

June 24, 1988

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Gerich: Mr. Speaker, through you, and to the members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce a couple, Tanley and Peter Klassen, and Ron Klassen from the Glenbush area in the north-west part of my riding. They're here for the farm progress show, and I hope that they find this morning and plus the entertainment of the progress show and the Assembly interesting and entertaining.

And I'd like to ask all members to please welcome my guests.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I have two groups I'd like to introduce to you this morning, and through you to the other members of the House. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to the other members, a group from Marian High School in Regina, 28 students from grade 11. They are with their teacher Erwin Ottenbreit, as well as Denise Barrette-Morasse and Jocelyn Moisan.

I'd like to point out, Mr. Speaker, to you, and I'm sure many people know that Marian High School has not only an excellent academic record but is also noted for its athletics, as well as arts and music. We're delighted to have the students from grade 11 in Marian High School with us today.

I'll be joining them later for pictures and for discussions. So please welcome our friends from Marian High School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martin: And, Mr. Speaker, a group of youngsters from St. Andrew Elementary School. There are 23 plus 18, I guess, is 41, and we have grades 3 and grades 4. They are with their teachers Lorraine Ferrara and Patricia Fox; chaperons Joan Lichtenwald, Giena Ludwig, Alma Dizey, and Stephanie Molloy. These students are from St. Andrew Elementary School.

I'll be joining them at 11 o'clock for pictures. I certainly hope you enjoy yourself here today. I'm sure you're looking forward to just the next couple of days — school must almost be out, I would think, at this late stage in June. At any rate, enjoy yourself here today. I'm looking forward to speaking to you later this morning.

Please join me in welcoming our students from St. Andrew School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Contracts with Dome Advertising

Ms. Atkinson: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Premier. Mr. Minister, can you tell me if it's the policy of your government to enter into contracts with Dome Advertising to pay advertising fees for services that aren't rendered, and if this is not the case, Mr. Minister, can you tell us why the traffic safety services branch did so for at least six months in 1986?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, a detailed question like that is difficult for a person to understand. I think the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, let me put it to you this way. The government, like all governments and governments before us, have one or two agents of record to do with the advertising, and that should not come as a surprise to anybody in this Assembly. It's been going on for perhaps 45 years in this province. The members like to flog about that.

With regard to the exact details, with regard to the details of the particular question, I will undertake to look into that, Mr. Speaker. Dome provides advertising. They are paid for their advertising. They are not paid for advertising they do not do.

Ms. Atkinson: New question. Well, Mr. Minister, I'm very surprised by your answer. I have here a series of invoices from Dome, dating from January of 1986, billing that part of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) a \$4,500 monthly consulting fee. I also have here a letter from the head of that department saying that there's no service rendered for that money and that he no longer wishes to pay for it.

Given that information, Mr. Minister, how can you stand in your place and deny you know nothing. That kind of creative bookkeeping is going on, and it seems to me that you don't care enough to be concerned, Mr. Minister, what are you covering up?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier that we have to be very cautious . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. We're having a little difficulty hearing the minister, and I'm sure we all want to hear his answer.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, one learns in this Assembly not to take what the members say at face value. Earlier this week we had the member from Regina North talking about a perfectly good Highways building that was no longer being used, and a new one being built. Now we found out following question period that in fact the building had been condemned and torn down, Mr. Speaker, months ago.

And so that's the type of information — misinformation they advance before this House. I told the hon. member I would look into the invoices that she is alleging, look at them, and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, we will find her evidence, her allegations and her information wanting, just like we saw wanting in the member from Regina North.

Ms. Atkinson: New question, Mr. Minister, Mr. Minister, I'd like to quote from a letter signed by a Mr. D. R. Kuss, legislative adviser to SGI, dated August 15, 1986, and that letter says:

Having paid the invoices under the mistaken assumption that we owed the debt set out in the invoices, we would be entitled in a civil action to recover the money so paid as money paid under the state of fact.

Mr. Minister, your government has paid at least \$27,000 to Dome Advertising for services that were never rendered; that is a fact.

Mr. Minister, I'd like to know what steps you have taken on behalf of the taxpayers of this province to recover at least \$27,000 to Dome Advertising, who we all know is the advertising agent of record for the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, I once again say: (a) we have learned many times over not to take what the members say in question period at face value. They have consistently, consistently said something in question period, only to find out the day later their facts were all wrong. I suspect in this case that's exactly what is going to happen.

I told the member that I would undertake to look into this. I would guess, Mr. Speaker, that the information they have is wrong once again today.

Ms. Atkinson: New question to the Acting Premier of Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, can you tell this House how many other government departments and Crown corporations are making payments to Dome Advertising for services that are never rendered? What is the amount of those payments, and what exactly is Dome doing with this money that's being paid for services that are never rendered?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, every government in the last 45 years in this province has used agents of record. In their case it was Struthers Associates and Dunsky. Okay. And they spent, on a 1982 dollars, more in advertising, clearly, than we have used in advertising, Mr. Speaker. That's a fact.

The reality, Mr. Speaker, is we employ people to provide advertising for the government. That's been going on for some time. And we pay them, Mr. Speaker, according to the work that they've done. And that's, I'm sure, the case in this situation.

Health Care Crisis

Ms. Simard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Minister of Health and the Premier, I direct my question to the Acting Minister of Health.

Mr. Minister, for some three months now my colleagues and I have been bringing to this House case after case of Saskatchewan people who are suffering because of the health care crisis that your government created. These people have urged us to bring these matters before the House for public scrutiny and because they see it as the court of last resort. But they can't get satisfaction, not from the Minister of Health, not from the Premier; in fact, not from any members on that side of the House.

One last time, Mr. Minister, I'm going to raise the case of Mrs. Klotz, a 76-year-old woman from Unity who needs a total hip replacement. I first raised this question on April 27 and a couple of times since. And this woman still has no bed, Mr. Minister.

Her daughter writes that:

The constant pain, together with the present temperature and weather conditions, give cause for her to sleep very little. We can see her determination fade and despair set in.

What are you doing to do for her, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say this. I believe you said the name was Mrs. Klotz, and there's other people out there as well. I think the Minister of Health has said on several occasions that there are pressures on two key areas in waiting lists that they are trying to come to grips with. One is for hip replacements and the other one is for cataracts.

Now the minister has indicated that there are additional moneys were going to Saskatoon, that the hospitals were going to be staying open longer, attempting to come to grips with that particular question, Mr. Speaker.

I can only say to the hon. member and to the lady involved, is that we are doing as much as we can. We are attempting to deal with those issues as quickly as possible. I will look into the particular matter of this particular case, if you would send this over to me, and I will see what we can do to expedite it even further, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Simard: New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you're not acting quickly enough. People are suffering in the interim.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Everybody Wins

Ms. Simard: But meanwhile, tomorrow you'll be holding a gala event in Saskatoon to kick off your new healthy life-styles program entitled "Everybody wins." Now I agree, a life-styles program is necessary, Mr. Minister, but why do you need a gala opening to announce it, Mr. Minister?

And I ask you: who wins? Is it Mrs. Klotz who wins? Is it Anna Wudrick, the Saskatoon cancer patient we raised? Is it Betty Shaw, the Saskatoon woman with cataracts in both eyes? Mrs. Skerrett of Saskatoon, who couldn't get her prescription drugs paid for? Is it Mrs. Shepherd, who couldn't even get prescription drugs, Mr. Minister? Is it Isabel Couch, the cancer patient, who writes: help, help, I need help. I ask you, Mr. Minister, who wins?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would say two things: I would encourage the member from Regina Lakeview to watch TV tomorrow and she will find out whether her predictions are in fact true, and I would ask her as well, Mr. Speaker, I would ask her as well, as she's looking at that, see if any of the health organizations, whether they're nurses or doctors or people working in various fields of health, are in support of the program or against the program.

Now clearly the NDP are on record as being against any kind of move that we would do to encourage healthier life-styles. Now that seems to be out of sync with many, many people in society that believe healthier life-styles lead towards more preventative medicine, more preventative measures, and that in the end encourages everyone to live a healthier life-style on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, and on the other hand takes less out of the health care system and budget so there's more to be applied to others.

So I'm not sure what this program is, but if she says everybody wins, I suggest to the hon. member that to encourage healthier life-styles there are few people that lose under that type of a program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I'll tell you who wins, it's Roberts & Poole and companies like Dome Advertising.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: Mr. Minister, I have here your fancy, lipstick, heart-embossed invitation to your gala event tomorrow to launch your "Everybody Wins" program. And I note, Mr. Minister, it's an RSVP invitation.

Instead of spending all this money of self-congratulatory praise and promotion on gala events, why don't you use the money for the people who need it, Mr. Minister. And, Mr. Minister, on behalf of the many thousands of people in Saskatchewan who are losers under your health care policies, here's my reply.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order, order. Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Lakeview is in a snit because she gets an invitation, and she'd be in a snit if she didn't get an invitation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, I would hope the member from Regina Lakeview would listen even to some of her other colleagues that have called . . . I'd look at the member from Saskatoon University, who has called for this back in 1978 and '79. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that she would even talk to some of her own colleagues that don't subscribe to (a) that type of a tactic, but also believe that healthier life-styles and the promotion of healthier life-styles is in fact a modern technique used in the field of medicine. And I would hope that she would get her head out of the sand and look into the future as things that you can do in a forward-looking way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Contract of CEO of Develcon

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was for the minister responsible for SEDCO, and in her absence I'll go to the acting minister, whoever that is.

It concerns the . . . It follows up on the lack of answers Tuesday in question period . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Mitchell: The Minister of Finance is in a frisky mood. Maybe he can answer this question. It follows up on a question asked Tuesday of the Minister of Science and Technology, who didn't have the answer then.

Can the minister responsible confirm that the new president and chief executive officer of Develcon,

whose name is Richard MacPherson, has been given an employment contract which sees him collect the following: a base salary of \$150,000 a year; a minimum \$75,000 a year bonus; a minimum salary of \$225,000 a year; plus \$50,000 in relocation costs and a Cadillac with all expenses paid and up to \$50,000 for leaving his former employment early, and a \$225,000 severance package — all this to head a company which receives \$7 million in taxpayers' money from SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) and then turned around and laid off 32 employees. Is this in fact, Mr. Minister, the compensation package signed between Develcon and Mr. MacPherson, and how in the world can that be justified.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite says that I didn't answer the question when it was asked back on Tuesday. And I will give him the same response that I did at that time. But I will, however, add just a little bit more to it, Mr. Speaker.

In the first place, I'm sure, as the member opposite knows, that the salaries of management within companies certainly is an internal matter and nothing to do with this government, but I would also point out the fact that it's our understanding that the salary that's being paid to Mr. MacPherson is not out of line with the industry norm, given his qualifications, experience, and background.

I would also point out, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. MacPherson left one of the Fortune 10 companies at a 30 per cent reduction in pay to take up this challenge. And we think that we're pretty fortunate to have a person of this calibre involved in our high-tech industry in Saskatchewan.

I would just say in a conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that we'll stack this man up against the David Dombowsky's and their salaries under the previous administration any time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: New question to the minister. I guess we could class Mr. MacPherson as one of the winners, couldn't we.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: I want to know, Mr. Minister, whether your government approved that employment contract with Mr. MacPherson. And I ask that question in light of the agreement between Fairfax and DEI Holdings Limited and SEDCO, which contains the clause:

All new employment agreements entered into with existing management employees must be on terms acceptable to the Government of Saskatchewan.

I want to know specifically whether the government approved that contract with Mr. MacPherson, and how do you justify such an outrageous contract to the taxpayers who bankrolled Develcon to the tune of \$7 million, and to the 32 employees which Mr. MacPherson almost immediately laid off?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the member opposite that when you look at the past record of the company Develcon, that over the last three years that they have lost in excess of \$16 million. I would think that one of the first things that any management would want to do would be to

take a look at the general operation of the company and, in fact, take steps to make sure that the company again becomes a viable operation.

So the fact that there were some employees laid off certainly is unfortunate. But at the same time, we have to consider that Develcon has now centralized their operations in Saskatoon. All of the members of Develcon or employees of Develcon that were laid off certainly are not in Saskatoon, or were not in Saskatoon. They were from other arms of the operation. Everything has now been centralized within the city of Saskatoon, and in fact I think that we're very fortunate that Develcon is going to be maintaining its operations in Saskatoon and that it has centralized everything there.

There's no doubt about it, that it's a good company. It has good products and excellent employees, and we certainly look forward to it being a good operation in the future.

Mr. Mitchell: A new question, Mr. Speaker. I take it, Mr. Minister, from your two answers, that the government knew about this employment contract and approved it in advance. And it's small wonder indeed that you refuse to make public the details of management contracts throughout the system, if this is the amount that you're approving for management jobs in this province — small wonder indeed.

Your government likes to claim that it protected the jobs of Develcon workers with this refinancing, and ministers of the Crown have said so. The fact is, in the agreement you did the exact opposite. On page 8 of the agreement you signed with Fairfax holdings, it is provided as follows:

the prior consent of the Government of Saskatchewan shall be required in any reduction in excess of 25 per cent of employees resident in Saskatchewan so long as the SEDCO debentures remain outstanding.

In other words, Fairfax could cut loose up to 25 per cent of Develcon's work force and still keep the \$7 million paid out by SEDCO on behalf of Saskatchewan taxpayers.

Now, Mr. Minister, why in the world did SEDCO sign a deal which sells out 25 per cent of the Develcon work force in this fashion?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, of course, seems to have a good deal more information about this particular deal. And as I understand it, the Leader of the Opposition was provided with a good bit of information.

There's no doubt about it that the agreement does state that the number of employees must be maintained at a rate of no less than 75 per cent. And I would hope that as time goes on, that as Develcon gets back on its feet, that in fact that they will be increasing the number of employees that they have.

I would also point out to the hon. member that he's well aware of the fact that Develcon is a private company; it trades on the stock-market, and certainly it is not their responsibility to divulge all of the details of contracts that they have between their management and themselves.

Death of Assiniboia Child

Mr. Goodale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Acting Premier. The members of the House will know, Mr. Minister, of the tragic death this week of a four-year-old child from Assiniboia after a tonsil operation, and I'm sure we would all want to extend our sincere sympathy to the bereaved

family.

There have been suggestions, Mr. Minister, that in some way our health care system, particularly in rural Saskatchewan, failed in this tragedy. And I would like to have your assurance that every aspect of this tragedy is going to be fully investigated to determine what went so tragically wrong.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: I thank you for the question to the hon. member. I was apprised of that unfortunate tragedy this morning, and I think we all would share, with that family, sympathy for the loss of their young child.

I think in fairness, even to the hon. member, that clearly this is most likely something that would be investigated through an inquest into that type of situation. Certainly we would all want to see what in fact happened and what we could do in the future to prevent any recurrence of that. If it in fact related to equipment, as one saw in the Leader-Post this morning, then clearly those types of things have to be grappled with.

I would want not want to (a) because of lack of knowledge, and (b) because of perhaps further action to be taken, would not want to get into speculating any further on that, but I would share with you the sympathy to the family and, I would think, from all members of the Assembly.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's response. As the minister has noted, it has been reported that there was a problem with anesthetic equipment that hasn't apparently been working for some period of time in the local Assiniboia hospital, and that if it had been working, that the circumstances might have been different.

In view of that reported information, Mr. Minister, and all of the tragic circumstances around this case, could I ask you to ensure that it is brought immediately and directly to the attention of the Minister of Health, and that no stone is left unturned to get to the bottom of this situation.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Clearly, the Minister of Health apprised me of that issue this morning prior to leaving for Lloydminster. I had an opportunity to briefly read the article in the Leader-Post, indicating that the anesthetic equipment had failed, that it has in disuse for some four years. That certainly raises questions, I think, in anybody's mind as (a) why was this equipment not used, and then, when used, why it was not properly checked over a period of time.

I mean, there's many questions that are raised, and certainly the Minister of health is looking and prepared to try to find an answer and get to the bottom of why that was in fact happening. And I again only try to assure the member, and to his constituent and family of the unfortunate accident, that we will do what we can to get to the bottom of that and try to solve that for any future opportunities.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Advanced Forage Payment

Hon. Mr. Hardy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a brief announcement I believe is important to the farmers of rural Saskatchewan, and I would just like to take a moment of the House to do it.

On behalf of the Hon. John Wise, federal Minister of Agriculture, and the Government of Saskatchewan, I am pleased to announce the following change to the Saskatchewan crop insurance in response to this year's severe drought conditions throughout much of the province. This year, because of the widespread

loss of forage crops, advance payments on these crops will be made.

The advance payment will be in the amount of 50 per cent of the insured's liability and will be sent to the producer on June 30. The total amount of this pay-out will be approximately \$3.7 million. No premiums will be deducted for advance payment accounts, and no interest will be charged on the forage premiums.

A statement of indemnity will be prepared in September. At that time, final indemnity amounts will be paid for the advance payment, and any balances owing on each customer's crop insurance amount deducted.

I'd like to also urge all contract holders who have questions or concerns regarding this change, or any other crop insurance related matter, to contact their local customer service office.

Mr. Speaker, next week we'll be making some further announcement in regard to crop insurance and feed. But I'd also like to say at this time that the crop insurance corporation has been, and will be working continuously over the next few weeks to put together these programs. The change, and others which we are considering, are a result of consultation with SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), Saskatchewan stock growers, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and other interested groups.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to consult closely with these groups as they work to respond efficiently and effectively to the problems caused by this year's drought. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance corporation, the federal government, and the Government of Saskatchewan remain deeply committed to providing the best possible service to farmers and to the agriculture industry in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I welcome another tidbit of announcement from the government on the drought problem. But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's long overdue and it's insufficient.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: The program will help those people who are in that situation, and they need help. But there's thousands of other beef producers out there who have been waiting for months to hear something about this drought and what this government was going to do about it. And what have we got here? Another morsel of an announcement. As they're on their knees waiting for something, they're just throwing out the crusts. Because this government believes they let them go right down on their knees and then they give them something so they appreciate it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: And while I welcome this announcement, I am just sick and tired of waiting for this government to do something about the drought problem that's been ongoing in this province.

This government and the federal government are not responding to the needs, and they should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. Where is the program for adjusting crop insurance? Where is the program for hogs and poultry people? Where is the program to ensure there's enough feed grains in Saskatchewan? Where is the program to possibly get the . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, order, order. I don't believe that this ministerial statement is an opportunity for a wide-ranging debate on agriculture policy. I think the . . . Order, order, order. Order, order. Order, order. Ministerial statements are intended to be brief and factual, and responses are intended to relate to that statement, of course.

Mr. Upshall: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, as you will know, we tried to get an emergency debate on this. The government stopped it. We tried again, and you stopped it. And I'm sick and tired of this going on because the farmers in this province need help. And it's disgusting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: We have a number of programs that have been . . . the government has been asked to bring forward. This does not address the problem. This is something that is necessary, that should be included in a full program that we haven't seen. It should be included in a long-term program that we haven't seen.

And, Mr. Minister, I simply say that, despite the fact that this will help some people, I am thoroughly, thoroughly ashamed of watching those people over there leave farmers out on a limb and not give them any support that they need in this drought situation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, because of the profound importance of this particular issue in my constituency, I wonder if there would be leave of the House for an opportunity for me to respond briefly to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Is leave granted? I don't hear any dissenting voices.

Leave granted.

Mr. Goodale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank all hon. members, and I assure you I will be brief.

I would welcome this small change that the minister has made with respect to the crop insurance program in so far as it applies to forage coverage in the province of Saskatchewan.

As the minister will know, that is a very small part of the crop insurance program in Saskatchewan, and the minister has on other occasions rather candidly, I think, admitted that there have been grave difficulties in Saskatchewan getting a good forage program up and running as we would all want to see it, and certainly the kind of program for forage that we have in Saskatchewan falls far short when it's compared to the program in some other provinces; for example, in the province of Alberta.

And I would simply want to advise the minister today that in estimates yesterday I asked specifically the Premier of Saskatchewan if the drought measures that would be coming forward from the government would be based upon some expansion of, or modification in, or topping up of, the forage provisions within the crop insurance program.

The Premier gave me the assurance yesterday that he did not view that as a solution in Saskatchewan because of the differences in the program. It might be a solution in Alberta; it certainly would not be a solution in the province of Saskatchewan. And I trust the minister will wait no longer than Monday to

come forward with the additional changes and the additional programming that is obviously required because this very, very small change will be of assistance to only a very limited few.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, today being June 24, I would ask the Assembly for leave to acknowledge briefly St. Jean Baptiste day, which is especially significant in the life of Saskatchewan's Fransaskois community.

Leave granted.

ANNOUNCEMENT

St. Jean Baptiste Day

Mr. Goodale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci Monsieur l'Orateur.

The past several months have, of course, been a turbulent time for the Fransaskois in Saskatchewan.

Il y a eu des ordonnances concernant les droits de la minorité de la langue officielle et sur la question gouvernant l'éducation française.

Il y a eu la profonde déception suite à loi 2 adoptée par le gouvernement, et il y a eu le tragique incendie du Collège Mathieu.

Il y a également eu, tout récemment, l'annonce d'un accord fédéral-provincial concernant les services dans les domaines de la langue et de l'éducation en Saskatchewan.

What we've seen, of course, Mr. Speaker, is a mixed collection in the last number of weeks and months, of good news and bad news affecting the Fransaskois, producing a range of emotions from excitement and exhilaration to frustration and despair.

En ce jour de 24 Juin, fête de la St. Jean Baptiste, je crois qu'il est particulièrement important que la législature s'arrête un moment pour réfléchir sur le rôle des Fransaskois dans l'histoire de la Saskatchewan et sure leur contribution linguistique et culturelle dans notre province.

Souhaitons-leur une bonne journée et un avenir dont ils pourront être fiers.

Mr. Speaker, may we wish the Fransaskois a happy day on St. Jean Baptiste day, and a proud and satisfying future in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Tchorzewski: Mr. Speaker, may I also, on behalf of the official opposition, join the member who has just spoken in extending our best wishes on this day of importance to the Fransaskois, St. Jean Baptiste Day.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, having said that, on another very serious matter which I think needs attention of the House and yourself in particular, Mr. Speaker. And before the orders of the day, I rise, pursuant to Rule 6 of the Legislative Assembly, to raise a question of privilege.

In accordance with the rules of this House, I did advise you earlier today of my intention to do so within the time prescribed. I believe, Mr. Speaker, as you I no doubt know — believe — that there's a growing disregard for the legislature and for the legislative process by the government that sits opposite. It is a matter that's become more serious as the days pass.

The issue, Mr. Speaker, is the set of unacceptable and critical and insulting remarks made by the Minister of Justice about an officer of this legislature, the Provincial Auditor.

As all members know, Mr. Speaker, a question of privilege is a grave and serious matter in this legislature or in any other legislature, and such questions of privilege should only arise very rarely.

The learned parliamentary authorities have defined privilege as follows:

The sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively . . . and by members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions . . .

And further, Mr. Speaker, and I quote again:

It may be stated generally that any Act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which (and I stress this point particularly, Mr. Speaker) obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly to produce such results may be treated as a contempt.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, one last citation, and I quote:

Both Houses will treat as breaches of their privileges, not only acts directly tending to obstruct their officers in the execution of their duty, but also any conduct which may tend to deter them from doing their duty in the future.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the Provincial Auditor is an officer of this Legislative Assembly. The Provincial Auditor Act is explicit on that point, and section 2 of that Act states that, and again I quote:

The provincial auditor is an officer of the Legislative Assembly . . .

Now unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has violated the privileges of this Assembly by this unacceptable and insulting criticism of the Provincial Auditor, which was published in the June 15 edition of this year of *The Kindersley Clarion*, a copy of which I sent to you this morning.

The newspaper report states, and I quote again, and it's the Minister of Justice, because I can't use his name — and it goes on to say, “. . . doubts the credibility of the auditor.” This is a quote, and these are the words attributed to the minister himself, in a direct quote:

Auditors are people who bump against reality once a year. They live in that jungle-zoo and call themselves bureaucrats. They wear thick glasses because they are looking at the fine print to see if every 'i' is dotted.

Now, Mr. Minister . . . and the members opposite laugh, and there are other people in this building who laugh. I think the matter is more serious than that. And I submit, Mr. Speaker, that those totally

inappropriate remarks by a member of this Assembly about the competence and professionalism of an officer of this legislature is a clear and unequivocal breach of privilege.

And regrettably, this is not the first occasion that that member has attacked in the press an officer of the legislature. I refer you, sir, to the ruling that you made in this House on that previous occasion last year, in which you stated the following in page 697 of Hansard. And here, sir, I am quoting your conclusions:

. . . it is clear that any action which may tend to deter a parliamentary officer from doing his or her duty may be considered to be a breach of the privileges of parliament. It is vital, if parliament is to get fair and impartial service from its officers, that these officers must be defended from intimidation while conducting their duties.

End of your quote, Mr. Speaker.

And so to sum up, the auditor is an officer of the Legislative Assembly, and all members have a solemn obligation to protect the office and the incumbent from attacks which would undermine and destroy his ability to perform his function and to serve the Assembly itself.

The minister's attack on the auditor was prompted by the auditor's conclusions and observations formed with respect to his duties to the Assembly. Those remarks by the minister were unacceptable, they were insulting, and must not go uncensored.

I therefore submit that the minister has committed a breach of privilege not unlike the breach he committed one year ago, and I respectfully ask you, sir, that you rule that in this case, as on that previous occasion, there is indeed a prima facie case of privilege. And at that time I shall move an appropriate motion in order that the Assembly may take the appropriate action in this matter.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: Mr. Speaker, I would just speak to the point by saying that not all that shows up in the media is gospel. And I think it's unfortunate that members opposite haven't at least given the member, as a matter of courtesy, the prior notice to at least allow him to determine whether or not the quote was in fact correct.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is unfortunate that that prior notice courtesy wasn't indicated at this particular point. However, I'm not here to defend the member. I think he can do that quite adequately himself. But I do make the point, Mr. Speaker, that not all, I know from bitter experience, that shows up in the media is gospel.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: Mr. Speaker, I quite frankly have been taken quite by surprise. I have not seen this article in the paper.

An Hon. Member: You know what you said. You remember saying it.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: No, I did not say what the member read out. I categorically say that I did not say that. I would like an opportunity to (a) read the newspaper, and then be able to respond. But until I do that, Mr. Speaker, I find myself not knowing exactly what to respond to.

Mr. Speaker: I have listened to the point of privilege raised. I have also heard the response from the Minister of Justice and the Deputy Premier . . .

An Hon. Member: Decide on the face of the evidence reported.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, I've heard the comments. On the basis of what I have heard, I will have to defer my decision.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Executive Council Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Items 1 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Item 6 — Statutory.

Items 7 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

Item 10 — Statutory.

Vote 10 agreed to.

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Parks, Recreation and Culture Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 39

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the estimates. I'd like to introduce to you Doug Cressman, my deputy minister; Allan Appleby seated directly behind me, who is assistant deputy minister, renewable resources; Keith Rogers, assistant deputy minister, heritage, sport, and arts; Dick Bailey seated behind me to the right, assistant deputy minister, support services; and Ross MacLennan, executive director of operations.

Item 1

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, we'll try and move through your estimates fairly quickly this morning. If there are answers that you will have to take time to look up, if it's okay with you, we could agree to pass that information over in writing.

An Hon. Member: This year.

Mr. Thompson: This year, yeah. And this should speed up the estimates.

First of all, Mr. Minister, if you could, and pass that over in writing, the names of the political staff and their positions that you have in your office — and that is your political staff, your executive assistants — the salaries that they're being paid, and if there has been any increases in the last year. Also, Mr. Minister, if you could provide me with the information on the trips out of the province by yourself and your staff, the destination, and the cost of those trips.

And also if you could provide for me the amount of money that you spent on advertising for your department, and if you could give me the name of the agency that you used. And it's fine with me, Mr. Minister, if you want to pass that over in writing.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, hon. member. In anticipation of your questions, and following Hansard to see what was happening with previous estimates, I noticed that you were asking a question of minister's political staff position and salary as of December 31 and then as of March 31 to determine changes, increases, reclassifications. So I've prepared that information for you.

I've also prepared total out-of-province travel starting in this last fiscal year, of April of last year, with a trip to Edmonton, all the way through to March of this year. The last time I was out of province was Chicoutimi, performing some functions on behalf of the province and the city of Saskatoon at the brier. And total money is also on this, that has been expended in that year. So I'd ask one of the pages to provide it to you.

On advertising. It's headed, communication services — major ad and print campaigns. The grand total is on here, as well as a breakdown by division, by branch, with everything we've done in the last year.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I now want to turn to the provincial parks, and I wonder if you could give the House an update on the status of the grasslands park, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd be delighted to discuss this one. There's been ongoing negotiations, as all members would know, for a long period of time. We ran into a few difficulties with the federal government who wanted us to give up water rights, and energy exploration, and a few other things that we found unacceptable to the provincial government, and indeed to the people of Saskatchewan.

We believe we have successfully negotiated an agreement with the federal government. I'd said some time ago that I fully expected an announcement would be made some time in July with the federal Minister of the Environment, Tom McMillan, coming out here for a ceremony of declaration of the grasslands national park. Nothing has happened in the last few weeks to alter that timetable or to change my opinion that that indeed will happen sometime this summer, preferably in mid-July.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Minister, you indicated the last time we were doing your estimates that there would be an announcement quite shortly on the grasslands national park, and I refer to the estimates. You indicated at that time that there would be three major announcements of parks in Canada, and as you are aware, the federal minister has now lost West Moresby, or there will not be a park there, or no major announcement.

(1100)

And I think that most certainly the grasslands park is a park that has been discussed and planned for many years in the province of Saskatchewan, and a very important park. And I would just ask you to use your good offices to speed up that process, and if you could just be more specific and indicate whether or not you're sure that there will be announcement on the grasslands national park in July.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: yes, Mr. Chairman, 99.9 per cent sure the announcement will come in the middle of July. We're extremely close to actually formalizing the agreement itself. There's some technical stuff; that's in the hands of the lawyers and those folks. The minister, my federal counterpart and I, have already agreed in principle. As far as we're concerned, we've resolved all of the outstanding arguments

over water and energy and exploration and anything else of that nature.

There was one little wrinkle crept in a month ago to do with grazing that affected some local ranchers in the area, and I had called his office and asked him if his staff could look into this and resolve that difficulty. I believe that one has been taken care of, and there's absolutely no reason, as far as I'm concerned, not to go ahead with the agreement that we've been negotiating.

Mr. Thompson: One final question there, Mr. Minister. Then there's no more land to be allotted for the grasslands national park. You have your full allotment of lands for the plan?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, it's the original 350 square miles that was initially agreed upon, and that's what will be in the agreement.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Minister, has there been any plans in the last year for any other provincial parks in the province?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we've looked at several areas that we think could be worthy of park designation. As the hon. member would know, we're also in some discussion on interprovincial parks with the Government of Alberta, primarily Meadow Lake, Cold Lake, and the Cypress Hills park in the South.

That would not necessarily constitute a new park, it would just be working together to avoid some duplication and to provide better resource management. Elk don't know provincial boundaries, as an example, neither do forest fires, neither do infestation of forest, and we think by having an interprovincial park in those areas we could have better resource management of what is in there.

We have been looking at two other areas, Mr. Chairman. The Athabasca sand dunes, which I feel, because of the unique topography of that area, would be well worthy of a designation at least as a protected environmental area, if not eventually a provincial park. It takes some time to declare a provincial park, as members would know when we did the last provincial park, Clearwater wilderness park; it took some time to put that together. We're looking at the Athabasca sand dunes, and we're also looking at The Great Sand Hills over on the west side of the province.

Mr. Thompson: Well, Mr. Minister, I'm not too sure what the advantages are of forming interprovincial parks. Whether you have a park adjacent to Saskatchewan, and you used the Cold Lake area as an example, if you were to form the interprovincial parks, it would seem to me that we would still have our park attendants and enforcement officers working strictly within the borders of Saskatchewan. I wouldn't want to see an interprovincial park where we have our resource people crossing into another park.

You talk about an interprovincial park. It would seem to me then that we would have officers from both parks which would be able to enforce the laws or bring the services that are needed into Saskatchewan and vice versa.

It seems to me, as far as fire fighting is concerned, we have always had interprovincial agreements to fight fires. We know that fires have no boundaries. But that's fine. We all use the Canadian Forestry Services aircraft in both provinces. We've always traded equipment. Saskatchewan has now got some equipment being sent in from British Columbia, I believe, to fight fires.

But I'm not too sure whether the interprovincial park system is the best system. It seems to me that we

should retain the provincial park. You have the Saskatchewan parks, regardless of where they are, and they should be able to retain that.

And I just would like to get your opinion on that. But I'm not too sure whether we should be taking a look at going into an interprovincial park. It's a Saskatchewan park, and I think we would want to maintain that independence.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member makes some good points. Nothing is finalized on this yet. In fact we're in the process right now of holding a series of public consultations to see if the idea does in fact have any merit. And obviously if the public don't like the idea, then we won't pursue it any further.

It's really just an idea that we think whose time has come, and no final decision has been taken. That's why we're soliciting public opinion.

But we think the thrust would be to improve co-operation in the development and management of those particular areas. We think there's a good role to be played there. For example, marketing efforts, promotional efforts could be co-ordinated; we could have a joint park brochure and advertise the park that way.

In the case of the northern part of the province with Meadow Lake and Cold Lake, the idea was born on the Alberta side where they want to do some development on Cold Lake. And a couple of years ago when I was up there, we had an agreement — and this touches on the enforcement the hon. member brought up — that it was very difficult for people who were angling on the lake to know if they were on the Saskatchewan side or the Alberta side. So we decided that one angling licence, either Saskatchewan or Alberta, would be good for the entire lake.

From there — and that's been very successful — from there we got talking about a water-based interprovincial park, including Cold Lake. On their side, they're looking at a development of a golf course and a ski hill, which seems, you know, it's something that we'd kind of like to tie into. And I'd also say that resource management programs could be co-ordinated to protect significant resources, such as the lodge-pole pine in the Elk and Cypress Hills; and I mentioned a fishery resource in Cold Lake, Meadow Lake. We would obviously retain jurisdiction over our park, and Alberta would retain jurisdiction over their park.

The senior officials have been looking at our respective park sites to see which parts are compatible and which are not compatible, and if we would require any changes for enforcement, which is exactly a point the hon. member brought up, because we do have different regulations regarding some of the activities that can take place in either park.

In the northern area, we see a tremendous tourism potential because we have that big market, the Edmonton market, which has been moving east, but they've been moving in the wrong direction, coming east. They haven't been going north, then east and into the Cold Lake area, and the folks in that area think they could attract that huge market. And if they came to an interprovincial park and there was a road joining, I think they'd go right through and we'd see that tourism thrust go into Meadow Lake.

Similarly in Cypress Hills — that's one of the best kept secrets in North America. It just seems that people don't understand what we have there — very beautiful park, the highest range of land from the foothills all the way out to the lakehead, trees, forest — it's a beautiful area. And I think it would be great if we could get people who are flashing over No. 1 Highway, saying what a drab prairie it is, to get

off No. 1, go 15 miles south, go through Cypress Hills, connect a road to the other side, the west block on the Alberta side, and see something scenic. I think they'd spend a few days there and enjoy it and it would just promote tourism. And that's the kind of thing we could promote jointly between the two provinces.

Mr. Thompson: I'll give you another example of where we should be tapping the tourist resort, and that would be the Clearwater Valley. We have a beautiful park there, and as I've indicated before, if there isn't a move made fairly quickly — and I've indicated to you last year that there should be a logging operation, selective logging operation, that goes into that Clearwater Valley to take that timber out of there before a forest fire destroys it. And as you're aware, Mr. Minister, this is a very serious season for forest fire, and what is going to take place, we're going to end up losing that complete valley if we don't get in there and selectively take that timber out. I just give you that in an example.

And you talk about the tourist traffic moving away from the Meadow Lake area, and I think — and proposals have come in from the community of La Loche, to make that lake or the road link-up between Fort McMurray and La Loche and eventually move down to Meadow Lake and Big River and The Battlefords. The Minister of Highways has not really moved on that. There has been a small project into Black Point at La Loche, but really no major move to get that link put in between McMurray and Saskatchewan, and I think that would really improve the tourist trade to the north-west side of the province where we should have it. We've got many, many thousands of people travel to Fort McMurray, but then they can't come east of McMurray and north, as you indicate, into Saskatchewan.

And I would urge you to push for that road link-up and to take a serious look at how we handled the Clearwater Valley, because I think that Clearwater Valley right now is very vulnerable with the type of situation that we have in this province, with the low water situation, the muskeg's dry, and the forest fire season that we have already, that we should go in there with an emergency program and selectively take that mature timber that's in there, take it out, and that would solve many of those problems. And I think that's a good example of an interprovincial . . . not an interprovincial park, but the two provinces working closely together, because Fort McMurray and La Loche, the Clearwater Valley runs right from La Loche right into Fort McMurray.

You talk about the protection of the . . . and to designate the Athabasca sand dunes. I think that that is a good idea because that most certainly is a unique situation in our province. It may not be unique if the weather keeps up like this and the winds that we have, we could have another sand dune right here in the prairies, but hopefully that won't happen.

But I think that that is a very beautiful part of the country, but one that I think could be put on the back burner in comparison to the southern ones like the Clearwater Valley. As you know, it's pretty hard to get into the sand dunes. One has to have a lot of money to be able to travel up there because you have to fly in and then get a helicopter to go in there. So I think that preferably I would like to see expansion go into the Clearwater Valley and such parks like that, and access to Alberta through an interprovincial road from McMurray to La Loche.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Certainly, Mr. Chairman, there's a lot of merit in exploring an interprovincial road. Some work has been done in that area already. There is a crew that's working there. The road itself would not run through the Clearwater and won't go through the valley. It's actually south of La Loche.

I think that we could increase the number of tourists going to that area. Obviously, we have to market and promote the Clearwater River wilderness park. Given that it is a wilderness park, there is a certain degree of protection afforded under The Parks Act to the area. And at the moment, something like

logging would not be a compatible activity; however, we . . . and I appreciate the argument that overmature timber is prone to disease and is prone to forest fire, and, I agree, it should be selectively logged. I've no quarrel with the hon. member about that one. I think it would be good for the economy of that particular area, and it can be done. We've demonstrated we have the technology to winch things out now. It can be done in a way that does not scar or deface the park in any way, and would allow for fresh growth, which of course is necessary for ongoing support for wildlife.

We do have a management plan for the park that's being worked on, and that is one of the suggestions that we'll take, and my officials have just indicated to me they will examine that potential and possibility when the park plan is presented, and we'll let you see it then.

Mr. Chairman: Why is the member from Yorkton on his feet?

Mr. McLaren: Mr. Chairman, I would appreciate leave to introduce some guests that have just arrived in the gallery.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. McLaren: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It's my pleasure and honour today to, on behalf of the member from Estevan and the Premier of our province, to introduce 38 grade 4 and 5 students from the Pleasantdale School in Estevan. They're in the Speaker's gallery and they are accompanied today by their teachers Jane Moriarty and Michelle Ward, chaperons Rick Rohatyn, the principal, and I think he's doubling as the bus driver today according to my sheet here, and Karen Conquergood. We welcome you to the Assembly today, students.

You're witnessing estimates of the Parks, Recreation and Culture department. The minister is answering questions from the member from Athabasca who is questioning the various aspects of Parks and, of course, the budget.

We hope you enjoy your stay here in the Assembly today, and I'll be meeting with you for pictures at 12 o'clock and some refreshments and to answer any questions that you might have.

So I would ask all members to please welcome these students from Estevan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1115)

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure
Parks, Recreation and Culture
Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 39

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome the group from Estevan.

Mr. Minister, I didn't get all your answer there, but you talk about the road being south of La Loche. That road is going to Black Point, and it's only seven miles south of La Loche. And regardless of where the connection goes, it still would be benefit to the complete north-west side of that province, and I speak specifically of the Buffalo Narrows and all the way down to Meadow Lake, Big River, and North Battleford, and Prince Albert. So I would urge you to discuss with your colleague, the Minister of Highways, to put some money into that connection and get that road through.

You also could put the connection from La Loche across to McMurray and across along side the Clearwater Valley which would give access to the Clearwater Valley.

And I believe, Mr. Minister, that that should not be a wilderness park, but rather a provincial park so that everyone in the province will have an opportunity to enjoy it. It can be developed as a provincial park and be beneficial, not only to the folks at La Loche but to the rest of this province and to the tourists that are coming in from out of province. So I would ask you to consider that.

Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could indicate how many campsites, public campsites in the province that you have either privatized this year or have shut down.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that last year 22 campsites that were leased to private operators; and this year the total is 23, the new one being at Borden bridge; and none have been closed. And if the hon. member would like a list of all the campsites and their location, it will take us some time to get that one together, but we're quite prepared to put that together and send it to you.

Mr. Thompson: Yes, that would be fine, Mr. Minister, if you could provide me that. And also, I wonder, if you have the information at hand, could you provide me with the individual who has taken over the Borden bridge campsite, please, and the charge that has been imposed on that — how much is he paying for the lease?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I've got the name for the hon. member. I was trying to find you some excess information. I thought you wanted a few other things. There were five proposals received. The best proposal was for \$1,000 and it went to Margie Perron and George Caper from 902 Avenue O South in Saskatoon.

Mr. Thompson: Could you indicate what the \$1,000 is for. Is that for the yearly rental fee?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, that's the yearly rental fee they pay to the department.

Mr. Thompson: Okay. I just want to close off on that by indicating that you now have leased out 23 of our public campsites, and I indicated my opposition to any privatization of public campsites. They're for the public, they're administered by the public, and that's the way it should be.

Here we see the Borden bridge campsite — and I might add, Mr. Minister, that is a very large campsite — and that has been leased out for \$1,000 a year to a couple from Saskatoon, two individuals. And I think that that campsite, if you took the capital costs to build that, that is one of the bigger ones and one of the busiest ones that we have. That's on the Yellowhead Route on Highway 16, and that is a very important public campsite which should have remained within the hands of the Department of Parks.

And I would just ask you, Minister, in closing off — I'm not going to carry on too long in this — but I would just ask you to reconsider privatizing any more of our private campsites. After all, they provide

the service to the tourists that are going in and out of our province and for our people in this province. It's a public service and they're public campsites, and I would urge you to reconsider that. Especially when you take the Borden bridge on the Yellowhead Route, which is a very, very important one and a very busy one, and you lease that out for \$1,000 a year. I think that that is just a bad deal for the taxpayers of the province.

I just want to leave it at that, Mr. Minister. If you want to comment, you can comment on that, and then I want to turn to the fisheries.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, I would just comment that we've had this discussion in the past, and obviously we just agree to differ on it because we have a different philosophical approach to this particular issue. We're cognizant of the fact that we require those camp grounds to be operated in a good fashion in order to serve tourists coming through our province — definitely, we agree with that.

The fact is, that camp ground was losing \$16,000 a year of taxpayers' money. By leasing it out for \$1,000 a year, it is being run privately. They will accept any losses, or if they can break even, good for them. And as long as those camp grounds we build into the lease are being run in a good manner in the interests of the public, then we're quite happy to let the public run them on behalf of the public. So just a comment on that; I realize that we differ on the philosophy of doing this.

We have no major plans, by the way, for anything else in the works right now. There was only one this year. I'll send you the list. I had a list here, but it's not accurate because there was one change to it, so we'll update that list and I'll make sure you get it within the next week.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. You say that that campsite was losing \$16,000 a year. You lease it out for \$1,000 a year. You sort of indicate that the Parks personnel who were operating that somehow must have been doing a bad job. And I say to you, Mr. Minister, that that's not true. They always did a good job. It's a busy campsite. If it lost \$16,000 under your jurisdiction, I would say it's going to lose more under the private, or the same. So I don't know what the difference is there. I've stopped at that campsite on many occasions, and I tell you that is a well kept campsite, well run, and I just want to commend the personnel from Parks who operate that campsite. And I just don't see any reason why you would want to get rid of it.

I now want to turn to the fisheries, Mr. Minister. And we have a number of problems that are cropping up, and they're cropping up on a continual basis. And I have the latest letter that I got from you and it's regarding the species limits that you continually keep imposing upon the commercial fishery in northern Saskatchewan.

I have a letter here, and for the life of me, Mr. Minister, I don't know why you would write a letter and use the type of comparisons that you used in this letter. When I talk about species limits, we talk about a lake that has a limit, it's a gazetted limit, and it has so many pounds on that lake, and if you take it out, then the lake is closed down and that's the end of it for the year.

But you now have imposed a species limit where you put 10,000 pounds of jacks; 10,000 pounds of pickerel, and 10,000 pounds of whitefish. That lake would have a 30,000 pound limit. So commercial fishermen have been fishing that lake for many, many years. And I'm using one lake as an example, Mr. Chairman — a lake with 30,000 pounds on it. Those fishermen have always harvested 30,000 pounds. Biologists go in and they check that lake and they determine what the limit is going to be, and they say well, that lake can handle 30,000 pounds.

And I want to add, Mr. Minister, that we have thousands of lakes in northern Saskatchewan. So what you have done now is said to the commercial fishermen, well you take 10,000 jackfish out of that lake, or northern pike, then you have to quit fishing and you'll leave the other 20,000 pounds that they should be harvesting.

That's like telling a farmer who has three quarters of land — one has wheat, one has oats, and one has barley. He takes the barley off and then the government comes in and says, you have to leave the wheat and the oats; you can't harvest the other two quarters. That's exactly what you're doing to these commercial fisherman, and it's hitting them just as hard as it would hit a farmer who you went in and told him that he couldn't harvest the other two quarters of land.

Then you write me a letter when I ask you to change that, and you use the comparison of moose. You say, well we have those species limits in this province. We use it with moose; we use it with birds. Well what a comparison. You buy a licence in Spiritwood to hunt moose, and you can hunt moose wherever you want, whenever the zones are open.

You buy a bird licence in this province and you can hunt Hungarian partridge in Estevan, or you can hunt Hungarian partridge in Shellbrook. Or if you buy . . . if you're out hunting ruffle grouse, you can hunt them down in the South or in the North or in Fond du Lac; it doesn't matter where you go. And if you've got a moose licence, you hunt moose wherever you want to go, and the same applies to deer.

But you write me a letter and say you're using the same type of policy that you use for game birds. Well, Mr. Minister, I don't think you did your research. And I don't really blame you for this, but my gosh, there is absolutely no comparison.

We have lake limits in northern Saskatchewan, or any other part, and we fish those limits and they're on a lake by lake, specifically. When we deal with Doré Lake, we deal specifically with Doré Lake and the fishermen who fish Doré Lake. And if the limit on Doré Lake is 200,000 pounds, those fishermen govern themselves accordingly.

Now you may want to use the argument that the tourist operator is putting pressure on. And I don't think that that's a fair argument because the tourist operators and the commercial fishermen have always got along. Sure they've had their little bickerings. Some tourist operators don't want to see nets in the water at a certain time.

(1130)

But most tourist operators realize that those commercial fishermen have fished those lakes ever since commercial fishing began in this province. That's how they make their living. That's how the farmers in the South who homesteaded their land, that's how they make their living on that quarter of land, or that section of land, whatever it may be.

Commercial fishermen have the same thing up there. They have a licence to fish a lake and that's just like their homestead. The fishermen in one area have so many lakes and nobody else from another area can come in and fish those lakes. They fish them every year and that's how they govern themselves accordingly, and that's how they make their living.

But, Mr. Minister, you keep imposing these species limits, and in the type of arguments that you're using, and I see this, Mr. Minister, when you take and you compare that to big game and to birds. I think, Mr. Minister, the research that you have, you're going to have to reassess that, because that just

does not apply and it's not a good comparison. Absolutely not.

And we have many fishermen up North who rely on the lake, they rely on that limit; it's always been 30,000. I just use that as a comparison. Some lakes have 50,000, some have a half a million pounds. But the fishermen, they fish those lakes accordingly. If a lake has 30,000 pounds on it, they know that if they go in there the third week in August and they fish that 30,000 pounds, then that's it; that's over.

You sell a licence to an angler, a tourist fisherman. It doesn't matter if he's living in Shaunavon, Saskatchewan or if he's living in Turtleford or Spiritwood or if he's living in Black Lake. He can fish any lake in this province with that licence; he can go to any lake.

Commercial fishermen don't do that. They're tied specifically to a lake. And I would ask you, Mr. Minister, to reconsider the species limits. And I know you indicate at the end of your letter that you're prepared to examine individual situations, and I appreciate that, because there are many individual situations in northern Saskatchewan and I think you have to be flexible on this. I would ask you to withdraw the species limit until you have a chance, Mr. Minister, to go out and discuss this thoroughly with the fishermen. There may be instances where some fishermen in some areas may agree that you could put on the species limits.

But I think, Mr. Minister, it's not good policy; the comparisons are just horrible. I just can't believe that you would use these type of comparisons, and I would ask you to reconsider that and go out and meet with the fishermen. I'm prepared to attend meetings with you.

I intend to go back and meet with more fishermen. but I have fishermen up there who are really concerned, fishermen who leave a certain amount of limit for the winter. Now, all of a sudden, the species limit's on there and what happens is some of them are going to have 40 or 50,000 pounds of limit left and they're not going to be able to take it. A lot of them, they take that certain amount of limit in the summer, they leave so much for the winter.

But with the species limit it's just been a real hardship on the fishing industry. It was imposed without any consultation and I would just ask you, Mr. Minister, to reconsider that.

And you know, you talk about high grading fish. It seems to me that it would appear that it's an attack on the commercial fishing industry in this province. And I say to you, Mr. Minister, that the commercial fishermen in this province have enough problems without having to be faced with other problems such as this. And I'd ask you to reconsider that and to withdraw your species regulations for the summer until you have an opportunity to go out and discuss it thoroughly with the fishermen.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: There are a number of points raised by the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, and I won't dwell at great length on the, but I'll just make a couple of observations.

First of all, your invitation to meet up there — I have met already this winter in La Ronge with the commercial fishermen from that area. I will be in Buffalo Narrows either late summer or early fall. I've had an invitation to a meeting up there, and at that time I would avail myself of your kind invitation. If you want to set that up, I'd look forward to that to have that discussion.

There actually was consultation that started in October of 1985, the discussion paper entitled Conservation Options for the Commercial Users of the Fish Resource was circulated and there were meetings held with the fishermen. And the upshot of that was June 1986 paper, Analysis of Conservation Options for Commercial Net Fishermen.

Three options were discussed with the fishermen: one, retain commercial quotas; two, adopt species quotas; three, increase lake supervision. The majority of the respondents actually favoured options two and three, and they saw that yes, there is some need to look at species to prevent high-grading in the lakes.

So if there's a limit of 200,000 pounds on a lake, as an example, and there are several species in that lake, and the price of trout, lake trout, goes way up, people are going to try and take 200,000 pounds of lake trout. And we have to look at what the tolerance of a lake is, otherwise the fishery will completely collapse, as has happened in several lakes in the past. We've had problems in Besnard, Canoe, Dipper, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Pinehouse, Primeau, Peter Pond, where a fishery collapsed there.

What we are attempting to do is to try and ensure that there's going to be a long-term resource available to the commercial fishermen, as well as anglers who use the northern waters.

But if we allow the fishery to collapse because of high-grading, as an example, which is taking off the higher price fish, and that came about . . . And the member knows better than I do, although I deal with this every day. He's a commercial fisherman; he deals with commercial fishermen. I know he understands the problems.

But we have to be very cautious because the resource is fragile in those northern lakes. And I would like to see us come in with some kind of a plan that ensures a long-term viability so the commercial fishermen can, in fact, go on fishing as they have traditionally for many years.

The fish could collapse. We know that's a reality; that is a problem. We're trying to cope with it. We think we're coping it in a sane and reasonable fashion. The hon. member has other suggestions to make, and we certainly will take them to heart.

Mr. Goodale: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With the permission of the member for Athabasca, I would like to beg leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goodale: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's my great pleasure to introduce to you, and to members of the Assembly, 27 students and four adults, representing grade 4 at Assiniboia Elementary School in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan.

You may recall that I introduced a similar group from a different grade 4 from Assiniboia yesterday, and their counterparts are with us in the gallery, in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Chairman, today.

Their teacher is Janice Erfle, and they are accompanied today also by Debbie Payant, Betty Peterson, and Wanda Deringer.

I hope that the students enjoy their visit to the legislature and find the proceedings of the legislature to be interesting and educational. And, Mr. Chairman, I would ask all hon. members to join me in welcoming these young students from Assiniboia.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Parks, Recreation and Culture Ordinary Expenditure - Vote 39

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to welcome the students and their teachers from Assiniboia.

Mr. Minister, I'm not going to belabour this because time is running short, but I do want to say that over the years you have worked from tolerances to species and each one creates a hardship for the commercial fishing industry.

I think that it's time that we started to work more closely with the commercial fishermen. They were the first up in that country, and they use those lakes . . . and you talk about the collapses of lakes. lakes go up and down. Fish run in cycles. You've got a biologist sitting right there. He knows that fish run in cycles. Canoe Lake is up. Big Peter Pond is up, right now. Little Peter Pond is up. There's pickerel wherever you set your nets this year. They weren't there last year, and that has happened over the years — fish run in cycles and they always have.

And it's not because of high grading or over-fishing. You can go to Delaronde Lake and that lake has been commercially fished for all these years. Or you can go into Dore Lake and it has its cycles with white fish and pickerel and jackfish. So that argument is not fair. And if you talk to a commercial fisherman who have been commercial fishing, and their fathers and their grandfathers, I think that's the type of information that you need, Mr. Minister. And I ask you to go and get that information, and I look forward to your meeting in Buffalo. But I would just request once more that you withdraw those regulations because they are creating a hardship and a concern amongst the commercial fishermen who, I indicated to you, are having enough problems as it is right now.

The time is running short and I have so much to get through, I think we're going to have to probably wait till next year to get a lot of this through. I wanted to cover many other items, to talk about the article about the prairie fishermen hooking record cheques.

I think, and you indicate in your letter, that there's no certainty as to what is happening to prices. Prices are up and down with the . . . and you talked about one trout being up one year and down the next. And that's what's happening.

And it's happening under the freshwater fish marketing corporation. I indicated to you that it's time that we got out of that fish marketing corporation. I don't mind them being an agency, a selling agency, to sell our fish, but there is absolutely no reason why we should be taking the millions of pounds of fish from northern Saskatchewan and trucking it 800 to a 1,000 miles, July and August, to Winnipeg for processing. We in Saskatchewan lose all the processing jobs, and as a result you have a poorer quality of fish. And I think you should have your biologist check into that because you just cannot handle fish and take them that far, especially in that heat.

And I would ask you to consider setting up some processing plants in the province and leave the federal corporation there as a selling agency, but by all means let's do our own processing in this province.

Did you want to comment on that, Mr. Minister, at all, or should I move to another item.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: We're not disagreeing on that.

Mr. Thompson: Okay. So you give me the agreement that you will look into those concerns. And you've agreed that you will drop that species.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I can't drop the species lower, Mr. Chairman, because we're into that as a fish management strategy. I am prepared to take another look at it and see if we're doing the right thing. I'm advised we are. But obviously I'm going to listen to the fishermen as well as the officials and the biologist. But I really have a lot of problem with this species limit. I get very nervous when I think how fragile the resource is, and we want to make sure we've got it there in perpetuity. So we're just trying to find the best way to ensure that.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Yes, it is a fragile industry and I think that if we leave it to the commercial fishermen, they have always handled that resource well. Biologists go in and tell them what the lake can handle as a limit; the commercial fishermen, they adhere to those regulations, and I think that's the route that we should be taking and continue to take.

I did want to talk to you about the bear hunting in the province. Last year you imposed a limit. You actually said that lynx could not be trapped, then you changed your mind and you allowed trappers to produce one lynx. Could you indicate if that is still on? Also could you indicate if you are going to add any more on to that list, or are you going to take the lynx off?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the lynx population is still very low. Of the 134 accidentally caught lynx measured last fall, only five were kittens, suggesting that the lynx population does indeed remain very low. So we'll be carrying on with the program again next year of no quota for lynx. We'll work out a mechanism for accidentally caught lynx.

One suggestion that's being bruited about is that we take proceeds of money from accidentally caught lynx and put it into studies for humane trapping. And as the hon. member know, that's quite an issue right now, fur trapping.

(1145)

The argument with Great Britain isn't really over. That was just the first skirmish in what's going to be a long and protracted war. And tomorrow morning in Winnipeg the wildlife ministers across Canada are meeting to discuss this particular issue and what we should be doing about it. I realize this is incidental to your question regarding lynx, but I think it's part of the big picture.

Mr. Thompson: Once again I disagree with you, Mr. Minister, when you talk about the lynx quotas being up and down. They also run in cycles. They run . . . when the rabbits are plentiful, then we have lots of lynx. They run up and down.

Once again you're putting a hardship on the trappers. All your policies have zeroed in on making it rough for the trappers in northern Saskatchewan. Either the trappers, the hunters, or the commercial fishermen — you've zeroed in on every part of their life, and I think it's time that that came to a stop.

There's pockets where there's lots of lynx, and there's trappers who were caught in a vicious circle up

there, didn't know what to do. The lynx prices have dropped dramatically. You used the high price of lynx.

Leave it alone. Let the trappers look after their own trapping blocks. They have their own zones. The type of information that you're getting is wrong information. The policies you're using are wrong-headed, and all you're doing is creating a hardship on the commercial fishermen, the trappers, and the hunters in northern Saskatchewan.

I want to just touch on the meeting that you're going to, Mr. Minister, in Winnipeg tomorrow. And I would urge you to urge your counterparts to take action. I ask you to become a leader. I've discussed this with you before. And I'm asking you to go down there and create a committee in this province, a committee of your officials, a committee of legitimate trappers, trappers who sell fur on a regular basis, and lots of fur. And I would ask you to let that committee work and to go out and to seek information on humane ways of taking fur in other countries and other provinces.

And if I just could take a couple of minutes, if you take a look over the last 25, 30 years, there has been tremendous advancements made in the humane taking of fur in our province. And I could go on and on, and I wanted to, but the time is short. But there has been tremendous advancements in the humane way of taking fur.

And I think that you should maybe get some of the animal rights groups to sit on that committee and tour other countries — tour the North and find out how the trappers operate, go into the Territories and see how they operate.

And what is better? to let the animals increase to a point where they starve out . . . they clean out everything else — what happens — and then they get diseased and they die a cruel life ; or let the trappers control nature? And they've always controlled their areas.

And I think you have to get that information, and that can be done through a committee. And maybe ask them to hold off for 5, 10, years so you can bring that information forward.

And have the animal rights groups involved because what they're doing just doesn't make any sense. They go after the trappers in the Northwest Territories and northern Saskatchewan where they don't have a means of fighting back. I don't see them going to Spain and going into the bull rings and trying to stop a bullfight, which I think is far more inhumane than anything that you could have. They don't go near there because they know what would happen — the matador would probably turn on them.

But let me tell you, I think it's time that those groups realized that there's a better way of doing this rather than destroy the livelihoods of trappers all over this country. And I would ask you tomorrow to ask them to consider a committee and to travel to Sweden and other countries and ask those groups to get involved. And maybe that we could work this thing out and to the betterment of the whole industry.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I'd just like to comment on the latter part of the hon. member's remarks. Actually, I instigated this meeting tomorrow in Winnipeg. I also sent a telegram some time ago to Joe Clark, External Affairs, protesting the actions being taken in the British parliament. Two years ago, on the national stage in Ottawa, I was the only provincial minister who took a stand on fur trapping in the face of an argument with the animals rights folks.

Since that time, other provincial ministers of wildlife have . . . whether they're giving into pressure, I don't know what's going on in some of the other provinces. I know that the Alberta and Manitoba

ministers agree with me, and they're going to support the stand I'm going to be taking tomorrow, which is advocating precisely what you've been suggesting to me in the last number of weeks.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I congratulate you for taking that stand and, as you say, you instigated that and I think that you can continue to take the leadership role, and the province of Saskatchewan, if you can get those groups together and work in closely to try and solve that problem, and I congratulate you for that. And I also wish you success tomorrow because there are a lot of trappers in northern Saskatchewan and northern Canada who will be relying on what you do there tomorrow.

I have a lot of other stuff that I'd like to go through with you, Mr. Minister, but in order to accommodate the time period and some of my other colleagues who have a few questions, I think I'm going to have to close off, and I would just ask you to consider what I've said about the trapping. I would ask you to consider the species limits. I would ask you to take that off and let's have a cooling down period here. Let's look at reality. I would ask you to reassess the lynx situation.

And another situation I want to add, Mr. Minister, is the corridors. I see there's no corridor between Glaslyn and Meadow Lake, and I don't want to get into an argument over that right now. And I would ask you to take a look at these corridors, and either they become for everybody or let's get rid of them from Meadow Lake north. Because that's where they are; there's nothing between Glaslyn and Meadow Lake. There were none there last year, and if there's any there now, the signs are not up.

But if you're going to retain the corridors between Meadow Lake and up in northern Saskatchewan, then by all means make sure they're put on in the southern part also. But I would prefer to see them lifted. I think that we have conservation officers up in that area and they do a good job, and they work closely with trappers and hunters. And I think that can be solved in another manner.

With that, Mr. Minister, I'm going to have to close off and turn it over to my colleague from Cumberland. But I do want to thank you, Mr. Minister, and your staff for the answers that you've given me today. I sincerely hope that you will consider what I have said. I have much more that I wanted to go over, but the time just does not permit. With your meeting tomorrow in Winnipeg, I want to close off by wishing you the best of luck down there.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I'd like to thank the hon. member and also give you an assurance: if you have a number of questions there that you didn't get around to today, if you send them to me in writing, I'll respond in writing and you'll have them back in two weeks.

Mr. Goulet: Yes, I would like to, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to direct some questions at the minister, and I'll restrict my comments to the areas of trapping and fishing, because of the time factor.

I would like to concur with the member from Athabasca, you know, as the other northern MLA, that the issues of trapping and fishing are extremely important for people in regards to their economic livelihood.

An Hon. Member: So is the uranium issue.

Mr. Goulet: And the member, of course . . . the Deputy Premier, of course, talks about uranium, and we've always dealt with that issue on a more practical level than he has in his six years of government, but we want to stick to the issue of fishing and trapping. He doesn't think that they're important, but I feel that trapping and fishing are extremely important, so I want to stick to the fishing and trapping issue.

Now, Mr. Minister, you mentioned that you are going to this meeting in Winnipeg discussing, you know, the protection of the livelihood of trappers in Winnipeg in regards to a counter-strategy to the animal rights activists and so on. It appears that you are out there doing a lot of help for the trappers and so on.

Now I look at it this way, in this province in the past six years — and I mentioned that last year, and the member from Athabasca has raised it — that in regards to help to the trappers, direct support to the trappers, a lot of that has gone down. We saw that in regards to the subsidy that used to go to the trappers' organizations, and the fact that we' haven't seen something, let's say in the area of humane trapping, as an example. That issue has been here for along time. It's not only an issue in the modern day but an issue in the traditional Indian culture as well.

I might add in that aspect, that there used to be a term, even in the Cree culture where the word "kuhochinan" was used to denote a protection and a balance of the harmony with people and the animals that they were taking, you know, to create their livelihood. And that word simply meant that if you indeed allowed an animal to escape from the trap, you ought to find it, otherwise what befell the animal in terms of sickness, the belief said, that you in turn would have that sickness. In other words, if you unnecessarily destroyed the animal in a cruel manner, that would befall you in the long run. So that there was this . . . in other words, there was this concept of humane trapping was existent in the Cree culture and I might add also, in the Dene culture as well.

And so you are seeing this aspect as a modern day exercise. When I look at it as a person involved in trapping when I was born, people used to talk about the dead-fall traps of long ago, and people talked about snares and the importance of improving different ways of snaring, so that the suffocation method of snares was utilized so that the animal wouldn't suffer, and also the fact that you had the aspect where you utilized leg-hold traps, you had improvements on the leg-hold traps to get a Stop-loss trap with a spring on it. Then later on there was improvements in regards to the Conibear trap. And there's been a lot of other examples that have come, you know, on the wayside that are impractical to this date, and basically we are stuck with leg-hold and Conibear traps.

So what I'm relating is a little bit of the overall history which I was involved in, in regards to the trapping. There seems to be an impression sometimes in the public that there hasn't been an attempt in regards to getting more humane trapping methods. What I'm saying is that there has been, in the traditional culture, that concern, and there has been a concern in practice by the trappers in regards to changes in method that they have made in the past, you know 50-some-odd years in the trapping industry.

So what I'm saying is that maybe the strategy the minister should be utilizing is working directly with the trapper. In regards to the heavy subsidies we see in forestry — 8 million to Weyerhaeuser — and we see the infrastructure that we build in regards to roads to the mines, tremendous amount of provincial money being used in that, there used to be moneys allotted for trappers and helping them out and helping them survive. But I saw that, in the past six years, disappearing. There seems to be an attempt at pushing out the traditional resource users so that forestry and mining companies can have free access to the bush, or the tourist outfitters. It appears that way.

I want to get it straight from the minister whether or not he sees that in the long run, because that's what I'm seeing and that's the feedback I'm getting from the trappers and the fishermen. Could we get a more positive statement from the minister in regards to his real concern for the trapper and the fisherman?

Now that he is going to Winnipeg, can we get a statement that when he comes back, he will not only in

direct consultation with the trappers and the fishermen, but also in regards to providing the material basis for a move towards a more humane trapping system and that in the long run, that's the direction that we're moving. could we get a statement from the minister on that regard?

Hon Mr. Maxwell: Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd be delighted to make a statement in that regard. I'd remind the hon. member to look at my record over the last number of years and the public statements I've made about trapping, the strongest of which was in Ottawa on the national stage, despite objections from several groups who were protesting. I said, as long as I am the minister responsible for wildlife in Saskatchewan, our residents, and primarily northern residents, and the members of our trappers association shall continue to trap in their traditional methods.

Now having said that, we also put on 13 schools and trained 328 students in the last year, in trapping. We're taking the money which the hon. member talked about, which used to go directly to the fur blocs, and we're putting the money now into the Fur Institute of Canada. And they are on a program to do several things: trap research and development, trapper education, public information — the very things we're talking about to tell the public what is going on in the trapping industry; and fur bearing management. So we're supporting those things.

(1200)

We're also putting money into providing, because there has been research done as the member from Athabasca said, in other countries, on humane traps. Now I know the argument, there's no such thing as a humane trap because eventually an animal dies. But we are providing what we consider to be humane traps. We're paying for them and we are providing them.

And just on the argument about trapping and there's no humane way to kill an animal, George Erasmus, who's familiar to all of us here, made an excellent point when he talked about what the animal rights activists are doing, is they are pursuing a policy of cultural genocide aimed against the natives and Metis and the Dene people and against the Inuit people for the very kinds of things that they are doing.

They are saying it's okay for us for breed animals in captivity — cattle, sheep, poultry, fish harvesting. We grow them for one purpose — to slaughter them and eat them. On the other hand, our trappers are not growing something, they are out actively pursuing something in the wild. They don't grow them in captivity and slaughter them. So I think there's quite a dichotomy here. In fact, I think the viewpoint of the animals rights is totally indefensible.

Mr. Goulet: One last question in regards to . . . directly to the fishermen. I would concur again with the member from Athabasca in regards to re-examining and reviewing the case in regards to species limit and tolerances and so on, and getting back to the people and really consulting with people.

And the point that I want to make in this regard is this. There's a tendency that rather than consultation and working with and co-operation and dealing with fishermen, that there was tendency to hold back, and once you hold back, then the enforcement system, you know, comes to take precedence.

And every year . . . last year, I mentioned this and I'll mention it again, that some people who are utilizing the lakes in northern Saskatchewan are saying that there is a . . . they do not mind the enforcement aspect as long as it's done on a fair and equitable basis. That's one thing.

One thing they're telling me again this year is this. We see the special treatment being made to tourist people. And that's what the people are saying. And I would like the minister in regards to when you do a

more intensive process that you've started already, that you examine that issue again and make sure that, in regards to the question of enforcement, that it's fair enforcement. People don't want to see, you know, people in the tourist area being bypassed when they're being stopped all the time. And that's the feedback I'm getting. I would like you to check into that.

And the other one is, I would like to see you look more at prevention and developmental aspect of it and greater co-operation with people rather than trying to edge into the enforcement, into the enforcement area.

Enforcement will always be a necessary aspect of it. We know that. Ninety-two per cent of the problems of enforcement are in relation to the angling . . . in the angling record, and we know that 8 per cent are in the area of commercial fishing, so that over 90 per cent are in the area of angling, so that enforcement is always an important aspect of the overall strategy.

But what I'm saying is that there's a tendency to overshift that direction rather than going back to the overall conservation and development with and co-operation with people. And unless that strategy of co-operation is shared with people, the enforcement costs will climb without being effective. And I would like to see a more effective strategy in that regard, and I would like to hear you make another comment in that regard. And so with that, I will transfer it over, but I would like to hear you make a comment on that.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, the whole area of enforcement, I'll tackle that piece first. Obviously, when you're dealing with public, you're dealing with user groups, consumers, be they tourists or commercial fishermen, always has to be considered a very delicate matter and has to be handled with some tact. We are improving, in the enforcement areas, the qualifications of our officers who have been working at that, and in the dealings with the folks.

You're right. The vast majority of the violations that are occurring and the majority of the convictions that come out are in the area of sports angling; it's not in the area of commercial fishing. And most of the commercial fishermen — I say most, not all, and we know this — most commercial fishermen realize that if they plunder the resource, it's not going to be there. So many of them do practise conservation, and I know that they are policing themselves in many of the co-op groups, the ones I've talked to.

We have done, I think, a reasonable job over the years of making sure that we consult with groups, be they commercial fishermen or the anglers. And I'd remind the hon. member that I took the unpopular move two or three years ago of reducing the species limit that could be taken by anglers as well, when we felt that there was undue pressure on the fishery and it could no longer support the kind of limits that we were allowing previously, so they were reduced.

Mr. Calvert: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a few very specific and short questions about the privatization of the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park. I have here a copy of the development agreement and the commercial lease, and I want to congratulate you, Mr. Minister, for providing these documents to the public.

Mr. Minister, a quick question. The development agreement sets out those facilities which are to be added to the park by course of this lease agreement that runs for the 21 years. It lists them in some detail, including an 18-hole miniature golf course, bumper-boat facility, go-cart, batting cage, the video arcade building, and so on. Mr. Minister, is this the definitive list of facilities that can be added to the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park under the terms of this agreement?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I think I'm understanding it to say, is this list of potential activity definitive, or if someone came back . . . if the proponents came back with some other idea, could it be considered? Yes, we would consider any other proposal that came in.

Mr. Calvert: Mr. Minister, have you considered, to date, any other proposal for another facility that is not currently listed in the development agreement?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, proponents are currently in the process of constructing three items which are in the agreement — the camp ground, camp kitchen, and a recreational games area. And they have not asked to do anything else that is not already in the agreement; at least we can't find anything. The officials say they haven't approached us with any other ideas.

Mr. Calvert: Well then, Mr. Minister, let me refer you to the Wednesday edition of the Moose Jaw Times-Herald, Wednesday, June 22, in which it is reported, and I know from witnessing it, that under construction just now at the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park is a 150-foot long slide with six runways. I have nothing against a long slide at all; it's just that I didn't see it in the agreement, and I understand that no approval has been given for that item of construction.

Now, Mr. Minister, on page 4 of the commercial lease agreement, section 5(a), it is indicated that the lessee, and I quote, "fast food, souvenir, and stroller rentals will not be allowed."

It is also reported in this Times-Herald article that the lessee now is planning to have an ice cream parlour on the property and an Indian handcraft shop, both of which would be described in my language as fast food and souvenir. So would you see that as a violation of the agreement?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, they're in compliance with a different agreement. They had purchased an existing facility in there which they were able to carry on, which already was there and it was in existence.

I may say I'm not familiar with the Times-Herald article, but there is agreement for any portable facility to be brought in, and it may be a portable facility. I don't know because I haven't see that particular article. Perhaps I could get a copy later and I could look into that one for you.

Mr. Calvert: Well, Mr. Minister, I hope you'll do that. It doesn't increase our confidence in this agreement with the developer to see these things happening that are not in the agreement. We begin to wonder, well what else will happen that's not covered by the agreement.

Mr. Minister, as I read through the agreement, I find statements which I find to be a bit contradictory. I read in section 2.01 of the development agreement, in the first sentence:

The developer agrees to design, develop, and construct, at its own cost and expense, the proposed new facilities.

I turn the page to section 2.07.1, where I read that the province agrees to contribute 20 per cent of the total cost of phase one up to a maximum of \$40,000. The province agrees to contribute 20 per cent of the total expenditure for phase two up to a maximum of \$120,000. I read that to say that the province is willing to invest \$160,000 into these new facilities in the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park.

I ask, Mr. Minister, if you think that's fair when other individuals in the community of Moose Jaw and

the province are building their own amusement parks at their own expense without public assistance. In this case, you're willing to provide another \$160,000 for these facilities, while other business people are left with no support from your government.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, this isn't inconsistent, and if you look at some of the other agreements that we've allowed, we've negotiated with people who are putting something into a park, what we do is we own the park and they lease, they pay a lease fee to us. So they don't own it. So therefore we're responsible for constructing infrastructure. So if it's waterworks or anything of that ilk, that's our responsibility because we own physically the ground.

So that's why that clause is in there, and that's what we're providing for them, is infrastructure. We do the same thing in other parks. So that really isn't inconsistent.

Mr. Calvert: Well, Mr. Minister, when the lease is complete in 21 years, will the province of Saskatchewan own those facilities that we're paying for then?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: We'll own the infrastructure, yes.

Mr. Calvert: Own the infrastructure, Mr. Minister, last year in these estimates you assured us in this House that the park was not for sale. Mr. Minister, you've said, and I quote:

We will own the parks. There's no parks for sale ever. It's completely excluded by The Parks Act that that could ever happen.

Mr. Minister, I read in this agreement that you are willing to sell, you've offered an option to purchase to the lessee, all of the buildings and improvements — cages, buildings, and so on — on the property. It's in the agreement. you're willing to offer those buildings and improvements to the lessee this year for a total of \$174,000. But if he waits until the year 2004, he could have the whole lot for \$1. Mr. Minister, why are you willing to sell the buildings in our publicly owned park?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: We won't sell the land in the park and we won't sell the park. But we don't mind selling someone a building if they're running an operation within there. We hold the hammer on it because we can renew the lease or choose not to renew the lease, as we see fit, depending on whether or not the proponent lives up to the terms of the lease. So we own the park, we own the ground, we own the infrastructure, and we don't mind selling them some buildings because we have the hammer at the end of the lease period.

(1215)

Mr. Calvert: And so, Mr. Minister, at the end of the lease period, if we decide not to renew the lease, we're going to have an animal park that has animals, land, and sewer pipes but no buildings or cages, because they will almost certainly then belong to the lessee who will be able to buy the whole lot for \$1.

Mr. Minister, another issue that we were concerned about and we fear happening, was accessibility to the park in terms of gate fee charges. I'll just raise this with you and then defer to other colleagues who have other questions.

Mr. Minister, you've set out in the agreement the gate fees that will be allowed under the term for the next five years. And I want to compare those with the figures . . . well I'm going to use 1985, before you raised the rates last year.

In 1985, Mr. Minister, if a family visited the animal park — they didn't have an annual pass; just came to visit — and that family consisted of two adults, three children, one grandparent, they could enter the park and enjoy all of the facilities of the park for \$4.75. That same family visiting the park in 1992, just to enter the park, will be charged \$22 just to get through the gate, and then will face a variety of other charges and fees once inside, for all the amusements.

Mr. Minister, I submit that in fact what we're doing here is creating a park for those of middle and upper income, and we will in fact be barring those of lower incomes from visiting the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I think, Mr. Chairman, what we have to do is take the comparison from 1987 when the rates were adjusted, and not old rates prior to that in 1985, because as we know, last year rates were adjusted for all of the provincial parks, upwards, and left that way, and no rate increase this year, or none planned for next year either.

So in 1987 the rate for an adult was \$2, and the rate for a student was \$1.50. yes, they're increased in 1988 to 3.75 and 2.50 respectively, and I think that's the comparison that has to be made.

I think it also has to be pointed out that the proponents are investing a very large sum of money in this park to put in new facilities that were not there before, which I think will make Moose Jaw really a tourist attraction, more so than it was before. I think a large number of people will avail themselves of the facilities there because there will be more things put in there. That costs money.

When the government was operating the park, we were losing something like \$250,000 a year of taxpayers' money. We're not losing any taxpayers' money. These people are taking the risk; they're putting in new facilities. And yes, the fees have gone up to reflect the fact that there's increased number of facilities in the park.

Mr. Hagel: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'd like to ask you a question regarding employment and the employment impact of the privatization sale of the wild animal park in moose Jaw. I ask you, Mr. Minister, if you will respond to two or three questions but I'll put them together and if you would respond to them together as well.

Could you please advise this House, Mr. Minister, how many employees were working at the park, were assigned to the park, just prior to the privatization sale of the park? And how many of those . . . which of those employees, Mr. Minister, which of those employees, Mr. Minister, which of those employees are continuing to work at the park to be employed by the current private owners? I would also ask you, Mr. Minister, are those employees continuing with the same rate of pay and benefits? And I would also ask you as well, Mr. Minister, are those employees continuing with the same rate of pay and benefits? And I would also ask you as well, Mr. Minister, what has come of the employees who are no longer there, and what undertakings or commitments have you made, or will you make, to ensure that those employees will not go without employment at the same rate of pay and benefits that they were privileged to prior to your privatization sale of the wild animal park?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, there were 12 employees involved, seven permanent classified service employees and five permanent labour services employees. One took lateral transfer to Moose Jaw district; two resigned to accept other employment; two elected re-employment list to accept employment with the new operator. And I don't know what their benefits are or what their pay is; it's between the two parties involved. So I'm sorry, I really don't have that information. I imagine we could

find it, but I would not find it today; we would have to ask them for it.

In labour service: three resigned to accept other employment; two elected to exercise bumping options and we placed them into vacancies in Buffalo Pound Park. So anybody that remained within classified service or remained within government would have no difference to benefits, they would just be bumping into another position. The ones I can't tell you about are the people who elected to stay on with the new proponents.

Mr. Hagel: Mr. Minister, would you provide me that specific information within the month then?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, unless they refuse to tell me how much they're paying their employees. Certainly I can get that within a week, I would think. Do you want the list of all of the people who were involved and where they went? I can provide that for you too.

Mr. Solomon: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a couple of technical questions I'd like to ask you and your department officials. Recently in the newspaper there's been a report that the Qu'Appelle lake has been . . . I guess the lake in which a number of cisco fish or tullibees have been found dead because of the heat and the lack of oxygen and so on, and the drought circumstances in southern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, how widespread is that in the lakes near Regina or the southern part of the province, and is it progressing into other species as well? I know the cisco or the tullibee are the first species to be affected by the lack of oxygen, but are there other species involved? And finally, what contingency plan does the department have in terms of assisting and resolving this problem?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, the member's correct. We are experiencing some severe problems. It's limited for the moment to two lakes, Mission and Katepwa, and it is tullibee or cisco — it's the same species of fish. It hasn't affected the other fish, and we're hopeful it will not be affecting the other fish. This is driven by nature. There are some things over which we really have no control, so this is out with our . . . I'm afraid this belongs to a higher authority than any government to deal with it.

Mr. Solomon: I suppose perhaps one of the contingencies would be to lift the levels of controls on the number of fish that could be caught, perhaps encouraging people to fish the lakes out and have some kind of restocking plan. But that leads me to another question, and you may want to comment on that point, Mr. Minister.

There are some lakes in southern Saskatchewan, in particular the only I'm familiar with is Dead Lake at Midale, which has a very low, low level of water. Some fishermen have told me that they're concerned that because of the low level of water that that lake and other lakes in southern Saskatchewan, come winter, will freeze and therefore all the species will die.

Would it be appropriate for the department to encourage those lakes to be fished out and restocked before this happens, if indeed the levels of lakes are low throughout the year?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: currently we're doing a major inventory study of all the lakes in southern Saskatchewan, and when we've completed the inventory, then we're going to develop a contingency plan. We do, as you know, do a lot of stocking. We've really increased it over the last number of years. We're also looking for other lakes that would lend themselves to stocking.

You're right about the winter kill. When the water level goes low and it freezes right to the bottom,

there's no oxygen for the fish. We have, in co-operation with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, run aeration programs to get oxygen into those lakes to prevent winter kill.

Mr. Solomon: A final question, Mr. Chairman, if I may. Has the department the capacity, or indeed the resources, to — if this was to happen, if the aeration program is not a possibility — to net the fish and move them to another location?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, I'm advised by the biologists that it just wouldn't be feasible, Mr. Chairman. We couldn't do it.

Mr. Lyons: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The questions to the minister will be forthcoming. I just want to make a few brief announce . . . or, pardon me, a few brief comments regarding some of the issues that have arisen in the recreation and cultural areas of his department.

I note with interest, Mr. Minister, that while the overall budget for Parks, Recreation and Culture has increased in 1988-89 by 6.8 per cent or 5,359,200 that that percentage increase did not go to programs or services to the people of the province. Instead, it went to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation or, as some people call it, Sask fraud co.

What we see instead, Mr. Minister, is basically a hold-the-line . . . it's actually a decrease of \$1,200 for services from your department. And I want to refer here to some of the individual programs and services, for example: sports and recreation, a 1.5 per cent decrease; arts and multiculturalism, 4.2 per cent decrease; Western Development Museums, 2.2 per cent decrease; arts, multi, heritage and museum grants, 15.1 per cent decrease; sports and recreation programs and grants, 40.5 per cent decrease; provincial cultural and recreational facilities grants, a 15 per cent decrease, with the program ending on March 31 of this year.

So that brings to my mind several questions, one which is a very general question, Mr. Minister, and that is that since the first year or the year that I've been appointed critic for this particular department, I've tried to find some kind of direction that the government is giving to the arts community and cultural community and recreational community in the province. And it seems to me that as I examine this, that I can't find any type of overall philosophic direction or any overall developmental direction. I'm wondering if you could comment on that.

What precisely, what plan do you have for the recreation and culture fields in the province of Saskatchewan over the next few years, or do you have any kind of plan in place?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to respond to that. We actually have a heritage strategy paper which will be released later this year. There is a recreation strategy paper being done. There's an independent study done by the three umbrella groups. For those who aren't familiar, we talk about the umbrella groups being Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, and Sask Sport.

We've had consultations; they've done a major study with recommendations. Virtually I agree with all of their recommendations for the future, the way we're going, the responsibility of the department vis-a-vis the volunteer groups, what kind of things we should be doing as a department, what kind of things best belong in the hands of the volunteer groups.

A bulk of funding as we know for those organizations, comes from the lottery system, and they had the same amount of money last year as the year before, and they'll have probably, it looks like, a growth in

the trust fund for this year. So there's no reduction in funding with those particular groups. The Western Development Museum, which the hon. member mentioned, received an additional \$175,000 a month or so ago when I spoke at the Saskatchewan Museum Association meeting. So yes, we do have a plan in place.

Oh, I should mention too, in the area of multiculturalism I've struck a task force to study multiculturalism in the province. They will be operational in July. They'll make a final report back, having met and consulted with groups, probably in December, at which time we'll be studying their recommendations with a view to bringing in a new multicultural Act. So I think there are an awful lot of exciting things happening on this side of the portfolio.

Mr. Lyons: Mr. Minister, your answer leaves a few more questions. First of all, in the area of funding and the relationship to the trust, I notice that while last year the fees that were paid, licensing fees paid by the trust, for \$75,000 there seems to be a slight increase this year of . . . from \$75,000 to \$7.8 million.

And I'm wondering if you could please explain the rationale for that kind of increase in licensing fees. I must say that, while your government has raised auto rates and all kinds of other fees, park fees and everything, I don't think we have ever seen that kind of a fee increase, a licensing fee increase, probably in the history of any jurisdiction anywhere in North America.

(1230)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Very simple explanation, Mr. Chairman. The lottery is actually owned by the government, and the groups who benefit from the lotteries receive the same amount of money as they had the previous year. What we did was, when the Finance officials got involved and took a look at the operations then, as we're all aware, there was an extremely close scrutiny of all aspect of government in the last year, in 1987.

One of the things that was looked at was the lotteries, and it was discovered that there was a sum of money within the lottery system that was basically a reserve within their system. So they were left with enough money to operate, enough money to provide all of their groups precisely what they'd received the year before with no reduction, enough money to fund several other activities such as the Sask First program, Saskatchewan Express, fund a sports hall of fame, the admin centre for sport, and various other activities like that, grants to museums association.

There was still enough money; the government felt we could take some of that money and use it for other operations within government. As the hon. member would also be aware, funds went into things like Jeux Canada Games and the Western Canada Games, and that was set up for the lottery system originally. The concept would be, it would fund sport, culture, and recreation, and that's what it's been doing.

Mr. Lyons: Well, Mr. Minister, I don't want to get into an argument with you today over whether or not some of the groups received the same amount of money or they didn't. I read off a list earlier about some areas where in fact there had been cuts, had been decreases. Seems to me that when the folks from treasury board came along and did the increase in the licensing fee, that certainly there should have been at least the amount of money retained by the department that was equal to the costs of inflation. Because I know that there are groups in the province who in fact have contacted me, and who in fact are going to feel some kind of squeeze in their operation, carrying out their activities because of the cut-backs.

But I want to turn to one of the programs which I had mentioned, and that was the question of the

provincial facilities grant program. And I notice that that program which was announced in 1983 and had set aside a certain amount of money to the tune of \$32 million for the construction of capital facilities for culture and recreational purposes in the province, I notice that at March 31 of this year, when the program ended, that there was something like \$7.3 million; that there was only \$24.7 million left over from the . . . or used out of that particular program.

Now what I was wondering, Mr. Minister, that there was a \$7.3 million surplus left in the facilities capital grants program, and we had an issue develop throughout the province in regards to the arenas and the construction of the arenas or, pardon me, the end of the viable life span for many arenas in this province which were constructed during the centennial year program.

And I could refer to a number of announcements that, for example, from the Star-Phoenix . . . pardon me, Leader-Post of January 23, 1988 where you made certain comments regarding the arenas and how many were in disrepair. I understand that your department did an examination of 145 arenas. It was found that 17 of the arenas should be closed, 32 used only with caution, and 78 of those arenas requiring modification.

And I wonder, Mr. Minister, and I'm going to put forward a proposal to you, that given that there was 7.3 million left over the facilities grants program, would you not consider a program of spending that \$7.3 million to upgrade those arenas that need upgrading and to repair those arenas which need repairing in those communities.

I don't have to tell you, Mr. Minister, that in fact that the arenas form part of the heart of many, many small rural communities in this province and that to see the end of an arena in fact takes out part of that heart, and hence part of the soul of that particular community, and just is another stake in the heart of rural Saskatchewan.

I want to propose to you, sir, that a program which would bring up to, either a provincial granting program covering 25 per cent of the cost or repair or replacement of an arena to a maximum of \$50,000, or . . . and/or provincial assistance on interest rates for the arenas up to — and I throw out the figure of \$200,000 because I'm using the \$7.3 million as the base funding figure at zero per cent interest rate — that they provide up to \$200,000 money or any combination of one or two or modification of one of the two, given the fact that we've got 7.3 million left over in that facilities grants program.

I wonder, would you be in the position to consider that kind of program? It seems to me that it's something that everybody in both sides of the House could agree on. I think everybody agrees that there's a need for the repair of the arenas.

I did take, however, exception to one of your comments which was that some arenas are only three and four miles apart. And I'd like to, as a subsidiary, as you: how many arenas did you find that were three and four miles apart that need repair?

My basic question is: will you consider providing money out of the facilities grants program for the reconstruction or the replacement and the rebuilding of those arenas and repair which need it?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Several points, Mr. Chairman. The first one is: the study that was done wasn't done by my department. It was done by Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, which we subsequently received a copy for perusal. But your figures obviously are correct in what you said.

We recognize that there is a problem with arenas, in fact with recreational facilities in general around the

province. There are swimming pools that are in trouble, as well as arenas, curling rinks, a whole host of things. Lots of correspondence has been flowing in on that particular subject, and we recognize that there's going to be a need for some help to the communities because the cost of building a new facility is just horrendous. So there's going to have to be, in my view, some kind of a program.

Now we've already, as a department, designed a program to fill this need on a priority basis, depending on the ones that are condemned, the ones that are in states of various disrepair. We've already designed a program, and it hasn't been finally approved yet, and as you're well aware, Mr. Chairman, you sat on that committee yourself and looked at the program design.

There are all kinds of options within the program, whether we go matching grant with communities, whether we look at interest rates, which is a suggestion I hadn't had before, but I thank the member for making it. There are all kinds of variables we could build into the design of the program, but we are anxious to come up with a program and fund it in such a manner over a period of years that these communities will, in fact, be able to take advantage of it and benefit from it.

But I should point out to the hon. member that there isn't any money left over in that recreational facilities grant, the capital grant. It's going to be expended over the next couple of years. There are some applications that are, I believe, only just came in . . . the construction is not finished on some, so there will be pay-out to them upon completion of the project. So the money that was committed to that program is still committed to the program.

What we're talking about is a new influx of funds, a new program, new money.

Mr. Lyons: Just on your last comments, Mr. Minister, am I to understand that the program didn't finish on March 31, that people in fact still have the opportunity to send in applications for that money? No, you're saying that the . . .

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: that was the application deadline . . .

Mr. Lyons: Okay. You received applications up till March 31, and that there will be in fact the remaining 7.3 money disbursed out. could you tell me whether in fact the applications that have come in, do they take the \$7.3 million . . . do they apprehend that 7.3, or will there be some funds left over?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Depending on the total uptake now and exactly when they finish construction and what they end up constructing, we assume that all of the money budgeted will be spent. It could be that it won't all be spent. We don't know that yet, because there's a couple more years to run before its program's finished and how much we'll be putting into it.

Mr. Lyons: I'm glad to hear, Mr. Minister, that your government in fact is considering the program to upgrade the arenas or to repair or replace those arenas and to find some kind of funding for that. I think that that's a laudable effort and I know that those communities in which the arenas are in disrepair, or their recreational facilities are in disrepair, will be glad to hear that good news.

I take it from one of your previous answers that you are now announcing the multicultural task force, the review task force. Is that right? Are you making the announcement now? And I wonder if you could outline who is on the task force panel.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Well I'm not really making the announcement today because the announcement was made last week at a function I spoke at in Prince Albert. And when I met the multi . . .

An. Hon. Member: Well you're not getting much press.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: It was not a big media event, I may say, where I met with the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. If the member for Regina Centre would just pay a little attention, he may hear something of value to his constituents.

The Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan, out of courtesy, I felt, should be informed first, before we make any big splash or big announcement. All of the people who have been selected, and I may say they were nominated by various multicultural groups from different parts of the province, all of those people have not yet been informed. We're in the process of calling them and asking them if they will serve. I can tell you that we're pretty close of having it finished and I think probably next week we can put out a news release with the names of the members on the task force.

Mr. Lyons: Well I'm glad to hear that, Mr. Minister. That's indeed encouraging news for the multicultural community in this province. They've certainly been looking forward to that. And we're certainly wondering why it was that it took so long before the announcement was made. But, be that as it may, they were glad to hear it.

I'd like to turn to a couple of other issues that are before us. One concerns the Big Valley Jamboree at Craven, which is one of the major cultural events, musical cultural events in this province. And there has been certain press and certain controversy has arisen regarding the operation of Bosco Homes, and people are raising questions about the . . . whether that means that Big Valley will go ahead, and precisely what's going on.

I've got two questions for you, Mr. Minister. First of all, does your department provide any money for the operation of Big Valley and the associated events; is there any money coming from there? And secondly, given the nature of the controversy, is the government contemplating holding an inquiry into the affairs surrounding Bosco, given the controversy that's now erupted in Saskatchewan over the operation of that particular operation?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Well, Mr. Chairman, we don't provide any funds to Big Valley or to the jamboree at all.

We're not involved with it. In terms of an inquiry, that would be out with my jurisdiction. I'm not sure which of my colleagues' bailiwick that would fall under, but it certainly isn't under my bailiwick. And I haven't heard . . . Nobody's come to me and said, hey Max, I think we're going to do an inquiry into Bosco. So I couldn't answer that for you.

Mr. Lyons: Okay, fine. Thank you very much. That will be sufficient on that particular issue.

Mr. Minister, a little while ago you talked about putting up art in the legislature building here in Saskatchewan, giving Saskatchewan arts a permanent gallery which would be viewed by many, many people in this province. I wonder, as we walk through these bare halls, have you any date at which we'll find Saskatchewan art beginning to adorn the marble palace?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I just took a moment to consult with my colleague responsible for the property management corporation, because we talked about this together. There are two displays that should be up fairly soon, certainly this summer. One is native art and the other one is Chinese art, and we'll be displaying them in the hallways, in the corridors.

Mr. Lyons: Well that's good, Mr. Minister. I hope that they'll be up, and I would hope you will consider an idea, not providing just those kind of art opportunities for the people that visit the Legislative Building, but that in fact you'd consider some kind of permanent travelling exhibit of Saskatchewan art that could be taken to various communities around the province to help enhance the education of people in Saskatchewan, that in fact Saskatchewan artists rank among the best in the world, and that will provide the methods of exposure to the artists. And I wonder, sir, has your department considered any kind of permanent travelling exhibition funded by the province so that people outside Regina and people in the small areas of rural Saskatchewan can get an opportunity to view those kinds of shows?

(1245)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact we do have a granting program to organizations to do just that type of thing. In fact OSAC, the Organization of Saskatchewan Art Councils, with which I know you're familiar, does in fact do this.

We also have the Saskatchewan Arts Board who have a permanent collection which from time to time does go out. It can be loaned out and it does go out travelling.

And I'd also like to mention that just very recently, a couple of months ago, our department sponsored a wildlife art competition with prizes for the winners. I'm happy to say I bought one of the pieces personally.

Mr. Lyons: Mr. Minister, I'd like to turn now to another area in the arts which is of particular interest to myself, and that's the question of the promotion of live music in the province.

And before I say this, you talked a little earlier about setting a direction for the arts and cultural community in the province. Having said that, it seems to me that the department, the government, is not getting the word out enough that culture and art are big employers in this province. For example, the cultural field in Saskatchewan employs more people than potash or uranium mining combined, and that it represents a major employer and a major economic activity within the province.

And among those are the festivals and the people who put together some of the festivals. I refer particularly now to, for example, the folk music festival recently held in Regina which had some 18,000 people attended — at least in the nightly concerts, the three nightly concerts — in total. And there was funding provided by your department for that.

And, Mr. Minister, I understand that the Saskatoon jazz festival, which is a major tourist attraction for Saskatoon and which in fact employs musicians from around Saskatchewan, and participates, applied for . . . it is my understanding that they applied for a grant from your department and failed to receive it.

And I wonder if you would first of all outline what criteria, what criterias that you grant money to festivals of this type . . . The Regina folk music festival, which I support, got money, and I'm glad to see that. But the Saskatoon jazz festival applied and didn't get money, it's my understanding.

I wonder if you could outline the criteria, and in this particular instance why it was that the Saskatoon jazz festival, which is the largest jazz festival in western Canada, didn't receive financial support from your department.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, we actually don't grant money to programs that are for community-

run events. And in the case of Folkfest, my assistant deputy minister says, if they received a grant, he never approved it. And I certainly didn't see it either.

So what it may have been was they got funding for a workshop or something of that nature. We have programs for that. But we'll find the . . . It just happened, so obviously it's hot off the press, that one. We'll get the information on that one. I'll be pleased to send it to you within a couple of days.

Mr. Lyons: Mr. Minister, the funding was granted because the people who helped organize the festival in Regina are a part of provincial organization to the Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society, I believe. Okay. And I think that that's where the money is coming from.

However, there are people involved, there are people involved on a provincial level with the organization of the Saskatoon jazz festival. And it seems to me that we have here one of those cases where a bureaucratic rule is getting in the way of, you know . . . which is being applied in a very, very strict manner, is getting in the way of the promotion of something which is beneficial to the whole province and which involves musicians, and involves in fact organizers and people involved with jazz in the province on a provincial basis.

And I'm asking you, sir if you would look at providing ways to assist the Saskatoon jazz festival in developing that particular festival — if you would look into it, give me assurance you'd look into it, and if there's a way to try to overcome that bureaucratic hurdle.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I say this is something we are looking at and through a lottery program or the TIP program — T-I-P— Trust Initiative program, and they could qualify for funding for a community event through there. They may also be eligible to go after the trust for that.

Mr. Shillington: Thank you very much. I wonder if the minister would grant me some indulgence. I'm going to raise a question which doesn't come squarely within his estimates, but which is very relevant to the area of culture. It has to do with the question of the fine arts building on the University of Regina.

I know that that is . . . the funding would probably come within the funding of the Minister of Education, that's right; however, those estimates are through and the issue has once again come to the attention of members through what I thought was a very effective presentation to a dozen . . . to a half a dozen or a dozen members, Thursday of last week. I think all the members who attended the presentation by the University of Regina were impressed by the serious state of deterioration in the building, were impressed by the very effective program put on by the University of Regina, and I think we were . . . and I think it's fair to say members on both sides of the House were also impressed with the crucial role that a fine arts program must play within a well-balanced university.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could comment on your government's intentions with respect to the fine arts building. I think in particular we would like your assurance that your support would be lent to the efforts of the University of Regina to get the funding necessary to replace the building.

There are some serious problems with buildings on that campus, and I won't go into those in great detail, but they're getting worse. And there's a number of things that should be done, but I think, among a nest of serious problems, the fine arts building is undoubtedly the most crucial.

So I wonder, Mr. Minister, if we could have your comment on that, and your assurance that, so far as you have influence on the matter, those of us who are seeking to get additional funding for this fine arts building can count upon your support.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Now, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member's correct; it doesn't fall within my jurisdiction, but I would like to comment on it. Back in the days when I was minister of advanced education, there was a discussion taking place between our two universities that perhaps there should be one fine arts program in the province and it should be located in the fine arts building down here.

There's also been discussion in the city of Regina to make it a heritage property, and then it would qualify for some funding through that route, but it wouldn't be nearly enough. I am advised that they're looking at something like \$13 million worth of work on that building.

There's no question it's a worthy project. Whether or not \$13 million is going to be available this year or next year, you know, it is a moot point. But I think it's worthy of designation, it's worthy of preservation, and I think it's an asset to the city. And I know that my colleagues, who were over there, came back and said precisely the same thing.

Mr. Shillington: I think, Mr. Minister, what I think the University of Regina was seeking was not so much a recognition that it's worthy, but a recognition of its urgency. And I'd like you to comment on that as well.

The building is such that they're going to have to begin within a relatively brief period of time, probably before the end of this legislature, I mean before the end of . . . before the next election, they're going to have to begin winding down the fine arts program if they don't have some commitment.

So I'd like a comment, Mr. Minister, as much on the urgency of this project as on its worthwhileness, if you can pardon that tortured syntax.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Certainly it's something I'd bring up with the Minister of Education. On his way out, he just mentioned that the university has set their priorities, and then his department has to respond to their list of priorities.

Mr. Shillington: I'm just going to make one final comment. I know the hour is late. I would just point out that there has been no buildings built on that campus since 1982, a date . . . I just picked that date out of the air. Mr. Minister, it isn't enough to say that the Minister of Education is going to look at the list, because he hasn't done anything with the list for some time. It is essential that at least one of those projects receive the go ahead, if not in this fiscal year, certainly within the next fiscal year.

Mr. Lyons: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just before we wrap up the estimates, Mr. Minister, I got two technical questions, I guess, or ones that can take a pretty direct answer.

I notice that in the estimates, that \$300,000 was allotted in '87-88 to the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts; however, in the supplementary estimates, an additional \$742,000 was made available. I wonder if you . . . I can't find out why that additional sum was made available.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to respond to that. That's a very expensive building to operate and to own, and as we all know, the Government of Saskatchewan does own the Centre of the Arts. It operates at a fairly healthy deficit. However, I believe there's a cost of doing business in the area of primarily culture in this province.

And we're looking for ways to reduce that deficit. We're looking at things that we can do to make it a more profitable or . . . It's not going to be profitable; I don't think it'll ever break even. But we're

looking for a way to try and cut the losses over there but at the same time, we don't want to detract from the service that it's providing to this city. I think there is a cost of cultural activity, and if that cost is 500,000 or whatever that the government's going to be putting into it, then we're just going to have to put it in.

Mr. Lyons: I recognize that there's a cost. I'm glad to hear what the minister's statement . . . the content of the minister's statement. It seems to me that that same content would apply, for example, to the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park or to any of the provincial parks around; that there's a cost to providing services.

But the other side of the coin, Mr. Minister, the other side of the coin is that in fact there is assets, and there's assets provided, some of which are tangible in the form of buildings, and some which aren't in the form of cultural experiences, if you like. But I'm glad to hear that you will admit, at least for the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts, that that's not up on the auction block.

My second question relates to the recreational field, and that's to the Young Athlete Saskatchewan program which receives no funding from the money available for recreation from the province. And I was wondering, Mr. Minister, have you talked to the folks from YAS (Young Athlete Saskatchewan) because I know that they've certainly approached your office on many an occasion asking that funding be provided for this program which allows for mass participation by literally hundreds and hundreds of young people in Saskatchewan through their sporting activities program.

Speaking from personal experience, and I know that other members and other members of this side of the House, and maybe other members on that side of the House have had their children participate in some of the YAS programs. I'm wondering, would you consider or have you considered or will you consider providing some kind of a form of funding to enable this program to grow. because it's at the basis of mass participation, which is to develop the skill levels of a great many people in the province.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, there's no question about the merits of that particular program to which the member has just referred. They do in fact receive funding from Basketball Saskatchewan, which is a provincial sport governing body. The provincial sport governing bodies — I think there's 75 of them — are all funded, and they choose how they will spend their money on subsidiary groups or their own client groups. so if we were to fund something like the YAS program, we would end up funding every group around the province involved in any way with sport at any level.

The way the system's evolved . . . and it's a very good one and I know the hon. member sitting over here from Regina North East was the minister of this department; he was partly instrumental in this program, and this program coming in. And those were the good days and these are better days, because we're spending even more money on these programs these days, Mr. Chairman.

But the way this program was set up, it's a good system, it's probably the best system in Canada, as the provincial sport governing bodies are funded and they in turn choose who they will fund.

Mr. Lyons: Mr. Minister, I realize that. It seems to me that the terms of the direction of Basketball Saskatchewan is aimed at an elite sports program, where the aims of the Young Athlete Saskatchewan tends to be more on the basis of mass participation. What I'm asking you is, is there some way that you or your officials can direct some funding available, out of either the lottery funding or some other area and if find another mechanism, if you like, outside Basketball Saskatchewan to enhance and encourage this kind of activity?

(1300)

Given the number of volunteers involved, given the locations around the province involved, and given the number of participants in the province involved, and given your own words that indeed it is a worthwhile program, it seems to me that we should be able to encourage people to develop these kind of programs on a volunteer basis. But even the volunteer basis needs some kind of funding base for ongoing . . . for an operation. And I'm asking you if you will, in fact, endeavour to look at some way of finding funding for Young Athlete Saskatchewan. If Basketball Saskatchewan can't do it, then surely there's other mechanisms available.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: There actually is an avenue that does exist currently, Mr. Chairman, through the TIP program, Trust Initiative Program, and I may say for the benefit of members that we have agreed on the lottery licence this year. That's already been taken care of with Sask Sport (Inc.) and indeed the TIP budget will increase by about a million dollars, from 2.5 to 3.5. And I would encourage YAS to explore that avenue, because that's precisely why TIP was set up, to assist groups at the community level. And as far as we can tell, they would certainly qualify for assistance from that program.

Mr. Lyons: Thank you very much. I'm quite sure that the Young Athlete Saskatchewan group of volunteers will be glad to hear that.

Mr. Minister, I've got no further questions, given the lateness of the time. However, I want to assure the people involved in the recreation and culture field in the province that the shortness of the estimates in no way reflects either your or my particular interest in the many, many activities and valuable activities that are carried out by the groups and individuals, you know, in these fields and that unless other members have questions, I have no further questions of the minister.

I'll thank in advance the officials for their co-operation in this regard.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

Item 8

Mr. Solomon: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question with respect to time no. 8. In 1987-88 there was an allocation of \$5.913 million; this fiscal year an estimate of \$3.183 million, a quite significant decline in the amount of money that you're spending this year on forestry.

Could the minister explain why there is such a difference? As well, there's such a difference in person-years, 130 down to 72. Could you explain that as well?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. member, those person-years, the money has been transferred, and it shows up under the forest renewal development fund. I don't believe the person-years show against that fund, but the money does.

Mr. Solomon: Are you saying, Mr. Minister, that all of that money has been transferred to the forest renewal fund? Does this have any impact on the tree planting in the province?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Yes, it has been transferred, and yes it does have impact on tree planting. We are going to be planting more trees than ever before, thanks to that particular fund and thanks to the money

we collected off the 15 per cent export tax. That's where the money is going, and unfortunately our spring planting is getting messed around with the hot weather conditions. The trees would not survive. We're hoping to transfer it into the fall if cooler conditions prevail, and we're going to be planting more trees than we ever planted before.

Item 8 agreed to.

Items 9 to 17 inclusive agreed to.

Item 18 — Statutory.

Item 19 agreed to.

Item 20 — Statutory

Items 21 to 23 inclusive agreed to.

Item 24

Mr. Solomon: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A question to the minister with respect to item 24, grants in support of sport and recreation programs. Again the amount of money that's been allocated towards this expenditure has declined significantly from last year to this year. Could you please explain why that is?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, there was a reduction of \$510,000 and that was due to three programs. I'll give you the details. Provincial coaching assistance grants transferred to the lotteries for \$180,000; athlete assistance grants transferred to lotteries for \$180,000; and the municipal innovative grants to cities has been eliminated. And the reason for that, the uptake wasn't very strong and some of the grants that were being given out for programs or projects under that particular item were something less than commendable, and in some cases they tended to be very weak and most of them could be taken care of through other funding mechanisms.

I'll give you an example. There was a program manual which was being developed and we just didn't think that you know, a program manual belonged under that particular item. So the bulk of this is transferred to lotteries.

Mr. Solomon: Mr. Minister, how much was cut to the municipalities, and where were these grants aimed at? Were they aimed at the larger municipalities, the urban municipalities, or were they general throughout the province?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: it was \$150,000, and it was to the cities. That's all of the cities.

Item 24 agreed to.

Items 25 to 33 inclusive agreed to.

Item 34 - Statutory.

Item 35 agreed to.

Vote 39 agreed to.

Supplementary Estimates (No. 2)
Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure
Parks, Recreation and Culture
Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 39

Items 1 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 39 agreed to.

Forest Renewal and Development Fund
1988-89 Financial Summary

Mr. Chairman: Any questions? Agreed. I'd like to thank the minister's officials.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to thank the officials for their usual good work in preparing for the estimates, and their loyal dedication to the public of Saskatchewan.

I'd also like to thank the members of the opposition for their line of questioning. I found it very interesting. I found it stimulating. In particular I'd like to thank my two critics, the member for Regina Rosemont and member for Athabasca, and of course, the other northern member from Cumberland, for their questions. Thank you.

The committee reported progress.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Seated to my right is my Deputy Minister, Doug Cressman; behind Doug Cressman is Hugh Hunt, the Superintendent of Wildlife; and directly seated behind me is Heather Sinclair, who is our lawyer from the Department of Justice.

Clause 1

Mr. Lyons: Mr. Minister, dealing with Bill No. 47, The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act, I wonder, sir, would you please outline to the people of Saskatchewan what criteria area is set aside as critical habitat, and how is it that land which is designated as critical habitat can be designated non-critical habitat? I think that's the first question I'd like to ask.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. member's question, the designation initially is carried out after careful assessment by the biologists within the department. We'll look at inventory and we'll look at the habitat and assess whether or not that habitat is critical to the support of various wildlife populations or upland game birds or, indeed, water-fowl. So on that basis, designation is made.

Sometimes, and we were guilty of this earlier this year when we had to do some changing around at our own caucus, we found that we had included, by mistake, some land that should not have been designated critical in the first place. There are also sometimes changing conditions — climactic or soil can make changes.

Mr. Lyons: Well, Mr. Minister, we'll be dealing with the House amendment a little later, involving quite a bit of land which had been designated as critical wildlife habitat, particularly in the Souris valley. We're talking about the land which will be . . . some of the land which will be hurt by the construction of the Rafferty dam.

Someone has yet to explain to me, satisfactorily, and to the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, and to the Canadian Wildlife Federation, and the Canadian Nature Federation, and to other groups who are interested in wildlife and conservation, how it is that the reports that they have done, and the studies that they have done on wildlife in that area, and the kind of habitat which exists in that area, which they originally had agreed with the government was, and the government had agreed with them, was in fact critical habitat; how it is that on the political whim of your government, that that land which was critical now becomes non-critical, and that the species which exist there are no longer recognized as species which are deserving of protecting, or the animals and birds which live in that are recognized as no longer need of protection.

How is it, how is it that that was based? When you say you made a mistake, was the mistake that you didn't consult with the Deputy Premier earlier on, or Mr. George Hill earlier on, that they were going to build a dam there and that maybe the animals and birds that live in that area were going to get in the way of their political project. Or is it true, as the deputy minister has said, that the decisions that are made on what's critical and what's not critical are arbitrary. I think that was . . . I'm not using another word, I'm using his word that those were made at least on arbitrary decisions.

When you say that . . . It seems to me that you can't have something that's critical one day and not critical the next day, particularly on this kind of area.

Mr. Chairman: Why is the member from Regina Centre on his feet?

Mr. Shillington: I ask for leave of the Assembly to introduce a group of school students.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: I hate to give the minister an opportunity to concoct a reply while I'm doing this, but I guess such is the life in the Assembly.

I want to introduce to the Assembly, a group of — I could only guess — about 15 or so students . . . 20, I'm told, who are accompanied by their teacher, Ingrid Alesich. These students, members will be interested in knowing, are English as a second language students.

Very few of these students were in fact born in Canada — the odd student from Quebec, but they're very few. Very few of these people were actually born in Canada. Most have come a very long distance to settle in this country. In some cases, there were functioning democracies in the countries they left, but in most cases, life being what it is, there wasn't.

So I know all members will want to join me in welcoming these students to our democratic institution here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend the Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act

Clause 1(continued)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: First of all, Mr. Speaker, as an immigrant to Canada — I've lived here for 22 years now — it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome you here today. This is the greatest country in the world, and it certainly has been wonderful for me and my family, and the best place possible to raise a family. Welcome to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: I'd like to deal specifically for the hon. member on the deletion of certain lands in this Act. And when I see a mistake, I'm going to finish with that one and show you how sometimes a mistake can be made. We're proposing to add, as we know, several hundred thousand acres that we believe to be critical to the support of wildlife in this province to the Act.

We are also proposing to withdraw 47,000 acres from this Act. And the major criteria are as follows: firstly, land directly involved in the proposed grasslands national park is 17,000 acres. So 17,000 acres has been drawn out so they can go in to the grasslands national park.

Land identified — and this is of prime interest to the hon. member, and we've provided this information, I believe, through my office to him — land identified as part of the Rafferty reservoir proposal is 2,400 acres.

Land no longer considered critical wildlife habitat — and this follows intensive review in this — is the forest fringe area of the province, amounts to 13,000 acres.

That leaves another 15,000 acres. And most of this were errors in the original Act due to a time lag in our consultation with Agriculture, maintaining their files, and then us putting into legislation.

I'll give you an example of what I mean by that: finding out that there was land that had buildings on it or finding out there was land for which there were already sale agreements in place that we didn't know about, and we included those in the Act. So we'd have to take those out.

So that's the 47,000 acres. And the ones that you're particularly concerned with are the 2,400 for Rafferty reservoir.

I've had lots of discussions with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the North Dakota Wildlife Federation, Canadian Wildlife Service, and others, and this is a business of trading off. It's not my place to debate the Rafferty; there are others who are more capable than I am of doing this.

But it becomes a trade-off. We are taking other land to put in here for habitat. There is certainly going to be some loss of habitat there, but we feel that the benefits of the project greatly outweigh that 2,400 acres. And we've agreed with the wildlife federation to take mitigating measures so that we will replace those acres elsewhere.

Mr. Lyons: Well that would be news, Mr. Minister, and I can appreciate that it's not your job to debate the Rafferty-Alameda. But, given the reasonable approach you're taking to it and your seemingly

openness to reason, I think you would do a better job debating it than the Deputy Premier, who's just pushing it ahead as if nothing more than a political project. I think you would do a better job.

Be that as it may, the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the North Dakota Wildlife Federation, and those other organizations mentioned, and those organizations you haven't mentioned, like the National Wildlife Federation and the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the Canadian naturalist federation, have all taken exception, first of all, to the process by which this has occurred; that you in fact have designated land as critical one time, and then because of a politically-driven project you have de-designated it on another time; that they seem to be at a loss in terms of what real criteria your department uses for setting aside critical wildlife habitat.

Secondly, those organizations dispute the area, the exact area, of whether it's 2,400 acres or not. They say, in fact, that the area is much larger that needs to be protected, and that the fact that there were some buildings on some land did not disclude that land from critical wildlife. but that's open to argumentation, and I think that everybody could be persuaded one way or the other on that particular instance.

But I think the fundamental objection to this designation or re-designation of the lands under The Critical Wildlife Habitat (Protection) Act -- and may I just say that in fact we support 100,000 per cent the inclusion of those 17,000 acres for grassland. And we see it's coming a little bit later than a lot of us would have desired, but we see it as a necessary step forward for the creation of the national park.

But be that as it may, despite our support for that side, of setting aside those several hundred thousand of acres -- it actually works out to be about 140,000 acres in total — despite our support for that, we think that it's imperative that you develop and then make it clear to the people of this province what the process of designating critical wildlife habitat is, which you have not done.

And when that designation is clear, that there is some legal protection for organizations like the wildlife federation or for an individual citizen of this province to be able to go to the courts for remedy in order to save them; that you in fact develop some kind of mechanism whereby people in this province can go directly to the courts as aggrieved parties, as citizens of this province; that they in fact can develop and initiate actions in the courts to save lands which have been set aside, which unfortunately the process is not now in place for them to do.

And I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you would comment on that fact, and we'll allow the Bill to proceed. As I said earlier, we have a House amendment that will put the 47,000 acres back in there until, in fact, those criteria that I've outlined are met.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, I can't comment on all the legal arguments that have been brought in. I can comment on The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act, which was an initiative of this government in 1983, 1984, and then the following year when we actually put in one million acres and now we're proposing to put in another 700,000 acres.

I believe you're asking what the process is for designating that land. That is assessed by the biologists. Am I answering your question? Is that what you're asking me?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: This is assessed by the biologists, according to the wildlife, water-fowl, and upland game bird population. And further north you look at other things: ungulates in the North and bear and fur as well. So we have to take a look at what the populations are and where they live and we protect

their habitat.

What has happened over a number of years is habitats have been disappearing, in some cases at the rate of 3 per cent per provincial constituency, largely due to programs directed by Agriculture whereby we paid people at one time to drain sloughs, and consequently, where we had four million pot-holes a few years ago, now we have one million pot-holes, and that's why our duck population, the mallards, are under a million for the first time in the history of this province. We've gone from 14 million ducks to four million. This is the reason that we're saying we have to protect the habitat and the upland nesting and the cover for the birds.

We have to do the same thing with deer. We have had programs to clear bush off. Deer don't necessarily run around in large forests, but they need little clumps of bush where they can move around. That's their habitat. That's where they live.

So what we are trying to do is protect . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I have colleagues here, criticizing my accent here. I did remind them I wasn't born in this country. My heart's in this country.

That's how we decide. The biologists make that decision based on the habitat and based on the numbers of animals and upland game birds and water-fowl, then is brought in as a schedule to the Act and put through this process.

Mr. Lyons: Just the one comment, Mr. Minister, in terms of the outline of the problem that is facing wildlife . . . and I may say it's not just wildlife in the province. When you have 30 per cent of the surface water drained out of this province in 10 years, you're not only dealing with the wildlife population, you're also dealing with the question of recharging of the aquifers and the whole question of water, which is why in places like Indian Head we're seeing the water table been dropping 12 feet over the last 12 years — just as an example that we're not just dealing with birds and animals; we're dealing with our environment and the way that in fact we relate to the earth.

And I want to say, Mr. Minister, I appreciate that because I think you understand that. And I think that what you said shows in fact your government's — not yours, but your government's — sorry record when it comes to dealing with some of those fundamental ecological environmental provinces. The fact that that kind of draining has gone on, mainly within the last six year since you took place, I think sends . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You and I will agree on that, right? The Deputy Premier won't, but at least you and I will agree on that.

The smartest thing you said, Mr. Minister, today however, relates to this critical wildlife habitat that is going to be lost. And you used the words "trade-off", and that's what the words we have been using, the opposition — and I'm not saying the opposition just in parliament — I'm talking about the extra-parliamentary opposition, the wildlife federation, nationally and provincially and internationally.

(1330)

All those groups that have been opposed to this because they are saying that trade-off is not needed, that trade-off is not necessary — and quite frankly, we can understand the position that the government has put you in, the cabinet has put you in, by going ahead with this Rafferty-Alameda project. I think, quite frankly, Mr. Minister, that if you had your druthers it wouldn't go ahead; that quite frankly you'd protect that natural habitat.

I certainly want to say that I sympathize with the position that the government has put you in on this.

And having said that, I would hope, I would hope that you will develop under the auspices of your department some pretty strict guide-lines and some mechanisms whereby cabinet, because of the political majority of one group or another in cabinet, can't dictate what the future of the ecology and what the future of wildlife in this province will be.

I hope and I think that you've got the responsibility, Mr. Minister, to develop those kind of mechanisms whereby people can come to the defence of the wildlife habitat. Those people who are interested have to, and need to have the mechanisms whereby they can march forward to the courts and say, we're going to protect what is in law. Having said that, Mr. Minister, we'll allow . . . I'll agree to let it go.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2

Mr. Chairman: House amendment to clause 2, moved by the member for Regina Rosemont. Will the members take the amendment as read?

Amendment negated on division.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 71 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act

Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 7

Mr. Chairman: House amendment to section 7, moved by the Minister of Parks, Recreation and Culture:

Amend section 49.3 of the Act as being enacted by section 7 of the printed Bill:

(a) by striking out "member of the The Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other police" and substituting "wildlife"; and

(b) by striking out "member or other" and substituting "wildlife".

Mr. Tchorzewski: I have now the amendment before me, Mr. Chairman. Can I ask the minister to explain what the purpose of this amendment is?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: Mr. Chairman, when this Bill was being considered in legislative review committee, there was a change made to the original Act and I'm . . . let me say this again. There was a change made to what was in the original Act, and when we later looked at that change, it wasn't one that had been requested. So we said, well we'd like to get the original text, it's been there for a number of years, back in. We realized we'd made an error in the discussion, so we're just putting back what had been in the original Act.

Mr. Tchorzewski: We will allow the minister to correct his error, Mr. Chairman.

Clause 7 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 14 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

Bill No. 78 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act

Clause 1

Mr. Tchorzewski: Mr. Chairman, I don't have . . . I'm not going to take a lot of time. I'm going to ask my question on both of these Bills. I have one question. We're going to do another Bill afterwards. I believe, No. 76. And my question simply is: can the minister assure the House, so we have it on the record, that all of the amendments here are what I think they are, and that is to put into place those things that have been negotiated in a collective agreement between teachers, trustees and the government. If that's the case, then it's already in a collective agreement and this puts it into force and we're quite prepared to support that.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: yes, that's the case. Both of these are as a result of the last collectively bargained agreement — and I mean both Bills 76 and 78, and the contract requires the government to make the necessary legislative changes as soon as possible. And that's what we're doing here.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 76 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act

Clauses 1 to 10 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: I'd like to thank the minister's officials.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: I move the Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 71 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: I move the amendments be now read a first and second time, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: With leave, I move the Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 78 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 76 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:43 p.m.