

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Fifth Session — Seventeenth Legislature**  
**34th Day**

**Tuesday, April 8, 1975.**

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.  
On the Orders of the Day.

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**HON. R. ROMANOW:** (Saskatoon Riversdale) I believe that St. Gerard School is here. Are they here? There they are — terrific. Because of the weather I think that probably St. Gerard was the only school that could make it to the Legislative Building today.

**MR. MacDONALD:** (Milestone) Look behind you.

**MR. ROMANOW:** Oh, I'm sorry, there they are. That's Ted Malone's constituency, is it? Well, they are always behind. But in any event, Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and to the Members of the House, 41 Grade Seven students from St. Gerard School in Saskatoon Riversdale constituency. St. Gerard, of course, is one of the better known schools in the Saskatoon school system. The students are not only good students but they are active in a number of extra curricular student activities. They are accompanied, I am advised by their teachers, Mr. Melnyk and Miss Budz. They are here until 3 p.m. at which time I hope to have an opportunity to say hello to them personally.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. E.C. MALONE:** (Regina Lakeview) Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to introduce to you and to other Members of the House 27 Grade Eight students from St. James School. They are seated in the east gallery behind the Attorney General.

They were led here today by their teacher, Mr. Kuntz, I hope they will find the proceedings enjoyable and educational. I hope to meet them a little later for a soft drink and will try and answer any questions they may have.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI:** (Humboldt) Mr. Speaker, if I may, I too would like to extend my greetings to the students from St. Gerard School in Saskatoon. I do this for two reasons, one because it is the first school that I practise taught in when I was going to the University of Saskatchewan, College of Education; and secondly, because among the group is one person who happens to be a niece of mine and I extend to her and her friends, a welcome to the Legislature.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY:** (Hanley) Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could make a request. I am wondering if I can find out whether a group of students from Greystone Heights in Saskatoon are in? They are. Well, in the absence of one of the MLAs I would certainly like to welcome this group of students from Greystone Heights in Saskatoon. They are accompanied by two teachers, I believe Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Sherwin. Now I don't know where they have been today, and after watching the proceedings of this House it's possible they still won't know where they have been, but I want to welcome them to this House, and Regina. Keeping in mind the icy conditions today, I wish them a safe journey back home.

One of the MLAs from Saskatoon will certainly be out to meet that particular group of students when they leave the gallery.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS

### DEVELOPING OF POTASH MINES IN SASKATCHEWAN

**MR. T.M. WEATHERALD:** (Cannington) Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Deputy Premier. I have a press release, Mr. Speaker, before me that indicates a potential for as many as three new potash mines in Saskatchewan in the next ten years.

But only one Government owned mine is likely to be developed because of an unattractive investment climate for non-government developers in the province, said Peter Jack, Manager of the Potash Company of America.

The question I want to ask the Deputy Premier is, what is the Government's timetable for developing potash mines in the Province of Saskatchewan because it is obvious that other mining companies are now locating themselves in other parts of the world?

**HON. R. ROMANOW:** (Deputy Premier) Mr. Speaker, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is only recently established and only recently have some personnel been engaged by the Potash Corporation. I am advised that they are in the process of examining all of the factors relating to the potash situation in the province including some of the intentions of the private corporations. Hopefully, some future government policy will be made known in due course.

### LAMB PROCESSING PLANT IN ALBERTA

**MR. A.R. GUY:** (Athabasca) Before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture but he is not in his seat, so I was going to direct it to the Minister of Industry but he is not in his seat, then I was going to direct it to the Minister of Finance and he is not in his seat, so I guess I'll have to address it to the Attorney General who probably won't know that much about it. But I wonder if he could tell me, I understand that a week or so ago the Government invested in a lamb processing plant in the Province of Alberta. I should like to know what money was invested and what equity they have got in that proposed plant?

April 8, 1975.

**MR. ROMANOW:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is right. There apparently has been an investment, the details of which I'll provide either later today or tomorrow in writing to the Member.

### **LAND ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM — QU'APPELLE VALLEY**

**MR. J.G. LANE:** (Lumsden) Before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Byers). In light of the Press statement that the Government now intends to purchase 70,000 acres of valley lands in the Qu'Appelle Valley system, and in light of your announcement a year ago that the approximate land purchase would be 10,000 acres, would you now mind explaining, I think considerably better than the explanation in the paper, the major discrepancy in the difference between the previous announcement and the latest? Would you also advise as to the number of acres of agricultural land that will be taken out of production, and how much of the increased land included will in effect not be bottom lands but will be other than bottom land?

**HON. N.E. BYERS:** (Minister of the Environment) When I announced the Government's Land Adjustment Program about July 23rd or 24th as part of the go-ahead program by the province on the Qu'Appelle Implementation Program without a federal agreement, I indicated that the Government was offering to purchase flood prone lands in the Qu'Appelle Valley, and that the number of acres affected were in the order of 10,000 acres. These 10,000 acres have been specifically identified as flood prone land and the Government was offering to purchase these lands on a purely voluntary basis. That refers to the figure of 10,000 acres.

The Qu'Appelle Valley Report with which Members will be familiar, identified a number of parcels of land in the Qu'Appelle that could be purchased by the Government as part of the Qu'Appelle implementation package over a possible ten year period. These are acreages that are fish spawning areas, wild life habitats and marshes and so on. Now if you count all of the acres involved you get a total acreage approaching 69,000 or 70,000 acres. However, I want to draw to the Member's attention that when you use the figure of 70,000 acres you are including really all of the lands of the Valley hills. It is really not the intention of the Government to purchase all this acreage either as part of the Land Adjustment Program or in parcels identified primarily for recreation and wildlife purposes. So the figure of 70,000 is certainly very, very high. Fifty thousand is probably much closer to the maximum that would even be considered for purchase by the province over a ten year period.

With respect to the lands taken out of production on the 10,000 acres, an assessment would have to be made as to whether the flood prone lands purchased are going to be leased back to the farmer. If they are, then the lands would simply not be taken out of production at all. Much of the land identified as parcels for wildlife uses, are really not in agricultural production, that is for cereal crop production, even at the present time, and, therefore, when they are purchased, they are not really taken out of production in that sense.

**MR. LANE:** By way of a supplementary question, without getting into a debate, Mr. Speaker, seemingly the Minister indicates that approximately half of the 92,000 acres presently used for agricultural land could be taken out of production or put under the lease aspect. By way of supplementary, there are some indications that there are some disputes between, or criticisms, by people having their lands purchased by the Government that they are not getting a fair price. I am asking would the Government consider either extending The Surface Rights Acquisition Act to land acquired in the Qu'Appelle Valley system by the Government or bringing in new legislation that would in effect give the same rights of arbitration to farmers in the Qu'Appelle Valley system as the farmers affected by The Surface Rights Acquisition Act have?

**MR. BYERS:** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear to the Hon. Member that the Land Purchase Program is purely a voluntary program and I know of no cases where expropriation is being exercised by the Government.

### **ENERGY CONFERENCE**

**MR. J.G. RICHARDS:** (Saskatoon University) Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) in the absence of the Premier and the Minister of Mineral Resources, I would like to pose a question concerning the policies that are being argued by the Provincial Government at the Federal-Provincial Energy Conference.

Last night on "As it Happens" the Premier stated that as a quid pro quo for the Energy Fund proposed by the Saskatchewan Government, that Saskatchewan was asking for the removal of the nondeductibility provisions which would mean in 1975, according to figures I have, up to \$1 billion returning to the oil companies. Is it not fair to argue that whereas through the front door the Government is wanting all increased revenue to stay in the public sector, through the back door the Saskatchewan Government is arguing that the Federal Government give up to \$1 billion more across the country to private oil companies?

**MR. ROMANOW:** No, I don't believe that is the case. I don't see that it is a fair policy where the Federal Government in effect allows a private corporation in some areas the deductibility privilege but the same privilege does not exist as far as the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta are concerned. The nondeductibility of royalties which was basically a breach of the agreement which was reached in March by the first Ministers works hardship on the provincial governments and if it exists in the areas of some corporations it should exist for the provinces as well. I don't agree with the Hon. Member's statement of facts with respect to the amount of money which is returned.

**MR. RICHARDS:** Well, nonetheless the fact does remain . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Just ask your question, we can't debate it.

April 8, 1975.

**MR. RICHARDS:** Is the Minister not agreeing with the Premier then that the Provincial Government is arguing for removal of nondeductibility which would provide inevitably, we can quibble about the figure, but the Provincial Government is it true to say is arguing for removal of nondeductibility implicit in which is a large increase in return to the private oil companies? Is the Minister willing to state that should nondeductibility be restored the Provincial Government will guarantee there will be no increased net back to the oil companies in Saskatchewan?

**MR. ROMANOW:** First of all I can make no guarantees at this time because I think that is speculative depending upon what comes out of the Conference actually. After that the Government will have to assess its position and a public position will be taken for the people of Saskatchewan. But the question of the nondeductibility, is vital in our judgement, forgetting about the dollars and cents for the time being, but strictly on the provincial rights issue. We have a right with respect to the royalties and we don't think that the Federal Government with its statement that the nondeductibility of royalties is now to be the policy has a similar right. They are, in effect, tampering with the provincial rights that the Province of Saskatchewan and the Province of Alberta have over the control and the ownership of the resources of their respective provinces. And accordingly that position must be maintained by the Provincial Government in order to maintain the position that we say under the BNA is the right, the lawful right of the Province of Saskatchewan to argue. So the money, while I don't agree with the Hon. Member's statement, the money is important but there is another issue which you ought not to forget and that is the question of the provincial rights which the Premier is also advocating.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION NO. 27 — INCREASED COVERAGE FOR CROP INSURANCE PLAN**

**MR. E. F. GARDNER** (Moosomin) seconded by Mr. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to consider the feasibility of immediately increasing the dollar amount of coverage under the Crop Insurance Plan for all grains presently covered under the plan.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words on item No. 6, crop insurance. It's come to our attention that crop insurance in this province for 1975 is going to be inadequate and should be increased. We know that Alberta and Manitoba have both increased the amount of crop insurance coverage that's available to the farmers in those two provinces. Alberta and Manitoba have recognized a need for this and increased their coverage. I'd like to give you some examples of the coverage that's available in those provinces.

In Saskatchewan for example the maximum coverage per bushel available for wheat is \$2.25, in Alberta it's \$3.50, over 50 per cent higher and in Manitoba it's \$2.75. For oats, the figures again are lower in Saskatchewan than either of the other provinces, \$1 in Saskatchewan, a \$1.20 in Alberta, a \$1.25 in

Manitoba. For barley the maximum coverage available to our farmers is \$1.40, in Alberta it's \$2, in Manitoba, \$1.75. In Saskatchewan for flax the coverage available is only \$3.50, it's \$5 in Alberta, \$5 in Manitoba. For rapeseed the maximum coverage available here is only \$3, again in Alberta it's \$5 and in Manitoba \$3.75. Rye, the coverage in Saskatchewan, \$1.40, Alberta, \$2.25, Manitoba, \$1.85. Alberta and Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, also have coverage for mixed grains which we don't have.

But the point is, Mr. Speaker, that both of the other provinces have recognized the need for a higher coverage on these crops and have made arrangements to have the crops covered at a higher monetary rate.

The Minister, I believe, in Saskatchewan, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) has said that the need for coverage is merely to cover out of pocket expenses. And, of course, the out of pocket expenses are getting extremely high today for the farmers, fertilizer having gone up in price from something like \$95 a ton to \$210 a ton. We all know that fuel has gone up by around 50 per cent in about two years. The price of repairs, taxes and other inputs have risen very drastically in recent years. These, of course, are only the current expenses faced by a farmer. He also has to think about land payments, machinery payments, cost of living for himself and his family and other expenses.

Mr. Speaker, the young farmer in particular is the one who needs the higher coverage. He is the one who has these high payments, has perhaps very few resources to fall back on and the young starting farmer is the one who needs more coverage. The young farmer in Alberta for example, if he was working on an average 20 bushel crop could cover his crop at 70 per cent of this 20 bushels or 14 bushel at \$3.50, \$49 per acre. In Saskatchewan he is only allowed to cover \$31.50 per acre. So that's \$49 in Alberta for wheat, \$31.50 in Saskatchewan. In other words a Saskatchewan farmer who wants to take out a basic \$10,000 insurance on his crop would find that a comparable farmer in Alberta could take out \$15,500 on the same crop and at the same rate. In other words the Alberta farmer could cover himself for 50 per cent more.

At Saskatchewan rates we would find that perhaps with two crop failures this could put a number of our young farmers simply out of business.

Higher coverage need not be compulsory. It doesn't have to be compulsory, we could have two or three basic rates at which you could cover. We cannot argue therefore that higher rates will increase the premiums or would prevent usage of the plan. The amount that's available in Alberta and Manitoba is available to the farmer if he wants it.

The thing we have to note, Mr. Speaker, is that in order to increase the coverage for the farmer would cost the province nothing at all. The province pays only the administration costs, they just write up the policy for the farmer, Ottawa pays 50 per cent of the premium and the farmer pays 50 per cent of the premium. There would be a substantially higher cost across the province to the Federal Government but I understand the Federal Government has agreed to pick up this extra cost for Alberta and Manitoba and would be receptive to the same type of a suggestion from Saskatchewan. In other words, if Saskatchewan

April 8, 1975.

asked for this increase in coverage, the Federal Government would agree to it and would pay their share of the premium at the higher amount.

The extra cost would only be in the premium and as the Federal Government as I said would pay half of this and they would readily approve this as they did in Alberta and Manitoba.

Saskatchewan farmers as we see it now, are at a disadvantage. They have to cover their crop at a much lower rate. I'm sure that rural Members will realize that if we have an outbreak of grasshoppers in 1975 in large areas of southern or southwestern Saskatchewan that farmers will be very hard hit because of the increase in the costs of their inputs. If we do face this situation where we have a severe outbreak of grasshoppers or some other problem such as drought, frost or flooding, that the Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan and the Government of Saskatchewan must accept their share of the responsibility. They are going to have to answer to the farmers in the province if this happens and I should like to ask the Members that represent rural areas and particularly those who represent south and western Saskatchewan, to support this Motion because they are going to have to answer to the farmers. If the farmer is only able to cover for a small amount and if we get grasshoppers or drought or some other problem this year and if we had two of these in a row many of these farmers would simply be out of business.

So I would hope that Members from rural Saskatchewan will keep this in mind. Remember, Mr. Speaker, this can be done with no cost at all to the Provincial Government. All they have to do is make it available on an optional basis and the farmer would have the choice if he wanted the higher coverage. It could easily be done even yet by the Crop Insurance Board and the Department of Agriculture because there are no calculations to change the basic rate, or the loss that farmers had, or in a certain area. All they would be doing is raising the premium for a larger coverage.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest then that it is still not too late to do this, it could well be done. There is still time for applicants to the program, there is still time for people who have already signed up for crop insurance to have an option to increase their coverage if they want it and this wouldn't affect the basic rate which they are paying, it would just increase their dollar coverage.

So, Mr. Speaker, with these few words I should like to move this Resolution.

**HON. G. MacMURCHY:** (Minister of Education) Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Agriculture is away in Ottawa on government business today, and I am sure he would like to comment on the Resolution and in particular on the words of the Member for Moosomin, therefore I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### FINAL REPORT ON HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Thibault (Melfort-Kinistino) that: **The Final Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety** be now concurred in.

**MR. E.C. WHELAN:** (Regina North West) Mr. Speaker, the Report of the Highway Traffic and Safety Committee represents approximately two years communication by the representatives of this Legislature with many individuals and organizations in this province, and other groups who are authorities in certain areas but live beyond the borders of Saskatchewan.

Those who sat on the Committee with me, from both sides of the House, attended hearings, listened diligently and, in my estimation, humbly to the people of Saskatchewan. The Committee was appointed because of the increase in traffic deaths on our highways. The cost of the Committee has been criticized but, Mr. Speaker, the cost to Government Insurance of one accident, so the Committee was told, ran to \$750,000. The entire cost for the Committee will be a fraction of that amount.

The objective is to save lives and the suffering of people. Some of our recommendations will undoubtedly inconvenience, annoy and arouse criticism from the general public. Even while the Committee sat during the past year, 1974, 50 more people died on our highways than in the year 1973, young people, people who belonged to our communities, people who had a contribution to make. Our job is to cut this useless cost, and this useless loss of citizens. Last year 318 people, that is, five times the membership of this House, plus the Clerk, the Assistant Clerk and the Sergeant at Arms, plus three. More than five times the total membership of this House — that is the number of people who died as a result of accidents on our highways, secondary roads and urban streets.

We expect criticism of this Report. A drastic situation exists and we have no hesitation in admitting that some of the recommendations may seem drastic, but I say to any Member, if it was your life that was innocently snuffed out, or the life of a member of your family that was innocently taken by a highway accident, wouldn't you expect drastic action? We found that relatives of people who had been lost feel strongly about the need for strong measures.

There are two or three areas that may meet with criticism that I want to talk about. The first one, Mr. Speaker, is the speed limit. The second one is the whole area of courts and, third, the need for roadside breath testing.

Because of the energy crisis in the United States, a speed limit of 55 miles per hour was introduced, not to save lives, to begin with, but gasoline. A traffic expert who had worked in Cook County, which is the area which includes the huge metropolis of Chicago, at a conference in Toronto last fall told me that he had studied the impact of the 55 mile per hour speed limit as it applied across the United States, in the rural areas, in the urban areas, on the main highways, on secondary highways,



April 8, 1975.

urban streets, mountain terrain, prairie country, mixed farming land and in the desert. And he said there was only one conclusion that you could come to: reduction in the speed limit reduced the severity of accident in every area and reduced the number of highway deaths. His statement was made to me in September. The records are now in for the full year of 1974 in the United States and they speak louder than his words. Attempts have been made to say that there is no need for reducing the speed limits on highways on the prairies, or perhaps in the mountain area because you can't travel fast there any way. But I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that those who make these statements are not really considering the record and the possibility that we might save lives, because that is the real motivation of this recommendation.

Let's look at what happened when the speed limit was reduced on the prairie, in the State of North Dakota. Traffic deaths in that state for the year 1974 dropped to 160 from 208 in 1973. This includes, Mr. Speaker, secondary roads, highways, urban streets. There was a 23 per cent reduction in North Dakota where the terrain is almost identical to Saskatchewan. In Utah which is particularly mountainous the reduction in traffic deaths was 37 per cent. In the desert country of Arizona the reduction was 25 per cent.

Members of the Committee who have travelled in the United States extensively, including myself, and my travel was in the urban areas, in the desert country and all traffic situations, agree with the recommendation, enthusiastically endorse it. When people say you need more enforcement for 55 miles per hour, they are suggesting that the general public is dishonest. That is not the situation that any of the members of the Committee witnessed while they were driving in the United States.

You say they travelled fewer miles. In 100 million miles travelled the number of traffic deaths dropped from 4.3 per hundred million miles in 1973 to 3.6 in 1974. The rate of traffic deaths is based on the number of miles driven and there was a drastic and notable reduction which one cannot argue with.

What are the basic reasons for this? When you are going slower you can get out of the way and on impact you don't hit as hard, the accident is not as severe. We are recommending that the reduced speed limit be tried for a year in the Province of Saskatchewan. If, at the end of a year there isn't a reduction in traffic deaths in this province, as there has been in North Dakota, I think we would be prepared to admit that we were in error. We believe and firmly believe that the possibility of saving lives is worth the trial period of one year. There are other factors that are dividends on the side — you won't burn as much gas and, as the Director of the DWI program in the city of Phoenix told me, you never realize how much scenery you miss until you slow down to 55 miles per hour.

Our recommendation is proposed in order to save lives, reduce the severity of accidents, save gasoline, while you also are introduced to the scenery along the road.

Incidentally, it is the Committee's recommendation that reduction in the speed limits should not apply to the highways only but to the grid roads as well, because we are well aware of the large number of deaths that occur on our secondary roads.

If you think that this Member is in an embarrassing position with the recommendation regarding the speed limit, it was the facts that convinced me. I readily admit that I was in favor of a recommendation in 1966, when the former Highway Traffic and Safety Committee met and recommended that we increase the speed limit.

Without any change in enforcement, with a wide variation in liquor laws across the United States, in some areas the drinking age is similar to ours, and in some areas you can buy liquor out of grocery stores, in spite of the differences, there was, over the entire United States, as a result of the reduction in the speed limit, a 17 per cent reduction in traffic deaths. Approximately half of this, according to the National Safety Council, can be attributed directly to the lower speed limit.

The suggestion regarding the change in our courts was largely influenced by the feeling that the population generally resent the present procedure, procedure that is brought about by the heavy work load and through no intention of the judges who are adjudicating in these courts. By witnessing an educational procedure used in the State of Illinois for traffic offenders and an experience we had in North York (Toronto) traffic court, which, although it is experimental, we thought did more to correct bad traffic habits rather than to punish a violator, and in addition to research into this approach, the Committee concluded that a different procedure should be used.

The people in the North York traffic court gave the violator an opportunity to explain the violation and in addition a chance to attend a one hour traffic improvement course.

No longer should we try to use the courts, if our objective is to save lives, Mr. Speaker, as an organization to dish out punishment and breed resentment through imposition of fines.

I want to turn to another aspect of the Report. At the present time if a police officer notices a vehicle being driven in an improper manner, he can apprehend the driver and ask him to take a test on a breath testing machine. Because the officer must be sure there is evidence of drinking, those apprehended, when the tests are averaged out, are over .15 not just over .08. Officers indicate to us very clearly that it is very difficult to apprehend a driver with the present legislation.

When we attended the International Conference in Toronto regarding the driver who drinks, traffic officers from all parts of the world discussed this aspect of legislation regarding breath testing. It became obvious that in areas where roadside tests could be taken with a screening apparatus, which is approximately the size of a package of cigarettes, drivers were more inclined to refrain from driving if they had been drinking. At the present time in this province, if there is a suspicion of purple gas, a road block is put up and every tank is tested for purple gas. A driver with purple gas in his tank is not as dangerous as a driver who may have alcohol in his tank, in his personal tank, that is, Mr. Speaker. And yet there is no law that permits an officer to put up a road block and test drivers. And I suggest to the Members of this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, that there is a need for this. It might be a matter of public education but with this type of legislation as well, it would not be long before drivers in this province would think twice before getting behind the wheel of a car if they had been drinking.

April 8, 1975.

While federal legislation may be needed to bring about roadside testing and, incidentally, after the roadside test is taken the person who fails the test on the screening equipment is then given a further test on a legally adjusted, properly operated breath test machine — we should also be thinking of some technique whereby the person who refuses to take a roadside test would have to surrender his licence, or some other procedure that would immediately protect the other drivers on the road.

The Report is more extensive in the three areas I have out lined, that is, traffic speed limit, special traffic courts and the extension of breath testing. There are a few other areas of a general nature that I would like to comment on.

First, the need for public education and, second, the need for co-ordinating our efforts to combat the situation that brings about 318 deaths in Saskatchewan in a period of 12 months. Through education in the schools and general publicity, and breath testing demonstrations, the public must be made aware of how serious it is to drive improperly or dangerously.

Second, and although we know from listening to the Ministers in charge of different government departments, that there is not one who is not absolutely serious and dedicated in organizing the branch of his department that may be responsible to some degree for reducing traffic deaths, Mr. Speaker, it became evident to members of the Committee that there was a variation of opinion, a need for co-ordination and a necessity for a concentrated, co-ordinated, all-out effort by everyone in the government service, at every level, to solve the problem that is taking the lives of Saskatchewan people.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, there is a need to pay special tribute to the staff, to the chairman's patience, particularly to the Opposition Members, to all members of the Committee who sincerely and without bias sought the solution for our traffic problem.

A year ago when we were in Phoenix, Arizona, the people there set up a schedule that kept the Committee busy until late at night. Late at night we rode with traffic officers who were trained to identify a drinking driver. The director of their DWI program in that city recently paid what I thought was a tribute and a compliment to the Committee. She said that many delegations and many legislative groups in a course of a year, from all over the continent, came to Phoenix to study their DWI program and their rehabilitation procedures. "Your Committee," she said, "you were the hardest working group we have had visit us. You were all on hand all the time."

I will support the Motion, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. M. FEDUNIAK:** (Turtleford) Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to rise and say a few words on the Highway Traffic and Safety Committee Report and on the Committee of which I have been a member and enjoyed every part of it.

The work of the Highway Traffic and Safety Committee has been a very complex one. We had a very difficult issue to deal

with. It is a situation of concern to every citizen and involves everyone. Mr. Speaker, our duties and responsibilities were to seek out the best solutions and suggestions in order to reduce accidents and save lives, due to ever-increasing traffic accidents.

There are many, many factors contributing to all traffic accidents. Before the members of the Highway Traffic and Safety Committee made their decisions, we had a relatively wide range of opportunities and information to listen to and study in order to evaluate the accident problem, with which we are confronted in our society. We had some 103 briefs and submissions. In addition to the briefs, we received 81 letters and 134 pieces of material and articles, booklets and reports from various sources.

Mr. Speaker, out of all this information which was made available to us, we had a very good cross section of opinions, feelings and ideas with which to make our recommendations to the Government to legislate. There are so many areas and subjects that I can refer to in this Committee's work. I should like to say something which I feel is one of the most serious issues and main causes of our rapidly increasing traffic accidents.

According to accident statistics, it has been very well established that the major portion of our traffic accidents and fatalities are due to intoxication. Most of these accidents are caused by younger drivers, who are 24 years old and under.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that our present court system of dealing with traffic safety offenders has failed miserably. It is not geared to cope with the current situation we are faced with. It has not been keeping up with the times nor with the progress which has been made in traffic movements over the past 50 years, speed, style and volume of traffic that we have on our roads today. The present court system was probably adequate in the past horse and buggy days, when the speed limit was 20 miles an hour. At that time when two vehicles met they stopped and the drivers visited with each other for a half an hour or so before proceeding on their way. Today's traffic court system does nothing to relieve or correct or reduce our serious traffic violations and costly accidents.

Presently under our system of traffic courts many good citizens who have had a very good driving record for years become subject to court action for small, petty infractions, and are charged without much consideration for their innocence and good intentions, nor for the implications and effects of these charges on these people. In most cases this type of action by our present court system dealing with traffic accidents aggravate and humiliate our drivers.

Our traffic violators are not being given a fair chance to be heard in court. The present system is too streamlined in order to process the increasing volume. The time allotted is not adequate to deal with each individual case. Many important cases are just pushed through in a very limited time, something like a minute or less a case.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it quite clear that I certainly do not put the blame on the officials and judges who are responsible for processing these cases. They are just following the present court system and in the circumstances they are doing a very good job considering the volume of cases they have to

April 8, 1975.

process in a given time, they have no other choice. They have to make many difficult decisions based on inadequate information.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have to take a different attitude. We must take a new approach towards our citizens who are getting involved in traffic accidents. We know that our accidents are increasing every year and this tells us that there is something wrong. We are not doing the right thing. Mr. Speaker we need some new criteria. I believe that there is a better way and that there are solutions. Other jurisdictions have come up with some programs that do reduce traffic accidents.

We must make our drivers aware of their responsibilities and concerned with the ever-increasing tragic traffic situation, which in turn results in suffering, loss of life and high costs. Mr. Speaker, I believe that education and attitude are our key words. We must start educating, beginning at the kindergarten level and following it up all through the entire school and college system. The education should cover rules and regulations, including first aid. In addition to the subjects mentioned, moving pictures should be shown, showing all the aspects of traffic safety practices, and also traffic accidents and their results, the loss of lives and loved ones, the loss of family breadwinners, the suffering, the costs, the number of persons it affects in every case.

I believe that a defensive driver's course be taken by every driver before procuring a driver's licence and that a driver's course include city and country driving besides a written test.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy that the Highway Traffic and Safety Committee is recommending that our traffic courts be separated from the rest of the court system and only deal with traffic offenders. In this recommendation we believe that a special traffic court be established, which will be able to emphasize the seriousness of various traffic laws and the necessity that they be obeyed. A Chief Traffic Magistrate for the province be appointed to be responsible for creating and implementing the traffic courts system to provide policy and direction. That a Traffic Magistrate be appointed in each judicial centre, who would hear all not guilty pleas in respect to traffic offences and would supervise the activities of traffic tribunals in the centre. A Chief Judge of the traffic courts would be appointed from among the Traffic Magistrates in each judicial centre. That programs of education and rehabilitation be developed as a component to this court system. The structure of this proposed court system will give the accused an opportunity to plead guilty or not guilty with full explanation.

I believe that this method of dealing with these offenders in many cases will create a satisfactory understanding. Instead of cash fines, they should be given a rehabilitative responsibility in participating in one of the programs for a given period. This type of approach would certainly improve the drivers' attitudes towards the law enforcement personnel and a better relationship will develop.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that our recommendations to deal with the drinking driver will be very beneficial whenever it is implemented. This recommendation suggests that we have a special police squad organized in urban centres and especially trained

in detecting and dealing with the drinking driver. That rehabilitation centres should be established in our province and be available to help the drinking driver. Perhaps a driving while intoxicated course be developed similar to that which is used in Phoenix, Arizona. These programs should be used as an alternative to the present form of punishment for the drinking driver.

Mr. Speaker, I am also happy that our Highway Traffic and Safety Committee is recommending that the compulsory wearing of seat belts in our province be legislated. There has been a small proportion of drivers who are opposed to this legislation. We know from statistics that at least 20 per cent of lives were saved in Australia when the wearing of safety belts was introduced and indicates to us without any doubt that it will be a worthwhile step in reducing deaths and injuries in our province. I believe that it is our duty as legislators to support such an act when we know the results it will produce.

Mr. Speaker, the Highway Safety and Traffic Committee's objective is to work to develop safety programs that would reduce accidents and save lives. May I say that the members of the Committee put a lot of effort into the Final Report. I should like to thank them for their co-operation throughout the meetings. I should also like to thank the staff for their service and patience and their kind co-operation during all our meetings. It was a privilege and a pleasure to work with them. I should also like to thank our chairman, Mr. Art Thibault, who so ably guided us from start to finish, which resulted in such a comprehensive Final Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK:** (Minister of Health) Mr. Speaker, I should first like to acknowledge the large amount of work that has been done by this Committee and in particular to commend the Hon. Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault), who was chairman of the Committee. I know that he has had a very keen and sincere concern and interest in the problem of highway and traffic safety. Over the years he has done a great deal of work in this area and the Report as submitted for the consideration of the Legislature is indeed a tribute to his work and concern.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** Mr. Speaker, highway and traffic safety is a big subject full of complex and perplexing problems. To come to grips with this important subject is an accomplishment by itself. The Committee has done more than that, they have provided us with a comprehensive review of highway traffic safety and have presented us with a number of detailed recommendations. I do not intend to comment on all the recommendations in this Report but I do want to make mention of several areas of particular concern to me as Minister of Health.

These include the seat belts, alcohol, drugs, driving, ambulance and emergency services. Mr. Speaker, the Committee's Report recommends that the Government enact legislation to make mandatory the wearing of seat belts after a one year publicity

April 8, 1975.

and public education program, followed by a further one year period in which only warnings would be issued. I have stated publicly before and I would repeat now that I am persuaded by the evidence which I have seen that the use of seat belts can reduce the incidence of death and severity of injury to occupants of motor vehicles involved in accidents. The Australian experience is particularly convincing. After legislation making the wearing of seat belts compulsory was passed there was a 15 to 25 per cent drop in fatalities, 30 to 35 per cent drop in injuries and a 26 per cent drop in hospital bed occupancy due to motor vehicle accidents. Other surveys and studies have presented similar evidence. An analysis of over 28,000 accident cases by Volvo revealed no fatalities and 40 to 90 per cent less injury for seat belt wearers involved in accidents below 60 miles per hour. By contrast, Mr. Speaker, non belt wearers were fatally injured in accidents at 12 miles per hour. A University of California study showed that seat belts reduced serious injuries by 43 per cent. A University of Michigan analysis concluded that lap seat belts would save 40 per cent of us fatalities and shoulder seat belts would save 53 per cent. The Canadian Safety Council backs up the University of Michigan findings. Our own University of Saskatchewan concluded that 60 per cent of those fatally injured in 1974 would have survived if they had been wearing seat belts.

I know that there are arguments presented which say that compulsory usage of seat belts infringes upon one's personal liberty. I think that argument is not valid, Mr. Speaker. For example, we have made many laws and regulations which enforce health and safety standards: the wearing of safety helmets for motorcyclists, the imposition of speed limits and rules of the road, the regulation to control contagious diseases. One could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. I think that the evidence that the mandatory use of seat belts would save lives and reduce injury is strong enough to warrant legislation making the wearing of seat belts mandatory. Certainly a number of other jurisdictions have come to that conclusion. Compulsory belt use laws exist in Australia, New Zealand, Israel, France, Spain and Czechoslovakia, Puerto Rico and Malawi. It has just been introduced in Great Britain and in Switzerland. I also understand that the compulsory seat belt regulations are either pending or being introduced in some 20 or more states of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the Members of the House might be interested that at the conclusion of the Health Ministers' Conference on February 13th and 14th of 1974, a communique was issued, approved unanimously by all the Ministers of Health, that is, all the ten provincial Ministers of Health and the federal Minister of Health and Welfare, Mr. Lalonde. The communique reads as follows:

The Ministers strongly endorse the adoption by the appropriate authority of legislation requiring the use of seat belts accompanied by effective enforcement measures. They were impressed that the Australian experience with such legislation indicated the reduction within a period of 15 per cent to 20 per cent in automobile deaths and injuries. If successful this would represent a reduction of approximately 700 deaths and 25,000 injuries annually in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the position that I have stated on the compulsory use of seat belts is my own position, it does not reflect the view of the Government.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to comment personally on the recommendation of the Committee referring to alcohol, drugs and driving insofar as the recommendations deal with suggested revisions of the Criminal Code and restrict the enforcement of existing laws. These matters come under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and he may want to comment on that at some future date.

I do want to say a word about publicity to make the public aware of the dangers of drinking and driving. My comments will be directed less to recommendations of the Committee which to me seem to be quite reasonable than with the criticism that has been spoken in this House by the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris) regarding the AWARE Program. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the Member may have given this Legislature and the public a false impression concerning what the AWARE Program is attempting to do and how it is going about its task.

First, I should like to correct an impression which the Member may have given by quoting a figure of 14 per cent as representing the increase in government funding for alcohol programs in the current fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, the increase he referred to represents only a small portion of the additional funds in various areas of the Budget which are committed to programs respecting alcohol and alcoholism. In fact, Mr. Speaker, last year we budgeted some \$3.2 million for these programs. This year, as I stated in the House during the Budget Debate, we have increased our commitment to these programs to \$4.3 million, in other words an additional \$1.1 million. All the money does not appear in the sub vote under the Alcoholism Commission. There are very good reasons why not all the money is included in the Alcoholism Commission sub vote. It is because of our ability to cost share some of the costs with the Federal Government. Mr. Speaker, let me point out that included in the Budget is \$1.9 million for the Alcoholism Commission, \$740,000 under the AWARE Program; \$198,000 for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; almost \$900,000 for inpatient care in various hospitals; almost \$40,000 for drinking while driving programs; \$150,000 in payments to physicians; almost \$550,000 in payments by the Department of Social Services for patients in rehabilitation units. That represents an increase of almost 35 per cent, Mr. Speaker, not 14 per cent. In other words we have increased our financial commitments in these programs by over one-third. I do not regard that as an insignificant increase, Mr. Speaker.

I am also concerned that the Member may have given the impression that the AWARE Program has no proper evaluation procedures built into it. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Before the program was commenced in the summer of 1974, an extensive survey was carried out in our province in order to provide solid baseline data on which evaluation of the program could later be made. This survey was more complete than any other survey of this type that has ever been undertaken. No other province in Canada has done this. Dr. Paul Whitehead of the Addiction Research Foundation in Ontario, one of the leading authorities on addiction research in Canada designed the survey. The Member for Arm River has often referred to the Addiction Research Foundation as an authority in this field. The survey provides us with the baseline data on which we shall be able to measure changes in attitude and behaviour which take place as a result of the AWARE Program.



April 8, 1975.

Incidentally, on the same day that the Hon. Member for Arm River spoke on this topic I received in my office an evaluation report on the first phase of the AWARE Program. The survey was one by our Research and Planning Branch in the Department of Health and while this is only an initial evaluation based on a relatively few months of experience, I am pleased to report to you that the conclusions of this evaluation report are very positive indeed. In fact I can best give you the essence of the report by quoting the summary in conclusion which is attached to the evaluation:

This survey is the first assessment of the impact of the AWARE Program in raising the level of public awareness to drinking patterns which are harmful. In future a similar survey will be taken at regular intervals in order to monitor the development of changing public attitudes toward the use of alcohol. Eighty-one per cent of the respondents have heard of the AWARE Program and have heard or seen at least one ad. Television newspaper and radio were the only media forms that received significant mention as sources from which ads have been seen or heard. Nearly three-quarters of respondents had seen the ad from television. Only four per cent of the respondents felt that the ads were of poor quality. Seventy-nine per cent of respondent stated that they were in favor of the AWARE Program and less than two per cent expressed opposition. About half of the respondents felt that the program was producing positive change in public awareness of harmful drinking patterns and in attitudes towards the use of alcohol. Positive changes in harmful drinking patterns were felt to be resulting from the AWARE Program by 40 per cent of the respondents. Eight per-cent said their personal drinking habits were changed because of the program. After only six months of the AWARE campaign, 51 per cent of the respondents said they had no changed their drinking pattern.

The result of this survey indicates that the great majority of the public had heard of the AWARE Program and observed its media campaign particularly on television. The survey results further indicate that a significant portion of the general public is in favor of the program and feel that it is making progress in fulfilling its objective, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would remind Members of the House that the goals of the AWARE Program have been quite clearly stated in contradiction to what the Hon. Member for Arm River told us the other day. Firstly, to raise the level of public awareness to drinking patterns which are harmful; and secondly, to reinforce social attitudes which will have a positive effect in changing the drinking patterns. Obviously from the results of this preliminary survey I want to stress that it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion when the program has only been in operation for some six months. I think that we can safely say that not only does the program have clear goals and objectives but the public is aware of these and is impressed with the job that AWARE is doing.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying therefore, that I cannot accept the Member's conclusion based on apparently no evidence whatsoever that the AWARE Program is increasing harmful drinking patterns. Even the results of the preliminary

program would indicate that this is simply not true. I would be interested in knowing what basis the Member has for making that statement. Others have been just as impressed with the AWARE Program as the people of Saskatchewan. I should mention that Ontario just this last week has announced a campaign similar to our AWARE Program. The directors of that program have been to see our staff and contacted our staff and are going to be using some of the same approaches and perhaps some of the materials that we have now produced. Also the Government of Manitoba has purchased some of our advertisements and is sharing the cost of producing others.

The Hon. Member for Arm River may also have misinterpreted some of the Aware advertisements respecting the subject of drinking and driving. I want to state categorically that our Government supports the view that the ideal would be that people do not mix drinking and driving at all. I know that the staff of the AWARE Program supports that view. The unfortunate truth is that people do drink and drive and we need to deal with those who drink and drive.

The AWARE Program has, as a matter of fact, just finished a 15 minute documentary film which shows the danger of even minimal amounts of alcohol and one's driving ability. AWARE ads have pointed out quite clearly the effect that drinking can have on driving. You may have seen a newspaper ad entitled, "After a Couple of Drinks you still See This", a group of children playing on the road, but then the question is asked: "Would you slow down?" The ad goes on to say, "If you plan to drive, either don't drink at all or allow an hour for every drink before you drive." An hour is how long it takes the average size drink to leave your blood stream. So if you have had three beers, or three ryes or three glasses of wine, wait at least three hours before you hit the road. The text does not suggest that you can take a drink an hour and still drive. To misinterpret the Aware ads to suggest that it is, in my opinion, a blatant distortion of what the ad says. In fact the whole approach of the AWARE campaign to drinking and driving has been to follow the lead of the Canada Safety Council whose pamphlets clearly attempt to spell out both the law and the effect of alcohol on one's driving ability. I think it would be difficult to read this material and suggest that it is telling you that you can take one drink an hour and still drive. The point of the Safety Council advertising and our own advertising is that you should wait at least an hour for every drink that you have had before driving.

We agree that the best course of action is not to drive at all if one is drinking, Mr. Speaker. I also must correct the Hon. Member on his assertion that the AWARE Program does not present the alternative of total abstinence. In fact one ad starts off this way:

Remember when friends came to call and your mother put on the coffee pot.

This ad attempts to show that it is not necessary to serve liquor in order to be sociable. We have more ads of this nature in preparation and they will in fact promote the alternative of total abstinence, Mr. Speaker. We also have six ads running on radio right now which feature interviews with six different alcoholics. They tell how they crossed the line from social drinking into alcoholism. They clearly show that social

April 8, 1975.

drinking can lead to alcoholism, I am told that the Director of the Alcoholism Commission says that the AWARE Program has had a warm response from the Alcoholics Anonymous Community of this province. This judgement has been confirmed by ministers, counsellors and others who are concerned with alcoholism. Mr. Speaker, to say as he has said in this House that fostering responsible attitudes to the use of alcohol, as opposed to the irresponsible attitudes which would result in abusing alcohol to say that this amounts to encouraging alcohol use is a tortured distortion of what this Government is trying to do. We want to see alcohol consumption cut down, Mr. Speaker. We want to see the abuse of alcohol and the tragedies that result from the abuse ended. This is our position. We will continue programs to deal with this difficult problem and I hope that the people of this province will continue to support us as they have already done.

Mr. Speaker, let me read to you a letter which was received on April 4th of this year by the Director of the AWARE Program. The letter reads this way:

May I congratulate you on your program AWARE. It is what we have needed for years as I believe people fully realize how out of hand alcohol has become and how much of a large percentage of people are depending on it to the point where a large amount of money from the family income is spent on liquor, not saying the amount of heartache caused in the home, plus a car accident that are the result of abuses. Please pass on my congratulations to a government that truly puts people ahead of money as this program will reduce revenue from alcohol beverages but I am sure it will win a lot of votes come next election as it does show true concern for a better life style for Saskatchewan residents. May God bless you on your efforts as individuals and to the party as a governing body to keep up the good work.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to quote to you, two other letters which are typical of the response we have received through the AWARE Program. First a letter from Mr. T.E. Williamson, an official of the Saskatchewan Conference of the United Church of Canada. The letter reads as follows:

I would like to commend your department for the very excellent way in which you are promoting AWARE to the public by way of television media. The commercials are very good and have a certain impact to them that I am sure appeals to everyone. It is impossible to have people totally abstain from alcohol and in this life I believe your promoting in moderation is most important. I have not met Mr. Leask as yet but do know of him by way of his reputation with the United Church of Canada and would encourage him further in his endeavors with your department.

Mr. Speaker, finally a letter from the President and General Manager of W.D. Saunders, Publishing House. He writes me a letter this way:

On a recent visit to my home province, Saskatchewan, I listened to your AWARE advertisement on the radio. I should like to congratulate you on taking this kind of initiative I am a strong believer in preventive

measures just such as those you have taken. I know of no similar actions by other provincial governments but then Saskatchewan has been first on the scene in other areas, such as hospitalization.

Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to table copies of that correspondence for anyone to see. Mr. Speaker, that last letter comes from eastern Canada as I said from W.D. Saunders Company, Canada, Ltd. and their headquarters are in Toronto.

Mr. Speaker, finally I should like to comment in general terms on the recommendations of the Committee on ambulances and the emergency services. I think there can be no serious quarrel with the Committee's general recommendation. Ambulance services need to be improved and better co-ordinated. Officials in my Department have been studying this question for some time and would have no quarrel with the general aim of the Committee's recommendation. The crux of the matter is how this improvement is to be brought about and to some extent what we can reasonably expect in terms of lifesaving potential by such an improved service. The extensive research into the lifesaving aspects of an improved ambulance service which has been done by our officials indicate that no significant reduction in fatalities could be anticipated regardless of the amount of the improvement in the service, Mr. Speaker.

The factors involved in this pessimistic conclusion include the vast road distances between Saskatchewan communities. The high percentage of deaths which occur before anyone discovers an accident and the experience of many newly implemented ambulance plans such as Ontario's and in the North part of New York State.

American studies are quoted in the report as saying that:

Twenty per cent of all highway traffic fatalities could have been avoided if adequate care was received at the scene of the accident or enroute to the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned because these American studies do not really apply to Saskatchewan. My officials suggest that those savings of life can only be achieved where reasonable distances are involved. We feel that no matter what type of improved ambulance service is developed in Saskatchewan, a small rural hospital would remain the most frequent contact between or point following serious road accidents. Accordingly ambulance services should be developed which allow the appropriate transportation of acutely ill patients from that first point of contact to a hospital capable of more specialized care.

The second goal should be the development of improved emergency response capabilities for those situations where the ambulance attendant actually provides health care on the scene. This situation is more difficult in areas immediately surrounding or in major urban centres.

The Committee expressed disappointment with the 1958 regulations governing road ambulance services in Saskatchewan. I should point out to the Members of the House that the voluntary ambulance guidelines were introduced in 1973. They have resulted in a significant improvement in ambulance services. At least half the calls in the province are now answered with a

April 8, 1975.

Class A ambulance and most operators with a Class A vehicle still meet the patients' care equipment standards but are simply not able fully to comply with the vehicle requirements without rather costly replacement of the vehicles they now have.

I should tell you that the guidelines were developed in co-operation with the ambulance operators of the province and I'm told by my officials that declaring the guidelines as mandatory conditions would not significantly improve the current situation. The Government is continuing to study the question of provision of ambulance services in Saskatchewan and the comments of the Committee provide a valuable input into this review. I am confident that we will be able to come up with a workable program in the relatively near future, Mr. Speaker, but I do want to emphasize that the problems that we face in providing ambulance services in the Province of Saskatchewan, which has vast geographic distances make it unlikely that a significant reduction in fatalities resulting from the road accidents really will occur.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion there are a great many other items in the Report that I should like to comment on but time will not permit such detailed discussion, however, the areas which I have mentioned today are indicative of the complexity of the problems this Report tends to deal with. There is no question in my mind that this Report will provide valuable discussion and that many of its recommendations will be implemented in due course. I think all Members of this Legislature owe to the Committee a debt of gratitude for the valuable work that they have done. Mr. Speaker, I will support the Motion.

**MR. D.L. FARIS:** (Arm River) Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member made mention of several reports and a base line value study of these on the AWARE Program. I wonder if those might be tabled.

**MR. SMISHEK:** The Advisory Committee which is advisory to the AWARE Program is right now reviewing that report. Certainly I hope that the Committee will make that report public. I do not have that report with me but I think it is the intention of the Committee to make that report public. I know that the Committee is meeting this month and in all fairness, they should see the report first.

**MR. FARIS:** Do I have the Ministers assurance that after they are finished . . .

**MR. SMISHEK:** Mr. Speaker, I will do everything possible to encourage the Committee to make the report public.

**MR. A.R. GUY:** (Athabasca) Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee, I'd like to say a few words. I realize that a great deal has been said so I have no long prepared speech, but I should like to say that I appreciated the opportunity of working on the Committee. It was a committee that got along extremely well regardless of philosophical and political differences. When we sat down to study the problem of highway and traffic safety we put that as our foremost objective and I appreciate it, I'm sure the other Members have said, the fact that we were there for one job only and that was to try to bring in recommendations that were for the

benefit of the general public in this particular field. I am pleased with the reports that have been given by Members on both sides of the House regarding the work of this Committee and I'm not going to review them.

I must say that I was a little disappointed in the remarks the last speaker and to some extent, the Member for Arm River because I don't think that the Report on the Highway Traffic and Safety is a place to carry on their vendetta over the AWARE Program and this is what it has developed into. The Member for Arm River made some, I gather, I didn't hear all his remarks on Friday, made some very strong remarks because he has some very strong feelings in this regard which he certainly is entitled to and which we on this side of the House appreciate. The Minister today spent most of his speech in answering the criticisms of the AWARE Program. Well, of course, in our Report we did not say we were in favor of the AWARE Program or we were against it or we were in the middle of it or anything else. And I think that the debate or the arguments that took place by both the Member for Arm River and the Minister of Health would have been far better left to the discussion in the Health estimates and I think that they've really detracted in this Legislature from the study of the Report.

The other comments made by the Minister of Health today I found it somewhat strange too for his sort of defensive attitude that he has taken to anything in the Report that relates in any way to his Department. Now it was certainly not the objective of the Report to criticize any department. We put the facts on the line as they were presented to us by members of the various departments, by the public and the fact that there was a criticism of the road system or criticism of the ambulance system or criticism of the court system, or criticism of the licensing system or the education system, surely doesn't mean that every Minister on that side of the House is going to get up and defend their system before they really had a study, really had the opportunity as the Minister said of studying the Report in detail. I certainly haven't seen the Minister of Education get up and try and defend some of the comments we made, some of the objections we had to the manner in which his Department has been involved or the Attorney General didn't get up to defend the court system. The Minister of Highways didn't get up to defend the highway system. In fact the only Minister is the Minister of Health who found it necessary today to defend the ambulance service and the only criticism that I have is that if this is the approach of any government to feel that they have to be on the defensive because a committee, a joint committee from both sides of the House made some recommendations which, you know, maybe could be taken as a complaint or could be taken as, that the present system is not adequate, I hope the time never comes when any government of any political stripe is prepared to sit and say all has been done that can be done whether it's regarding highway and traffic safety, whether it's regarding the development of social services, whether it's regarding education or the development of industry. I hope we never reach that period where any government would say everything that can be done, has been done. Therefore I feel in a position where I have to defend the position that we shouldn't make any recommendations about improvements that could come along and that's the one part so far in this debate that has sort of certainly disappointed me and alarmed me to some extent that, where there are some who are ready to defend rather than say yes, you know, there are improvements, there's an opportunity

April 8, 1975.

to improve and because there are opportunities to improve the highways, the ambulance system, the court system it doesn't say that the present system has to be condemned out of hand because we didn't do that in the Report. We merely built our recommendations around what had been the facts as they had been presented to us and then as a committee we tried to assess the present situation and tried to come up with recommendations which would be in the best interests of the public and also recommendations that we thought the public were prepared to accept at this particular time.

Most of the recommendations have been discussed by other members of the Committee so I'm not going to review or plow that ground again. I just want to say one or two words about the fact that, along with the Member for Whitmore Park, we were the ones who put in the only reservations. And that was in regard to the use of mandatory seat belt use and I must admit that we heard some very strong evidence for the use of seat belts and I am sure that there is very strong evidence for the use of them and I am prepared to go considerable distance towards, certainly making sure that seat belts are available for those people who wish to use them and I think they should be encouraged to use them. I like the program that the present Government has of signs on the road with the big question mark, "Are your seat belts done up?" and some of the other types of education programs that are under way to encourage people to use seat belts. I think they should use them but I don't think we are at the stage where there is much to be gained to make the use of seat belts mandatory.

First of all I don't think that it can be enforced. I don't think it's going to create a better atmosphere between the enforcement agencies and the general public at a time when the relationship between those two groups is strained on many fronts. I find it rather difficult to impose compulsory seat belt legislation on car drivers when we don't have them in public means of transport such as trains, buses, and school buses particularly. And I think that we are, perhaps, not prepared yet, as I said, to go the mandatory route. It's very easy to say, well, you know, we will accept the Government, we the Government, we this Committee will accept the responsibility where, in an area, where, perhaps the individuals should be encouraged to have a little more responsibility, after all, it's basically their lives that are at stake. Now I know you can argue that it affects insurance rates and other people on the roads and so on and too, I say indirectly this is true. But directly while it's in the best interest of the individual to have that seat belt done up and we should encourage more responsibility on the part of individuals rather than opting for government force or government control in this particular area. So it was on that basis that we two Members from this side who were on the Committee did put in the reservation in regard to the use of seat belts. It wasn't that in our Committee we didn't have a spirited and angry debate on whether it should be compulsory or not, but members agreed that those who supported it would put it in the main body and those that didn't would put it as a reservation and again, as I say I have no great profound, strong feeling in this regard but I feel that at this time that the use of mandatory legislation is not in the best interest of individuals. We have, and this is true, not only in the Provincial Government of Saskatchewan but provincial governments and Federal Government all over Canada and perhaps all over the world, where, you know, we're just a little too quick to use government legislation when

encouragement of the individual's responsibility would perhaps solve the same problem and certainly would create a better feeling.

The only other comment that I wish to make is in regard to the speed limit. I didn't put a reservation in on that particular recommendation because we, I think, compromised in the Committee by saying we should like to try it for one year and I certainly have no objection and I think a one year trial would do no harm. However, I am very pessimistic in my own mind that in Saskatchewan that the reduction in the speed limit to 55 miles an hour would have very much effect on the fatalities, total fatalities. I think the wide spaces that we have, the good highways that we have, a lot of four laning, yes, most of it, seeing you want to get involved in it politically, most of it came during the seven years of the Liberal Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. GUY:** John started that one out over there. No, I think the fact that we have over the years built good highways, a good main highway system that the reduction of speed is probably not nearly as important in limiting or bringing about the decline in fatalities as getting the drinking driver off the road, getting the people who deliberately refuse to obey the traffic laws. I don't think that reducing the speed limit from 65 to 55 is going to get the person who consistently drives 95 miles an hour on the highways. He is the real danger on the highway. A ten mile, you know, ten miles here or there within the 55-65-70 area, I'm not sure is that, you know, is that involved in creating accidents, however, as I said I didn't put in a reservation in this regard because I am perfectly prepared to go along with a one year trial.

I wanted to see also what the people of Saskatchewan, what other Members in the Legislature who were not on the Committee, what they have to say in regard to the speed, reducing the speed limit and the use of mandatory seat belts and so I hope that some of the Members who were not on the Committee will speak, particularly on these items.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, that I haven't anything further that I wish to say in regard to this Report. Again I think we did try to come in with recommendations that made sense, that were within the realm of possibility, that were within the realm of any government being able at least to make a start on legislating into force, bringing into force, studying and trying to improve this problem that we have on our highways.

I'll certainly support the Report.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. A. OLIVER:** (Shaunavon) Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Athabasca said when you follow so late in the debate, there isn't much left to say. However, I am happy to see that he is supporting the use of seat belts. I respect his position of opposing the mandatory aspect on a personal basis. This is one of the great things about democracy. But in the matter of seat belts, I think that the safety factor has well been established. The public has available to them, through the various police forces, an



April 8, 1975.

acceleration slide which demonstrates the safety features of seat belts and I think that if ever you have a chance to try one of these acceleration slides, get in the thing, strap on the belt and just see how much force is exerted when you come to that sudden stop which is about five miles an hour.

I think the opposition to the use of seat belts comes generally from an inherent stubbornness or obstinacy of human nature. It is sort of like the urge to touch newly painted furniture or a newly painted door that has a sign on it saying, 'Wet Paint', you automatically stick your finger on it to see if it is fact or not. There are those people who believe in the old wives' tales told by the fatalists who say that something terrible is bound to happen if you buckle up that seat belt. Something like the guy that refuses to make up a will because he is sure, in his superstitious nature, that if he does so, it is going to be the end of him, he is going to cash in. But there are certain concerned people who have various phobias about being strapped in. I think that is a problem and must be considered. Some can quote cases where an individual was strapped in the seat and was burned to death or drowned. They state that they would rather be thrown clear than strapped into a wreck.

True, these seat belts are uncomfortable, cumbersome and restrictive but they are improving. There is a desperate need to improve the design of the seat belt with respect to safety, comfort and convenience. But the most important feature of seat belts and the compulsory aspect of them, I think, must lie in the area of child restraints. A child has very little chance of staying in a fixed position in the vehicle in the event of an accident. It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has more or less got ahead of themselves in producing legislation or regulations that really prohibit or restrict the manufacture of safe child restraints.

In November of 1974 the Hazardous Products Act, of which I have a copy, put forth stringent regulations in regard to the restraint devices for children. What these regulations did was to tighten up so much that the manufacturers first of all complained about it being too restrictive to be able to manufacture something that the public would buy and would be within the average family income. But then they had further restrictive regulations coming into effect in November of 1975. Now the public cannot get the safe child restraints they want. This is unfortunate because the dealers do not want to take from a manufacturer anything that is going to be obsolete, which he may be stuck with.

The Provincial Department of Consumer Affairs did a little bit of research for me on this and I have a fair bit of information on child restraints. These restraints have been tested and are considered the safest on the market. There are about ten of them available in Saskatchewan, most of which are fairly safe. There are three that are considered the top three — the safest. They are the, Ford Tot Guard; the GM Children's Loveseat; and the Sears Safety Shell. All of which do not really fit within the present restrictions of the Hazardous Products Act proposed by the Federal Government but they certainly do provide a degree of protection rather than let the child run loose or sit loose in the vehicle.

I think the argument for seat belts, besides the safety factor, is one of insurance costs. The insurance benefits to

accident victims and payments for property damage is paid for by the public and therefore the public should be protected from needless expense. The public has accepted other regulations we provide for the safety of the motoring public, such regulations regarding the safe operating condition of the vehicle, such things as brakes, lights, tires, even rules of the road have been accepted. The public is in full agreement that the car manufacturers have a responsibility in providing a safe vehicle. They agree that such things as collapsible steering columns, padded dashes, which are required by Federal Government regulations, are necessary. I don't think there is going to be any mass opposition to the mandatory use of seat belts. But any seat belt legislation must first be preceded by a two-year high quality educational campaign centred around the advantages of seat belts and not the big stick approach. There must be exclusions for certain persons such as delivery truck drivers and those individuals who for medical or physical reasons must be exempted with a medical certificate. This is written into the legislation passed in Australia; they have exempted certain groups of people from it.

Another point, Mr. Speaker, which we should look into is the study of the safety of the vehicle, namely vehicle inspection. The Hon. Member for Rosthern and I went to British Columbia to inspect their compulsory vehicle inspection depots. I was quite impressed with the inspection setups that they have there. Actually if you go out on any street, such as Albert Street, I am sure you will find many vehicles with some degree of mechanical defect. These vary from a light out to no brakes. The accident reports of the city police will back this one up.

The British Columbia compulsory vehicle inspection depots were set up in 1938 by the city of Vancouver. It was set up as money maker, but then it was taken over by the British Columbia government and expanded to the present five depots. The costs for inspection are practically nil. It is now \$3 for an inspection fee which covers the inspection of all lights, headlight alignment, glass, brakes, wheel alignment, exhaust system and even noise level. A decal is issued if the vehicle is considered safe. If it is defective they have ten days to have it repaired and re-checked. The fines are set up under a provincial statute. These are guidelines of maximum and minimum fines. Each municipality has the prerogative of setting their own fines within those provincial guidelines. It has been effective, but it is very difficult to know how effective since the research team, the evaluation accident research team, really has had a tough time trying to sort out all the causes of an accident, because there is no one single cause of an accident. There are a number of factors.

It would be difficult to build a vehicle inspection depot such as the British Columbia depots which are open air structures because of our climatic conditions. But, I think it is only reasonable to believe that a mechanically safe vehicle is less likely to be the cause of an accident by removing the mechanical element as the cause of the accident, leaving only the driver and the road as accident causing factors, is important. We could have such a vehicle inspection unit here probably in the two larger centres on an experimental basis and from there branch out to rural Saskatchewan.

The recommendation concerning co-ordination I feel is very important. There is a great lack of co-ordination within

April 8, 1975.

government departments, public councils and safety groups. Each, in the past, seem to have staked out their own little territory and try to build their own little empires. I think this is changing and I think it is going to have to change more rapidly in the future if we are going to lessen the slaughter on the highways.

The Attorney General's Department must be co-ordinated with the Department of Highways, the Department of Education and the Department of Health. All safety councils must be plugged into the same system if we are going to find any solution to this problem.

The recommendation on the speed limit is a bit of a tacky one. As the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) says, I think it would be very difficult to enforce. There are two sides to the question. The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association in the United States have actually urged Congress to extend rather than make permanent the nation wide 55 miles per hour speed limit in the United States. But I think there is value in a reduced speed limit because it decreases the in-traffic injuries and deaths due to decreased exposure through speed. Actually you are not going to cover as many miles if you are going slower. The energy shortage, car pooling, the use of other methods of transportation to reduce the number of miles driven by each motorist was significant in effecting the number and severity of crashes. The use of safety belts particularly in newer cars also had its effect on this.

I believe what would result from a 55 mile per hour speed limit, as they found in the United States, is that slower speeds, spilled over to the marked highways with speed limits below 55 miles per hour. So it had a tendency of slowing the people down even on slower speed highways.

The recommendation concerning the .06 blood alcohol content I don't think is low enough, because it is recognized that it is at .04 that impairment begins. I should like to see that the .08 of blood alcohol content be lowered in stages, say by 1976 it be lowered to .07 with roadside checks as the Member for Regina North West spoke of. These roadside checks I believe should be limited to the outskirts of each of the 11 cities. In 1977 it could then drop to .06 with roadside checks on all the outskirts of the 131 towns, so that by 1980 the whole province would be fully aware of the program to get drunks off the road and make driving that much safer with a blood alcohol content level of .04.

This has merit in introducing such a program in stages from larger centres out to rural Saskatchewan because it would get the needed publicity necessary to make the motoring public aware of changes in the law and thereby lessen the possibility of hostile reaction.

There have been a number of arguments against roadside checks or breathalyzer tests. They say it is an infringement on their civil rights because consenting to a breath test is really giving evidence against oneself.

Are we to guard this right by law by not allowing the police to take a blood alcohol count of a motorist on a highway and thereby permitting a drunken driver to continue to murder other motorists and pedestrians? What about the civil rights

of the innocent people killed or maimed by the drinking driver? We should be concerned about the innocent majority and not the drunken minority.

In the matter of education — we must embark on a totally co-ordinated educational program from the cradle to the grave. An educational program must consider the present situation in which society finds itself and begin where the people are. It must recognize the fact that there are habitual speeders born with a heavy foot on the gas pedal. It must recognize that our youth are driving at an ever increasing younger age; it must recognize that alcohol while undesirable, is a part of our society. I am pleased that the Department of Health has recognized the fact and has embarked upon a program to make the public aware of alcohol abuses.

The AWARE Program has had an effect and as the Minister of Health stated that in a recent survey it is showing the results of this publicity.

Mr. Speaker, on the point of the Aware Program, when I first read the advertisement, I have it here, that headline shook me up a bit. It says, "Take a Drink". As you are skimming the newspaper for news of importance one always goes through the headlines to sort out what is important to him and then maybe read a few paragraphs of it. I think it is the same with advertisements. You read the lead line, and after I got a shock from reading that one, "Take a Drink", I looked down to see who was sponsoring it. I couldn't really rationalize it when I saw it was the Department of Public Health. The first thing that went through my mind was, "What is the Department of Public Health doing sponsoring liquor?" But when you get reading through it, it makes sense. This particular paragraph says:

What happens when you take pentathol or ether is the same sort of thing that happens when you drink. That is because alcohol is also a mind depressing drug.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of those that disturbed me at first glance. Here is another one: "Introducing Alcohol, the Drug Habit almost Everyone Supports". On first glance it did seem to me that we were on the wrong track. I was very sceptical because I didn't relate to the ads. But that is not so strange because it wasn't designed for me or the 10 or 11 other MLAs who are also abstainers, or in fact the 25 or 30 per cent of abstainers in Saskatchewan. It was designed for the drinking public and the alcoholic. Mr. Speaker, who relates better to an alcoholic than another alcoholic? That is what AA is all about. This was the line taken by the AWARE Program.

It has, as the Minister stated, now become concerned with those who are abstaining and this is the ad that he referred to: "Remember Friends Dropping by and Your Mom Putting on the Coffee?" Those ads are now coming out in a series to bridge this gap of misunderstanding between the abstaining and the alcoholic. These hopefully will bring this understanding to light and hopefully bring the two parties closer together. I hope the AWARE Program continues to make the motoring public aware of the dangers of drinking and driving.

Mr. Speaker, I think this demonstrates the results of what the Government Department can do for traffic safety. If all departments were closely co-ordinated to present a united attack

April 8, 1975.

on the causes of traffic accidents and fatalities, it wouldn't take long substantially to reduce this needless waste of human lives.

It has been a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to be a part of this Highway Traffic and Safety Committee and present to this House what I feel are very important and realistic resolutions. It is my hope that the Government will give serious consideration to these recommendations.

I will support the Report.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. R. ROMANOW:** (Attorney General) Mr. Speaker, just before the mover closes off the debate, I'll just take a minute or two to congratulate the Committee for a job very well done indeed in this particular area. I think all the Members of the Legislature have acknowledged this to be a good piece of work done by the Members of the House and I think special congratulations are in order for the Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) who is the chairman of the Committee.

Very often, as MLAs, we get criticized. I think, a lot of the criticism is unfair, certainly the activity of the Committee as it is represented in this very voluminous report which I might add is a final report — there was, of course an interim report that was tabled earlier — is a sign to the public that beneath all the criticism and sometimes what might appear bitter debate, we all are working for the better objectives of society

Now, Mr. Speaker, so much for the words about the Committee. Let me just simply say that this Report has some very far reaching implications if it is implemented. Not only if it is implemented in total, but even if a portion of it is implemented, it has far-reaching implications. There will, of course, have to be a variety of legislative amendments. There will also have to be the establishment of a co-ordinating agency which is recommended by the Report and so forth.

Let me just make one or two very brief observations. First, on the question of the seat belt, Mr. Speaker, I agree with what has been said by all Members of the House, namely, the value of a seat belt, I think, has been demonstrated. I share some of the concerns that the Member for Athabasca has indicated about making seat belt legislation mandatory for individuals. I get a lot of mail on the issue of seat belts and on the issue of speed limits and this is far from being one where there is a wide degree of consensus. I think a degree of public acceptance is absolutely necessary, a degree of public confidence, acknowledgement of the need of seat belts is accepted before any move to legislation should be contemplated. That's a reservation I have about the concept of legislation with respect to seat belts.

Second, on the question of the co-ordinating agency, I believe this to be one of the most important recommendations of the entire Report. One of the very real difficulties of Government at present is the fact that there are so many agencies and so many ministerial responsibilities that there are diffused efforts with respect to this difficult problem. I'm not sure that the co-ordinating committee concept chaired by a Minister

of the Crown really is the answer. I don't criticize that because I don't have any other alternative. At one time, in my own mind, I rather thought that a department of government with a Minister, and, then stringing away from all the other departments anything related to vehicles, that this might be the co-ordinating agency because it has the impetus of a Minister who can fight in Treasury Board and in Cabinet for the concerted emphasis needed on highway traffic safety.

I'm not sure that that's the approach either. I think that that has drawbacks. One of the biggest drawbacks of that suggestion is that it doesn't involve the public and accordingly the Committee's suggestion of a co-ordinating committee which draws on not only agencies of government, but presumably the public, as a whole, has a great deal of merit to it.

So I simply want to say that the suggestion of a co-ordinating agency is one which I find an intriguing one, not free of difficulty, but one that the Government will most certainly have to look at very carefully.

Third, Mr. Speaker, the question of driver suspensions is one that troubles me and I'm not sure that the Report has fully come to grips with it. The biggest difficulty that really presents itself with respect to suspension of driver licences is that there are really two questions to this. One is, do suspensions do the job of taking off the bad drivers? The Committee Report seems to suggest that it does not. That there are a large number of people who being suspended still continue to drive. But the second question which is related to that is, is the method of driver suspension and increasing the penalties on driver suspensions a method which is likely to gain (a) public support and (b) at the same time do the job of educating and keeping suspended drivers off the road?

For example, when we introduced our Driver Licence Appeal Committee for the Highway Traffic Board, this was in effect a thin edge of the wedge from what up to that time had been a no return of licence policy. I have much misgivings about the Driver Licence Appeal Committee. But quite clearly the statistics seem to indicate that total suspension does not work. Perhaps to be more accurate, a suspension for the period which is stated does not work.

Officials of the Highway Traffic Board tell me informally that we should do is not have a Driver Licence Appeal Committee but reduce the period of suspension from six months to three months. No return of licence and couple this with an education program which will correct the driver who has made that one mistake when he's been caught drinking and driving. The point I want to address myself to is whether or not the public would accept any move, one way or the other, on the question of driving suspensions in such a fashion as to make the entire program credible. Will it be accepted or will it be thought of as being too lenient in the eyes of the public if we lower the suspension period from six months to three months, as for example, informally, Highway Traffic Board people have argued with me? Should we be going the other way? Rather than saying six months you get the extreme that says take him off the road for a year, or even two years. The Report seems to indicate that that way is not the way to go because it doesn't in fact bar the suspended driver, he still finds a way back on the road.

April 8, 1975.

This is a very large area. I think it really depends on what the attitude of the suspended driver is and the attitude of society towards suspension and while I think the Report is very helpful, quite clearly, since we are dealing with attitudes and very difficult things to measure there are some questions which have to be further looked at in this area.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, the question of the drinking driver is still a major problem. I don't understand what it is about today's society that will allow a family man who has no record, who perhaps may even need his licence for a job or a job related function to risk the possibility of a fine, a criminal record, loss through suspension, the loss of driving privileges, loss of respect in the community, loss of respect in the eyes of family. What is it that he risks all of that to take the chance to get behind the wheel after two or three drinks? Don't know whether suspensions do it. The Report seems to indicate that they perhaps don't. I don't know whether education is needed. Personally, I believe education generally in this whole driver training area is something that we would support, but do we send the man to a DWI program, for example? This is still one of the most difficult areas to tackle, with respect to the whole business of highway safety. The rights of individuals, the problems that a drinking driver presents to the society as a whole.

Now, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, just a word about the court proposal in this Report. This is also a very innovative aspect of the Report. Without sounding too sensitive or too self-defensive or too defensive of the Government in a number of areas, I want to make some general comments.

I think it's very difficult for us to devise a system whereby the police are not involved in the question of apprehending, getting evidence and bringing a person to court. Very often the types of ill-will which have been articulated here in the speeches and in the Report against the court system is really directed at a prosecutorial or a police investigative system. We've all heard it many times over and we've probably thought of it when we've been caught for speeding that the police officer really hasn't been doing his job or the police officer must, as the common myth is, have some invested interest in getting more convictions as a way of promotions or better pay. You hear all sorts of mythology in this area. But I don't know what the alternative is. Obviously there is no alternative. There has to be a police force to police the question of offences and it's a very, very difficult job for the police officer, because one of the most difficult areas for the police officer is discretion. When you're going 65 miles an hour in a 60 mile an hour zone he has a discretion: should he or shouldn't he charge. It takes a very wise man, a very experienced man, almost as wise as Solomon to be able to make a quick judgement call, given all the circumstances as to whether or not he should or shouldn't charge

The type of thing that the Committee seems to suggest we've got to build into the system, I agree with it. We should be building in sensitivity. We should be building in discretion, but that type of example, as I'm sure the colleague for Lakeview (Mr. Malone) would agree is a problem throughout the entire legal system, whether it's a traffic offence or whether it's a very serious criminal offence which is alleged, the question of discretion. When do you make the judgement call as to whether or not a charge should or shouldn't be laid?

Similarly these remarks apply to the court system. The Member for Turtleford (Mr. Feduniak) today was very critical of the fact that you're in in one minute and you're out in one minute. I know, to a layman, that that doesn't look good. When you plead guilty, very often the magistrate has no choice. He has a minimum fine he has to impose. I agree with the Member for Turtleford that very often the court docket is so heavy that he's motivated to keep running them through, but there is very little that can be done in very many cases by virtue of an explanation because the magistrate has no option. He must take, for example, a licence away for six months under the Vehicles Act if he's caught for drinking and driving. It's not a 'may' it's a 'shall' proposition. Now to the layman, somebody might think, well he's not giving me a chance for him to listen to the story. Maybe we should be amending the Vehicles Act to build in all sorts of discretionary sentences. If we do, then we run smack dab contrary to the Committee's Report that there's got to be more uniformity in sentencing, because the only way you can get uniformity is to put in the minima in the bill. If you take out the minima from the bill and you leave it up to every magistrate, some go up and because of their attitude sentence very stiffly; some because of their attitude, sentence very lightly. So, it's a very difficult proposition. I know that the Traffic Report, traffic submission is based, not based but there is a similar operation which is now working in North York, in Toronto where it's strictly a traffic operation. I think that's a worthwhile experiment to look at and I agree with the general thrust of a traffic court for traffic people. I agree that it should be a court which is given tools to sentence people to classes for driver training, to sentence them to further education, to make it less of a moral play or a morality play as I recall the words of the Report. I agree with all of that.

My simple plea to the Members of the House and to the public is simply this: that if you set up a separate traffic court, or you leave it with a Magistrate's Court you are going to get these very wide discrepancies and variations because the system is after all, to cite a truism, as strong as we as individuals are and goodness only knows judges have as many failings as any of us in the society as a whole.

So the traffic court operation, not to be viewed as a panacea, I'm sure the Committee didn't recommend this in any way, not as a panacea to the solutions of the court and I simply say that a lot of the flack that our judicial system has taken and the police system has taken is inevitable basically because of the nature of the prosecutorial system that we have in the judicial framework.

Having said all that I want to say that I find this one of the most innovative aspects of the Report, one that I as Attorney General will turn my mind to, to see what we can do to implement it. I think it's worth the try. I'm not sure we want to have three men sitting on a tribunal because sometimes it's tough enough with the one, but those are small details. Nor do we want a Chief Magistrate of a traffic court. That's a detail. But the concept of a separate traffic tribunal to be sensitive, to be knowledgeable, to be educated, to be aware about traffic problems. I think it is an exciting idea and it's a revolutionary idea and I'm going to look at it with a view to see if we can implement it. Having said all of the cautionary notes that I say even if we do that we'll still have many of these problems hanging around.



April 8, 1975.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't want this to be viewed as throwing cold water on any of the Report, recommendations in the Report, not at all. These are just some thoughts that came to me as I read through the Report. Other Ministers and other MLAs don't agree with me on this quite obviously. The task now for the Government is to take the Report and see what can be done to implement the Report. From that standpoint I can assure the Members of the House that it's the intention of the Government to take this Report as seriously as we can and to act on it as quickly as we can, in as many areas as we think that we can. Again, congratulations to the chairman and to all the members of the Committee for what I think is just an absolutely first rate job. If nothing else the publicity has warranted, the favorable publicity, the awareness about driving and safety for driving, the awareness on this has warranted, justified the entire establishment of the Committee, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. A. THIBAUT:** (Melfort-Kinistino) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank all those who took part in developing the whole issue, in working with the Committee and I also must thank the co-chairman who was very helpful at times, the staff and all those who participated in the debate today.

I know that it's pretty hard to put in a book of this size all the work that we have gone through. It would require days to debate with the rest of the Members of the Legislature to be able to sell the idea of whether it's the courts or whether it's the co-ordinating body and so on. We made those recommendations after very serious discussions.

I think before cold water is thrown on any part of the Committee's work, that all departments should discuss these problems very seriously. I know there are the international conferences every year, or every second year, coming up and the Government should see to it that somebody attends those international conferences. There is no kidding that in Saskatchewan on traffic safety we're like the slow horse on the race track that is a whole turn behind and he's running like sixty and thinking that he is ahead. When you are going to deal with an attitude of this kind it's pretty hard to jack it up in a hurry.

The Report recommends that 1976 be traffic safety year. There is a good reason for this. Because we know that we must develop a good attitude towards a new traffic approach. Unless we give it a real jolt with traffic safety year for one year and I don't propose that we use the hound dog approach, let's use a good shepherd approach where we have sheep and use the hound dogs where we have coyotes. I think that's the way you have to approach this thing. Use 1975 as a year to prepare the programs for 1976. I agree with the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) when he said, 90 per cent of the people would obey the law, would co-operate. I have that feeling that a lot of people would co-operate without being shoved into something.

Whether we make seat belts compulsory or not is not really the big thing. Whether we drive at 55 miles an hour or not is not the biggest thing of the Report. I think the co-ordinated

effort from every aspect of traffic safety is the answer. You've got to take this thing as a bundle. You don't stop water with just half a dam across a river. If you had tried to save Lumsden with half a dyke it would have drowned pretty quickly. The co-ordinating body is recommended in order that every department plays its role in traffic safety.

I said in my introductory remarks that in our schools today we don't teach first aid. In checking with other countries such as New Zealand, it starts at kindergarten. Naturally it is going to pose problems for the Department of Education. So what? This is the way we found it. That's what we are telling each department what we feel is wrong. It's up to them to get together and talk this thing over and spend some time in getting to the good results of the work that this Committee has done for two years.

I want to say that some of the Members on this Committee sat on the first 1965-66 committee and had the benefit of that experience. Some of the Members sat on the Liquor Committee and had the benefit of that experience. Now we have turned the Committee Report over to the Legislature and I want to make it clear that those are not laws. Some people in this country believe that this is already law, but these are only recommendations and it is entirely up to the Legislature to do now what it thinks is right. I hope they will approach it in a very realistic manner and give it a fair trial. For this I want to thank each one who has participated in the program. All the papers that were presented to the Committee are filed away for anyone in the future to see. Believe you me there is a pile of them. Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:53 o'clock p.m.