the appearance before the House of an agreement that does not meet the original intent as directed by cabinet in the fall of 1977.

I think this gives the member something of a background involved. I think it has to be said the intent was that SGI would own the building during construction. The problem occurred because the contract between the Department of Government Services and SGI was perhaps drafted improperly and the property wasn't turned over, wasn't intended to be turned over to SGI until the land upon which the building was built and the property itself could be turned over together. And so that was the matter that the provincial auditor drew attention to in his annual report.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, just a couple of comments. First of all you say a slight oversight. The dollars referred to in the auditor's report, I don't accept as being slight. You read that explanation there fairly quickly. I wonder if you would be kind enough to send me a copy of that. I'd like to study it a little bit. I know it will be in Hansard tomorrow, but I'd like to have a look at it today.

And the last comment I'd like to make on that is you've had six years or five to the '79 year to do things properly and to suggest that it's a slight oversight is a bit difficult to accept. Will you be sending me a copy of what you read out there?

MR. SNYDER: — Yes, I think it's my own copy. It's not probably in the form in which we would wish to send it to you. Do you have another copy? Yes, we can send you the copy

if you wish.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I don't want to start the same line of questioning over again but I recall the other day asking about government services' (just brief me on it because I can't remember the answer and I haven't had time to look it up) role, if you like, in assembly office space for Crown corporations. Do you not touch it? Or do you do some of it? Or do you do it all? I can't recall. I remember I asked the question. I don't remember the answer.

MR. SNYDER: — I think in general terms the information I gave the hon. member yesterday was to the effect that in assembling space for their own use, the larger Crown corporations, particularly those that can be considered to be of a commercial nature, the Sask Tels, the SGIs, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the majority of those that fall under that general category, will look after their own space needs. It'll be only on select occasions when we will offer to one of the Crown corporations perhaps some excess space when we need a filler in a building.

When we put an agency into a building, we'll have X number of square metres available. We will on occasion offer that in the event it's going to be spare or excess space for us for a period of time. But under normal circumstances the larger Crowns take care of their own needs. On occasion the smaller ones are accommodated by DGS but in general terms in a very general way it can be said the Crowns look after their own space needs.

We try to collaborate with the Crowns, essentially because we feel our space co-ordination committee can have a kind of general overview. Mr. Foley is the secretary to that space-needs committee. Accordingly, we find ourselves in a position, if we have this kind of an overview, that the various Crowns will not be competing with each other in order to provide for their own space needs. If DGS has additional space available to it, then it can make its surplus space known to those Crowns looking for office space.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Maybe I'll ask some specific questions on the line of questioning, particularly, Sask Housing. Does the Department of Government Services look after the space requirements for Sask Housing? I'll wait for that answer I guess.

MR. SNYDER: — I think we do make special concessions for Sask Housing there. It is one of those Crowns that fall into the general category where we do provide space for it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Have they approached you recently for space requirement planning? You mention Mr. Foley being that secretary of that committee. Has there been a request by them for a space requirement planning on that committee recently?

MR. SNYDER: — Yes, I'm told the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation is suffering from something of a crowding problem. Their inventory of space does not meet their current requirements and so there is some internal work being carried on to attempt to more properly provide for the needs of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, this question seems to have taken a long time to get a reply from your officials. I'm going to go back to a question I asked you the other night, and perhaps get a little more specific again. I asked if you were planning any space requirements in the new office building in the city called Chestermere. I will identify the building; it is on the corner of McIntyre and Victoria Avenue. My source of information tells me that definitely Sask Housing was going to be occupying some of the space in

that building. Now, can you check with your officials and confirm or deny this report?

MR. SNYDER: — At the present time there is no lease and there is no agreement and there is nothing in the way of a firm arrangement with the owners of that building at this point in time. This is not to say that perhaps the needs of that, or some other agency or department, may not be accommodated there sometime, but currently, my officials tell me, there is no arrangement and no lease has been put in place.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I noticed, Mr. Minister, that you were careful in saying there was nothing firm. Then I would assume from your reply that there are negotiations taking place. My next question will be then, who are you, (the person, the individual) negotiating with on that particular — or that Sask Housing or whoever it might be who is negotiating on that particular building?

MR. SNYDER: — The hon. member apparently doesn't have the correct information because I'm told there are no negotiations taking place with respect to Chestermere on Victoria and McIntyre Street. There are no negotiations taking place with them at this time, or in the past.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, the reason I came back with that question was simply because of the answer you gave. You said nothing firm had been put into place. I questioned the way you replied to the question. You are definitely saying no approaches have been made; no negotiations have taken place; no discussions have taken place with people from this company and either Sask Housing or government services or any other department of the government?

MR. SNYDER: — I am told that there have been no overtures made by DGS (Department of Government Services), my people tell me there may be a remote possibility that the housing corporation itself may have made some overtures but we think that is unlikely. But certainly the Department of Government Services has no knowledge of any overtures being made to the owner or managers of that operation. No, we have no knowledge of that.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Nor from them?

MR. SNYDER: — No, nor from them to us.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You indicated earlier that Sask Housing had been discussing with your committee (you called it a space requirement committee or something like that; I can't remember what it was, which had been negotiating for space) space requirements because of the overcrowding of the corporation. What plans do you have in place for Sask Housing? What plans has that committee come up with, any decisions or any preliminaries or anything which may be coming up in the next month or so, or this year?

MR. SNYDER: — There are some negotiations taking place with them to provide additional office space for them in the old SGI head office building which has space available in it. It is a very real possibility that Sask Housing will find itself in a new home in the old SGI headquarters building.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Just a very quick question on that. I recall reading some time ago that you were going to sell that building. Have those plans been changed?

MR. SNYDER: — SGI still owns the building. The decision has not yet been made whether the Department of Government Services will acquire that building from SGI. When any of the Crowns have surplus space, their first obligation is to offer it to the Department of Government Services before they offer it for sale. The decision has not been made with respect to the intention of the Department of Government Services to purchase the building. Frankly, it looks like an excellent building. It has some features about it which are perhaps somewhat difficult to cope with, but in general terms, it is a good building which we might consider.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The other day I also pursued a line of questioning which I would just like to come back to and perhaps get a few more details on. You indicated your space inventory versus your civil service numbers in the province. Does that same situation, which you advised the Assembly of the other day, whereby it was down on the space inventory which you had — was less than it was a year ago — apply to say, the city of Regina and the city of Saskatoon? Are your requirements and inventories down as well as your civil service numbers?

MR. SNYDER: — I wonder if I could correct what may have been misinformation which I may have given to the hon. member. The negotiations with the Saskatchewan Government Insurance people are to provide for a lease arrangement with them with respect to the old SGI headquarters building rather than the purchase of the building. Some discussion has been going on with SGI with respect to that.

I will give you a rundown on the Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and North Battleford districts. There has been a decrease in Regina of some 5,308 square metres. In Saskatoon there has been a decrease of 489 square metres (that is a combination of leased and owned). In Prince Albert there has been an increase of 101 square metres. In North Battleford there has been a major increase of some 3,767 square metres which, as I indicated to you yesterday, came about as a result of the purchase of that large co-op store, adjacent to the provincial office building, during the last fiscal year. So there was a fairly major increase of 3,767 square metres in North Battleford, an increase of 101 in Prince Albert; a decrease of 489 in Saskatoon; and a decrease of 5,308 square metres, total of leased and downed space. I can break it down if you wish, but that will give you a general idea of the breakdown. So essentially that gives you those districts.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, one more question. I notice the clock up there so (I'm not going to pursue it too long. I would like you to provide to me (I'm primarily interested in the city of Regina at this point in time) a list of those buildings you have unloaded. I see, as do the people in the city of Regina, new structures like the SGI building, the T.C. Douglas Building and a few others you built in the last year that came on stream at the time. We see nothing but an increase in your inventory of office and yet you tell us about a decrease. You must have unloaded an awful lot of property somewhere along the line.

I would like to know what property you did unload, how it was done, who bought it. Was it sold to other government Crown corporations, or the private sector? How did that come about? How did you manage to unload so much property when I see so much new property coming on stream?

MR. SNYDER: — You may want me to send this over to you. Essentially the heading of this piece of material indicates the building space dropped in the Regina district 1979-80. That's essentially what you are looking for — space dropped from the inventory of

the Department of Government Services. It consists of: an office building, 2400 College Avenue, 193 square metres dropped; at 1820 Albert Street, 1,570 square metres leased, dropped during that period of time; 1914 Hamilton Street, which is the Toronto Dominion Bank, 325 square metres dropped there; 167 dropped at 2220 Albert St; 437 from 2240 - 13th Avenue; 627 square metres dropped on 12th and Angus — this is all leased space — the workers' compensation board, 1840 Lorne Street, 141 square metres formerly leased by DGS from the compensation board dropped; Saskatchewan Power Corporation, some 803 square metres dropped; Sask Tel, 1825 Lorne Street, 1,808 square metres dropped; McCallum Hill Building, 1,207 square metres. That is a total of 7,278 square metres dropped. The provincial correctional centre, some 90 owned square metres of space; Dewdney and Atkinson, some 60 square metres — that's a house, 2310 College, 449 leased square metres dropped; 907 Winnipeg Street, 353, for a total then of 8,080 square metres. The total of all leased and owned space dropped is something in the order of 8,230 square metres.

The Assembly recessed until 7:00 p.m.