

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eighteenth Legislature
2nd Day

Monday, March 15, 1976

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

QUESTIONS

Suspension of Work on Highway 47 — Estevan

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer).

I would refer to a letter written by the Minister to the Mayor of Estevan, in early February. In that letter the Minister indicated that because of criticism by the Estevan Chamber of Commerce and elected representatives from that constituency there would be suspension of the work on Highway 47 north of Estevan. I would, therefore, ask the Minister to justify the form of blackmail on the town of Estevan.

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways): — Mr. Speaker, I rather take a dim view of the suggestion this was a form of blackmail. I want to say this that as of last September, early October, there was a great deal of criticism of the Government crew that was working in the Estevan area on Highway 18 and Highway 47. Some of this in print, and other scuttlebutt. There was no retraction by any of these people, and the Member of the Legislature for Estevan (Mr. Larter), and the members of town council were reported to have said that the work was inefficient, tardy, slovenly and words to that effect and that a private contractor would do much better. Well, at that particular time I thought, I believe in taking local advice, I think that is the democratic thing to do, so we decided because of that and because of the fact that our crew felt they had done a good job, records show they had done a good job, that they should not be subjected to that kind of criticism when there was lots of work to do in other places for similar crews. Besides that it was time to quit on that particular section anyway because of frost. It wasn't suspended just at that time because of any criticism, well advised or otherwise. But the idea that was mooted by these responsible citizens seemed to be a good idea, so we called for tenders on the balance of the work on their advice. When the tenders came in they came in at a figure that was just impossible to take. At 69 cents compared to the approximate 42 cents that our crew was doing the job for.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that that is not blackmail, I suggest that it is just simply good business, a democratic way of doing things. Taking advice from the local Member and from the elected city councillors. I apologize to the Chamber of Commerce because it was reported in the paper that at a city council meeting these members, a Mr. Peterson and I think one other, had raised the question about the inefficient work, but my information was not correct as far as the Chamber of Commerce. And I have written to the Chamber of Commerce indicating that I am sorry for any embarrassment that may have been caused them. It was in

print and certainly not contradicted in any way by the city council members and by the MLA. Now we have since that time received a letter from Mayor Peterson indicating that she is sorry. Further to that we have also . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I suggest to the Members that if this Question Period is going to work, first of all Members must put questions which must not be of a nature requiring a lengthy and detailed answer. Secondly, that the Ministers must respond as briefly as possible. Are there any supplementaries?

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, because the Minister has just not told the truth I ask permission to quote the opening line of his letter, if I may with your permission.

MR. SPEAKER: — The Member has the opportunity to ask a supplementary and I would suggest the Member proceed and not provide any more information than is absolutely necessary to frame the supplementary.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister's comments have made me a little upset because he has not told the truth. Nonetheless I would like to ask a supplementary question. At that time in his letter he indicated that the cost of doing this with a private crew would be 50 per cent higher. By the admission of the Department of Highways they are vastly over budget on their work to this point in time. When the Minister says that a private crew would be 50 per cent higher, has he taken into consideration the over expenditure already in effect by his own crew?

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Speaker, I have only got the price to date of our crew which is carefully tabulated. I want them to be competitive. I am not criticizing by any means the private contractors because they have done equally good work and are giving us dirt and black top at a price more than competitive with any other province. I am simply saying because of the situation in this area which was subject to very heavy rainfall that the contractors were not able to take a chance on providing a low bid. Because if it rains as much as it did last year in a dry area, they would not be able to make any money at 69 cents.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary for the Minister. You indicated in your statement that there were allegations by responsible local government officials that the work was being done in a tardy manner and that it was being done slovenly. What investigations have you made as Minister into those very serious allegations and what actions did you take about that particular crew if those allegations are true?

MR. KRAMER: — The allegations are untrue, because I did investigate. I gave a detailed report to the press in Estevan in October as to what happened. If the people who chose to shoot from the lip as they did, had taken the trouble to investigate they probably would not have got into the difficulties that they are in.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Extension of Time for School Boards to Determine Mill Rates

MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Education. In light of the fact that the Budget will not come down until the 24th of March and school boards are expected to have their mill rates determined and sent to their taxing authorities by the 1st of April, I wonder if the Minister has given consideration to an extension of the date by which school boards are to have their budgets finalized?

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Education): — I appreciate the difficulty that the Member refers to which I think everyone is fully aware of how it came about. We have no desire to have school boards get into any more difficulty that they are going to be faced with, and we are trying to find some way in which we can accommodate them in getting information on the grant allocations at the earliest possible time in order that they are able to meet the requirements that are going to be necessary.

MR. PENNER: — I wonder if the Minister could give us some indication of when boards might then expect an earlier indication. I take it, Mr. Speaker, from what I have just heard that he is saying that there will be grant allocations available to school boards prior to March 24th. I wonder if he could tell us, first, am I correct, and secondly, how much sooner?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I might indicate that the grant allocations will not be available prior to March 24, but we will endeavor to make the information available as quickly as we can afterwards. This is not a new approach, it has been done I understand on other occasions. We will be seeking the co-operation of the Members opposite in providing that information to the boards.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. What the Minister is saying has, in fact, happened in the past. That is a telegram may go out on the morning after the Budget comes down in the House so that the information is available. Would the Minister not agree, however, that for a school board to develop a budget and finalize a budget with only seven days notice is an almost impossible task?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Well, not necessarily. It is certainly not an easy task but it is possible in that much of the work in the developing of budgets has already been done with the process that is established and is commonly followed. Although there are going to be some difficulties as we all understand, the school boards certainly understand, and I have been in touch with the President of Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, I think that it is possible to be done.

MR. PENNER: — The Minister must understand that other local governments are able to get extensions where they require it. While it is true that some work has been done, the work has been done, Mr. Speaker, without the necessary information to

finalize the work and until school boards know what their grant allocations are going to be they can't get at the actual nitty gritty of cutting. I wonder if the Minister would react to that and would then give me an answer to my first question, whether or not there will be an extension to when mill rates are to be set?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — We have not discounted the possible need for an extension. That is one of the items that is under consideration. At this point in time we have not decided on whether it will be necessary but we certainly have not discounted it.

SPC Union Members

MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation. Is the Minister aware that there is a plan to work to rule or a slowdown by the SPC union members as of tomorrow?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Yes, I am and I have instructed the mediator to meet with the IBEW, this is the union that is involved, not the OCAW, to offer to them a counter proposal to the proposals that have already been laid on the table. I have not yet heard from that meeting.

MR. HAM: — In light of this, what steps will be taken to protect the public in the event of an emergency, Mr. Speaker?

MR. MESSER: — We are hoping that such a situation does not develop. That could well be interpreted as a hypothetical question, although we are putting together a counter proposal for the union to consider and I think that because of that proposal not having had the opportunity to be either accepted by the union or turned down by the union, it is too early to say what the repercussions will be but we do have a plan in place to undertake to provide power where it needs to be and those out of scope employees will be brought in in order to deliver that power.

MR. HAM: — A second supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Considering the problem that exists between the SPC and the Government with regard to negotiating, are you in fact negotiating in good faith with the unions and are you aware that the feelings of the workers are not of money but of stand-by time, etc.?

MR. MESSER: — The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is Yes. Very much so, Yes.

Study on Special Care Homes

MRS. E.G. EDWARDS (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Social Services. In view of the fact brought forward by the Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) and myself on February 13, setting out

conflict of interest charges regarding the appointment of H. Livergant and his group Extendicare Canada, to a study of special care homes in Saskatchewan, I wonder if the Minister has had time to reconsider his decision about hiring this group?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, Yes.

MRS. EDWARDS: — Yes, what?

MR. ROLFES: — I have had time to reconsider.

MRS. EDWARDS: — Thank you. Who is doing the study?

MR. ROLFES: — Extendicare.

MRS. EDWARDS: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. During the last days of the session of this House in January, the Minister of Social Services in his speech to the House said that he was going to appoint a committee. And at that time I asked and said I would be interested in the makeup of such a committee, an independent committee as we had hoped. Why did he change his mind and hire a group who has obvious conflict of interest charges?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, at no time did I say that there would be an independent committee. I simply said that we would set up a study to investigate the construction costs, the escalating construction costs of special care homes and the escalating operating costs.

MRS. EDWARDS: — A third supplementary. In Hansard on the 20th of January it says that from the Minister speaking that he announced that a committee would be set up to do this study.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I said I did not indicate that it would be an independent committee.

MRS. EDWARDS: — Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have Extendicare Canada do this study in spite of the objections and obvious conflict of interest, could the Minister tell us what he is paying this group to do this study.

MR. ROLFES: — Approximately \$47,000.

Radon Levels

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Minister of the Environment regarding the Uranium City problem with the radon levels. Would the Minister indicate what the picocurie levels found in the school were and would the Minister indicate whether it is true that the levels are approximately six to seven times the levels that closed the Port

Hope school and are any steps underway to see if the homes in the area, which after all are on the same land, is subject to the same problem of radon poisoning?

HON. N.E. BYERS (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, the investigations that are underway at Uranium City result from the announcement of the Hon. Alastair Gillespie, that a federal-provincial task force would be established to monitor both gamma and radon levels at several locations in Saskatchewan. I want to point out to the Member that the union at Uranium City had, I understand, asked the Federal Government to undertake tests of this nature as long ago as January.

When the federal task force was announced, I immediately said that we would support the federal move and that we would co-operate with it. We did send our people from the Department of Labour to Uranium City, with equipment that is not as sophisticated as you might wish to have for this type of monitoring. And on the basis of the results which they found, it was the view of the committee that the levels of radon gas were perhaps too high for the continued operation of the school. As a result of the advice which they provided to the Uranium City School Board, which is also the council and the government of Uranium City, the schools were closed. That is the answer to your first question.

The answer to your second question is that as a result of these surveys there are continuing surveys underway. A week ago a task force of federal and provincial officials, five in number, went to Uranium City and did further testing and they identified that if certain improvements to the ventilation system in the schools were undertaken that the schools could be reopened and on the basis of those tests the schools were opened.

The group is continuing to monitor radon levels at Uranium City. They are there now and they are continuing to monitor levels in homes and businesses in that community.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, by way of a supplementary, let me ask my initial question again. Would the Minister confirm that the picocurie levels have been found in the 170 range; they have been lowered to the range of 30 and that that is still higher than the range of levels in the Port Hope School which resulted in the Ontario government closing the Port Hope School.

My question is, are the levels six to seven times higher than the Port Hope School which resulted in a closing there and what does the Government intend to do to lower the levels from that range down to an acceptably safe level?

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, the levels of radon radiation found at Uranium City were, in the opinion of the people who undertook the tests, at a level considerably higher than was considered satisfactory for the continued operation of the school at that time. I want to point out to the Hon. Member that one of the ventilation systems in the school was not functioning at the time that the tests were taken, so that the levels were higher than were considered to be a satisfactory level. I want to bring to his attention that these were only preliminary tests

that were taken, that the tests were taken with machinery, with equipment that is not as sophisticated equipment as we might like to have for this type of monitoring. But on the basis of those very preliminary tests it was felt that it would be wise that the school be closed.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, it may be the Minister doesn't know the levels. I wonder if any tests are planned for the students, the people who have been exposed to these dangerously high levels, will any tests be undertaken to make sure that they haven't been hurt in a permanent way and secondly will any tests be undertaken to make sure that the rest of the community which is all on the same land, which is probably dangerous land, that anything will be done to see about the homes and not just the public institutions?

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, the people in Uranium City, and particularly the employees in the mine, are given periodic tests to determine if there are any ill effects resulting from continuous exposure to the radon gas levels. That type of testing goes on almost continuously in Uranium City. Secondly are there tests going to be continued in the homes and in the community? The answer to that question is yes, that there is a group in there now, who with better equipment than the first group in there had, and there are tests continuing in the homes and in the businesses in the community. We are waiting for their findings.

MR. PENNER: — Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Minister mentioned a moment ago in discussing the equipment that they didn't have sophisticated enough equipment. I'd like to ask him why they don't have the proper kind of equipment to conduct the kinds of tests that are required?

MR. BYERS: — Because the responsibility for having this equipment is a federal responsibility.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — It is a federal responsibility. It was the Province of Saskatchewan headed by a group of officials in the environment department who asked the Federal Government to come with their equipment, which they are obliged to provide for this type of monitoring to undertake the tests at Uranium City.

MR. MacDONALD: — I'd like to direct a question to the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order!

MR. MacDONALD: — Would the Minister tell me if an investigation is also going to be held at Rabbit Lake and the other uranium mines around the province? Has there been a check as to the radiation level in Rabbit Lake and the rest of the other uranium deposits in northern Saskatchewan to ensure that proper safety levels are checked in those communities as well as Uranium City?

MR. BYERS: — Yes, if the Hon. Members had read the telex put out by the Hon. Alastair Gillespie they would have noted that there are to be surveillance operations undertaken. But they should also have noted that these surveillance operations cannot be undertaken until the snow goes. It is still winter in the Uranium City area, as it is in a good part of Saskatchewan. So that many of these tests cannot be taken until after the spring breakup.

Secondly, the federal task force will identify a number of locations in Saskatchewan where additional tests will be taken. For the benefit of the Hon. Member, one of the next spots that is intended for examination is the Rabbit Lake mine at Wollaston Lake.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — By way of supplementary. Would the Minister not agree that the proper course for a responsible government, having exclusive jurisdiction in the field of education, when it sees this particular problem to close down the schools and eliminate the particular problem or remove the children from this very dangerous position? I'm surprised that the Minister having exclusive jurisdiction in education wouldn't take that action.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! The Minister please.

MR. BYERS: — I don't want to be over critical of the Federal Government for its slowness in responding to this very critical issue, but I draw to their attention that they have been requested since January to provide the equipment needed to undertake the monitoring. It wasn't until the radiation unit of the Department of Labour was made available the equipment which it has to undertake this type of monitoring. That equipment is crude, it is unsophisticated, the measurements that we got from the first tests are un-calibrated and all of that, but we sent our officials up there to get at least an idea of what the levels were. Those people were dispatched by our Government within hours of the announcement of the federal task force being established. For the benefit of the Member for Qu'Appelle, it was this group of officials, which we dispatched, entirely from the Department of Labour, entirely from the Provincial Government to go to Uranium City, who obtained these very crude readings and interpreted them for the local school board, that the local school board made the decision to close the school until they could ascertain what corrective works were needed and that has been done.

MR. SNYDER: — I think one additional point needs to be made.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! Introduction of guests.

Highway Maintenance

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — On a Point of Privilege, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask the Minister of Highways if he would table any written proof he has of any derogatory remarks made about the crews that are his department crews? Would he table these.

MR. SPEAKER: — I question the validity of that as a Point of Privilege. However, the Minister of Highways has your message. Now, introduction of guests.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. G. McNEILL (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a gentleman from the North, Mr. E. Slager. He's been in the Goodsoil area since 1933, been active in municipal government and community affairs. He is now the mayor of Goodsoil. He is here to see various government departments. I take pleasure and I'm sure he takes a lot of pleasure in, they have put a complete modern system in their town of Goodsoil and when it is completed it will probably be the one and only community in Saskatchewan that will have paid cash for this. I think he's proud of his community and I'm proud to be connected with communities such as Goodsoil and the mayor of Goodsoil and I wish him all the best in his endeavors in the city and I wish him a safe journey home. Would you stand up please.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery we have a class of students from the Douglas Park School accompanied by Mr. Harrington and their teacher, Dennis Sandness. I am sure this House welcomes them here. I've been talking to them and will be talking to them and I'm sure that all Members welcome them and hope that they are enjoying and learning from their trip to the Legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, it also gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce a group of Grade 10 and 11 students from the community of Glenavon. For the edification of all the Members of the House Glenavon is in Indian Head-Wolseley, a very important part of 16 Highway and they are accompanied by the teachers Mr. Ron Preitchet and I hope my bilingualism is up to date, I'm not sure if I am pronouncing that correctly, Mrs. Gallowicz, Mr. Hazel and Mrs. Smith. I certainly hope that the students from Glenavon and their teachers will have a very educational and informative day in the city of Regina, at the Legislature. I look forward to meeting them when they leave the gallery.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. H.H.P. BAKER (Regina Victoria): — Mr. Speaker, I'm not trying to take anything away from the Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant). I should also like to welcome the Douglas Park School students. I believe some of them live in my district. Many of them used to be in my constituency and they may be again some day hopefully. But I do want to greet them as well as the Member for Regina Wascana.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, we became embroiled in question period and we inadvertently failed to introduce the students from Rosetown Division III School, so our member for Estevan has gone down to meet with them in the cafeteria, but I should like to welcome them, although they are not here.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Hockey — Provincial Championship

MR. M.J. KOSKIE (Quill Lakes): — Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence I should like to make just a brief announcement, which I think will be of interest to the House, it's very brief.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to indicate that the constituency of Quill Lakes has again come to the forefront. I'm happy to announce that the Muenster Peewees, Division D, yesterday won the provincial championship, defeating Dodsland, 6-5.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — En route to that victory they defeated Leroy and Lake Lenore and Gronlid and St. Louis. I want to say that the team was coached by a local teacher, Mr. Joseph Dumba, Arnold Strome was the manager, and the captain of the team was Doug Koskie.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Address-In-Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. D.G. Banda (Redberry) for an Address-in-Reply.

MR. D.G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before I get into a few remarks I have left on the debate on the Speech from the Throne, I want to deal in a little detail with a question that has been asked in this House, and a very glib and unsatisfactory answer that was given. To lay before this House and the public an unbelievable conflict of interest that's engaged in by this Government, seemingly agreed to by this Government. And apparently from the answer of the Minister of Social Services, they are not prepared to back off or even give this any kind of consideration.

The situation is this. In Saskatchewan we had and still have in some areas, a company called Extencare and the president of Extencare is an individual called, Mr. Livergant. Now when I became Minister of Health he had worked for the Department of Health. He left the Department of Health, he is and has been and still is, and this is his business and he has every right to be, I don't question his right, to be a strong supporter of the NDP. He has been and still is as far as I

know, but he certainly has been a fund raiser for the NDP and he is the president in Canada of Extencicare.

Now Extencicare owned nursing homes in this province that they sold to the Government. I understand they sold them at a handsome profit. Mr. Livergant was hired by the Government of Saskatchewan, the Blakeney NDP Government to operate, to continue to operate those homes. We also have the situation where Extencicare of Canada owns, and I want to point out that Mr. Livergant is the president of Extencicare, owns a company called Hartz, J. F. Hartz and Company. This company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Extencicare Limited. The president of Extencicare Limited is Mr. H. Livergant.

Hartz and Company sell to the Government of Saskatchewan through the SAIL program and to nursing homes, equipment. Now let's get the picture.

Here we gave Mr. Livergant, an NDP and a fund raiser, in Saskatchewan. First he sells to the Government of Saskatchewan nursing homes at a good profit. Then the Government hires him to operate those homes, I presume at a very lucrative salary or contract. Nothing wrong with that. Well, there could be a little bit wrong with it. But they go further than this. They then proceed or continue to buy from the company that he controls totally, equipment for the SAIL program, operated by the Government and for nursing homes. Other nursing homes that are in a position to find out their business, to find out a great many details about them.

Now, this under anybody's terms of reference and under an ethical code and moral code must be a questionable conflict of interest. One man owns a company, sells to the Government, given a contract to run it, continue to own that company in other parts of Canada and in Saskatchewan. He owns another company totally, controls it. Gets business from the Government, the government he now holds a contract with. And so it has been raised by Members of the Opposition, not just us, but other Members of the Opposition. So he asked for an investigation.

The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes) promised such an investigation. And in fact, said in this House, that that kind of investigation would be carried out. In fact I will quote exactly what he said in this House. The 40th day of the last session, January 20, 1976. I am quoting the Minister of Social Services. He made an amendment, he said:

That all the words after "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefore:

This Assembly commended the Government of Saskatchewan for its recent announcement that a committee would be set up to study special care homes with the respect to escalating construction operating costs and alterations to special care homes.

Now he announces that that investigation will be carried out by whom? By independent committee? "No", he said, "at least three times I answered the question". At least he had either the stupidity or the honesty or a little bit of both to admit that it wouldn't be an independent committee, and by cracky, when we hear who is going to head that committee, you have to admit it won't be an independent committee. The committee will be who? Extencicare. Mr. Livergant. He will be asked to

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to examine himself. A fund raiser, an NDP, the most blatant conflict of interest . . . the Minister laughs. Well I tell you. The Minister and that Government opposite have a very strange conscience, and a very strange code of ethics. But I will tell you one of the latest additions to the Cabinet has the strangest and the lowest code of ethics and level of morality that I have seen in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — I say that the Premier should make some investigation into this. If he can stand in his place in this debate or at any time and explain that there is nothing wrong with Mr. Livergant being able or a company that he controls while he is still in the employment of the Government through a contract or direct employment being allowed to sell goods to the Government, if he can explain that and then when we ask for an investigation announce that they are going to give this man or his company \$47,000, roughly he said, to investigate this, investigate himself I presume, if he can explain that in this House and to the public of Saskatchewan as nothing but an immoral, I would say illegal act, then I wait with bated breath and with great anticipation to hear.

Mr. Speaker, I said on Friday that I intended to look at this Throne Speech to see if there was anything in it that would call for greater comment that I made on Friday. And after a thorough perusal of both pages, there is nothing that even recommended the few words that the mover and the seconder said on Friday. It is not worth the paper it is written on. And certainly is not worth much of the time of this House.

The question that we have before this House right now is: what is this Legislative Assembly and the 61 Members here going to concern themselves with between now and March 24? Well, we watched the effort of the Members opposite jumping up and placing resolutions in the House, whining to their Federal Government as usual. That was to be expected. I think the most startling one was when the Minister - Member, the hope to be Minister - the Member for Quill Lakes (Mr. Koskie), when he got up and offered a resolution commending the SGIO for what? For raising the rates anywhere from 35 per cent to 80 or 85 per cent.

The only thing I can think of is that this is going to be a rather amazing attempt for him to cover up his brother who I understand holds an executive position with SGIO.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We look after ourselves.

MR. STEUART: — I know you look after yourselves. You got a job here, your brother has a job there, half your relatives are working for the Government. Don't tell me that the Koskies don't look after themselves, of course they do. Any that the Koskies forget to look after, Mr. Blakeney and the NDP look after very well. Yes, I agree the Koskies are well looked after under this Government. But I looked forward again and with amazement if you can stand up and explain this plundering of the public by the SGIO and the increases they put as something that should be commended by this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan.

However, the truth is that we have no bills, nothing on the Order Paper today. One proposed bill by the Minister of Highways to amend The Highway Act. With some of the questions that were raised today I think that there is more that needs amending in The Highway Act. The truth is that we literally have nothing to do. I expect when I sit down we will hear the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver), the Leader of the Conservative Party attempt to get up. I look forward to that. To explain the rather embarrassing position he got himself and his Party into. And then I expect him to be followed by the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) and for Rosetown (Mr. Bailey) to explain how the solemn word that they gave on behalf of their Party was broken. I hope that they will explain that situation. I have great sympathy for them, I look forward to that. I understand the Attorney General is to say the least likely unsettled about what he thought was a reasonable, and an honest and straightforward deal. I expect him to say a mild word or two of reproof.

MR. ROMANOW: — Strained.

MR. STEUART: — A strained word on a rather high level to the Members of the Conservative Party to my left. By having done that that should be cleaned up by about 5:30. And if not we could come back tonight and I would suggest that we vote on the Throne Speech, vote it off. There is nothing in it and let's get it out of the way. If we do that there are two or three consequences. The Government might be defeated, if that would happen then of course we would have an election, we would win the election and bring good government back to the Province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — By the look of the Members opposite that would appear to be highly unlikely. The alternative that might happen is that the Government will win the vote on the Throne Speech debate and then I suggest that we are faced with a rather interesting problem, what to do. I would suggest, Mr. Attorney General, that when we rise tonight, if we've disposed of this rather barren Throne Speech, when we rise tonight that the Attorney General would adjourn the House until March 24. I am sure that all Members opposite and all Members on this side certainly have a great many more important things to do than sit here and waste our time and the taxpayers' money in a barren debate and futile debate about whether the SGIO has done a good job in robbing the public, or haven't done a good job. And whether there should be a vote on the rapeseed or at least on the Feed Grains Policy. I am sure that there will be in due course, since Mr. Lang has promised it and we all know that he keeps his promises to the letter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — So we can expect that any time. However, if it gets the Members over there through the night and rings their bell to have a little debate on whether he should or should not that is great. But we have got lots of time to do that later on on Private Members' Day. I would suggest we listen to the Members of the Conservative Party. Let Roy deliver that baby or whatever

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he is holding back, he is looking so solemn and unhappy about, get that off his chest, he will feel a lot better I am sure. Vote off the Throne Speech, adjourn and come back on March 24 and get down to the business which we were elected to do which is to listen to Walter's budget and get down to examining the budget and voting supply for the Government for the coming year.

With that suggestion, I am not going to make a motion, because the fate of people who have made motions like that in the last two or three days has not been all that successful.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — I will leave it to the intelligence I hope, I am on record evidently as saying the Premier is very intelligent. I said a few other things that they refused to print but I won't complain about that right now. I leave that to the responsibility of the Government. I will of course when the vote comes up, which I hope will be tonight, vote against this Throne Speech. I don't know why we should vote for or against it. We are not even going to bother to put an amendment in, it is not worthy of an amendment, not hardly worthy of a vote, but we on this side of the course will be voting against it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, it is with some trepidation that I rise to speak to this Assembly on this occasion.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why?

MR. COLLVER: — Well, we will possibly get into that. But I was interested to note and I am very sorry he is not here, the Minister responsible for Saskatchewan Telecommunications having passed across this lovely publication to us from a Government that takes the name of the Minister of the signs on the highways and puts on the 'people of Saskatchewan'. I was very interested to note that on page two was a picture of the Minister and then I leafed over to page three, and found another picture of that same Minister and I didn't think that was quite so much and then I turned over to page five and found another picture of that same Minister. I should also like to make a comment if I may, Mr. Speaker, on the Question Period that has just been tried for the first time.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Highly successful.

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, that certainly would be successful as mentioned by Members to my right. We were informed just prior to this session that the Liberal Party would be granted the first two in keeping with their numbers in the House and we would be granted the third question and I thought it was tremendously honorable of them when we have the Member for Estevan to leap up and ask the very first question that they would ask. It is the question pertaining to a matter that the Member for Estevan had been quite considerably involved in personally . . . Yes, we can certainly see the lack of order, Mr. Speaker, I may get into that a little bit more as time goes on.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to be making a few comments, very few, very briefly, pertaining to the so-called negotiations and pertaining to the so-called agreements that have been floating around. This talk of agreements and so on. In commenting on the comments of the Premier on Friday and to a certain extent the comments of the Leader of the Opposition on Friday. I really did search for some words to capsule my feelings on it. I thought of it for some considerable time. I was leafing through some documents that I had in my office and discovered something that the Minister of Tourism very kindly sent to me during the recess. I recommend it to all of you for reading, it's called, "An Analysis of Fluctuating Moose Populations in Saskatchewan 1975." This is an exceptional work and inside, as I leafed through this, I came up with the exact phrase that applied to what the Premier had to say on Friday and to a certain extent to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say on Friday, and it came to me in a flash. In the inside cover of this book is an "errata". It reads as follows:

In the centre page an error exists in the last sentence of the third paragraph in the far right column. The sentence presently reads, "However, in 1972 four stations showed more bulls than cows shot." This should read, "However, in 1972 four stations showed more cows than bulls shot."

That is a very excellent comment on what the Premier said on Friday and to a certain extent to what the Leader of the Opposition said.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday last we heard from the Premier on the negotiations that have developed between the present Government and ourselves and the so-called agreement which the Attorney General says he has in his files. The Premier suggested he would like to table these documents but he wishes he really didn't have to do that. And I say to the Premier today and to the Attorney General today, please table these written "guilt edged" honourable agreements that were agreed to and reached between ourselves and you. I'll just spell out what they are. They are a letter written, Mr. Speaker, from the Attorney General and I have seen copies of them, shown to me by the Attorney General. Letters written to the Leader of the Opposition and to the chairman of our caucus, the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) outlining three agreements reached on the Wednesday, the day of the prorogation, in keeping with the totality of agreements reached on that particular day. Also, a note passed in the Assembly by our caucus chairman back to the Attorney General stating that as far as the PC caucus at that time could determine these three points were in keeping with the unanimous agreements; knowing full well, all Members of this Assembly, knowing full well that I was out of the country on that date (and I won't get into the "why" I was out of the country on that day); knowing full well that the Member for Estevan spelled out to the Attorney General and to others that this agreement was subject to caucus approval.

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . . Member for Estevan.

MR. COLLVER: — And you will hear from the Member for Estevan to that very same effect.

In the Premier's statements, Mr. Speaker, on Friday last

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he mentioned that everybody in the Chamber knew the Budget would be presented on March the 12th. Well, I suggest to you that I didn't know that the Budget would have been presented on March 12. The Premier goes on to suggest wouldn't it have been nice if someone had contacted the Premier's office; common courtesy would have suggested that the House Leader and the House Leader of the Opposition be contacted - now I do apologize to the official Opposition for not contacting them; but to suggest that no contact was made between ourselves and the Government on this matter is simply not spelling it out the way it is.

First of all no contact was made with the Premier because he was in Hawaii. No contact was made with the Attorney General because he was away during the first two weeks after the last session. But contacts were made in keeping with these negotiations pertaining as to whether our party would be recognized rationally and reasonably in this Assembly and not be treated as intruders in this Assembly.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Better let it die.

MR. COLLVER: — I think I will go on with it just to conclude it.

Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. CAMERON: — We want to know the facts.

MR. COLLVER: — I suggest for the Member for Regina South that the Members to my right were quick to jump to believe all the things that the Government said pertaining to this matter. Quick to jump and believe that all of the answers given by the Attorney General and by the Premier were correct. But the half-truths on behalf of their friends in the potash industry were not correct. The half-truths presented by them on television, with which I agree, they were presenting half-truths as it related to the potash industry and you didn't like that. You certainly believed everything they said as being absolute; as being a hundred per cent truth as it related to us because it served your convenience and your point of view.

He conveyed nothing to us until we sent notice that the House was to convene on March 12, says the Premier in his comments. Members of my staff were in contact with members of the Premier's staff on several occasions between the prorogation of the last House and March the 2nd or March the 3rd as it related to providing to our Party at least one researcher, at least one secretary. At least one!

AN HON. MEMBER: — We need . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, with respect . . . thank you very much I might take the Members to my right up on that; they obviously need whatever research facilities we have in the presentation of questions because they certainly seem to be our points of view.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier goes on to say with respect to research grants the estimates on which we are operating and he goes on to say they delayed putting a person on staff so they could have a full-time one. He doesn't mention that the negotiations between our staff and his staff were that we couldn't

get a grant for that money and we had tried for three or four months and we were told continually, "now wait a second we will be looking into that as to whether you'll be getting a grant for that money or whether you'll be putting a person on staff." It was finally resolved that my secretary had to go on in order that we get sufficient to just get our grants for this year.

He doesn't go on to mention that the Liberal Party to my right gets over \$80,000 in total and that we get over \$15,000 in total. He doesn't make those points clear. We were telling him that we were in trouble for this coming session that we needed help and that we had to have sufficient staff to investigate the Budget and do what was needed to be done.

MR. LANE: — It is . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Well perhaps. We don't think that it's rational that the Members of the Progressive Conservative Party representing 124,000 people in this Legislature or at least 124,000 people voted for us. We don't believe that we should be asked to go on and on and on operating on far less than the Members to our right; expected to be reasonably close to their presentation. And they agree they say and yet have they asked, for example about the half-truths presented by the Attorney General in this very Assembly. Day after day after day presented to us here in the Assembly, presented to us outside in the corridors saying we'll see that you'll be well looked after, we'll see that everything is in order, don't you worry about it you just co-operate with us and we'll make sure that you get what's coming to you. Well, we got what's coming to us obviously.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier goes on to say at the first opportunity in this House in November, as far as we were concerned there is no agreement and there never was any agreement and I sincerely hope the Attorney General places this so-called agreement on the table for the edification of everyone. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe we had any agreement of any kind whatsoever. But I go on to add because the other Members were told in no uncertain terms that this was subject to caucus approval and any further discussions. I suggest that the so-called agreements that the Attorney General will be filing will not be as binding as he has pretended or that the Premier has pretended in his particular speech.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Somebody has misled the House . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Someone has misled the House, that is correct.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We'll forgive you.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, I don't happen to believe that the comments made today off the record by the Members to my right or the comments made by the speakers across from me off the record are in keeping with the traditions of this Assembly.

MR. ROMANOW: — On a Point of Order. I cannot hear the Hon. Member, I just cannot hear the Hon. Member. I don't know if it is the sound system or the Hon. Member. I wonder if I could ask him to

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Speak up.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, as I say as far as I was concerned and as far as our caucus is concerned we did not believe that there was a binding agreement. Furthermore, all of the Members were made fully aware that I was out of town and that any sort of agreement was subject to caucus approval. As part of all the overall agreement and as part of all the discussions in this House, the Chambers, and in the corridors, as part of all those discussions was the suggestion that we were going to get sufficient to do our job in this coming session.

MR. ROMANOW: — Let Bob Larter get up and say that and look us in the eye. He can't say that.

MR. COLLVER: — Well I can say that it was made to me.

AN HON. MEMBER: — But you weren't there!

MR. COLLVER: — I wasn't there on a Wednesday but I was certainly there throughout the preceding forty-six days.

MR. ROMANOW: — Let Bob Larter stand up and speak . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you the Member for Estevan is going to get up in this Assembly and he is going to say it exactly the way it happened.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Intimidation . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, I'm sure. Mr. Speaker, we are not going to dwell on that any further. I don't believe the comments made by the Premier on Friday were in any way in keeping with the facts of the situation. I haven't got documents to back up what I'm saying. I don't have pieces of paper or signed agreements or letters but I just ask you to consider a few questions. Why was it necessary to be in writing this time when you say you've never had it in writing before and you didn't do that now.

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . . answer . . .

MR. COLLVER: — I'm answering it, why was it necessary to have it in writing this time?

AN HON. MEMBER: — It didn't do any good anyway.

MR. COLLVER: — Oh yes, but you knew about that on prorogation day. Furthermore . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why did . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Well, that's . . .

MR. PENNER: — What's it feel like to have

people in your own caucus you can't trust?

MR. COLLVER: — I trust the people in my caucus, but they don't trust you. They don't trust you, I can assure you of that.

MR. PENNER: — Sit down and let's get on with it.

MR. COLLVER: — But that having been said . . . No, I don't think that we've been too sparkling today, but it's difficult for anybody to make a comment on the kind of attack that was delivered in this House on Friday, when day after day in the last session, comments were passed to me and to other Members of our caucus, day after day in this Assembly, but not on the record, that this would be attended to and looked after.

In the last session we, after considerable numbers of letters between the Premier and myself pertaining to the research matter, we told the Premier that we would not back MLA pay increases, and included in the last Throne Speech was the suggestion that our grant would be included in a study of MLA pay raises and services to us. We don't think they have anything in common at all. Nothing in common at all. Eighty-two thousand for the Liberals, \$15,000 for us.

MISS CLIFFORD: — We do all our own work!

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, I am sure. It is pathetic.

Mr. Speaker, I am having difficulty in collecting my thoughts. I have no more to say.

MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY (Saskatoon Centre): — Mr. Speaker, it certainly gives me pleasure to enter this Throne Speech debate, but before I get on with what I have in mind, I certainly want to congratulate the mover and the seconder for a job well done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — In so far as the Throne Speech is concerned, I searched high and low and there is really nothing wrong with it. I couldn't really find very much wrong with it at all, and I have to congratulate the Government on a short speech, to the point and something that is not too contentious. Before I go on, Mr. Speaker, I do want to bring to the attention of the House something that has happened to me over the past couple of months. It may or may not be in order, but you may have noticed that I have lost a considerable number of pounds.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — I assure you that although there is less quantity of me I shall try to make it up in quality.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MR. MOSTOWAY: — One of the reasons why I decided that I would shed some pounds is because I found myself having some Liberal and Conservative thoughts, and I thought it was time to pack it in.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my remarks mainly in regard to the Leader of the (at one time I would say the Progressive Conservatives, one time the Conservatives) now I think I will just refer to them as the old Tories.

Now the Hon. Member, I thought, gave an excellent speech in this House and as far as I could determine what he said today pretty well reflected what must go on in the Hon. Member's mind. A very good speech for sure. He mentioned, honorable men, and I want to say one thing to the Hon. Member, and I am sorry that he is out of the House right now, that I don't think he can question the honorableness of any of the men or women in this House. I have often found it to be true that when somebody questions as to whether somebody is honorable or not most people automatically suspect the questioner. And that's a natural reaction with people. But, however, I shall not pursue that matter any further.

He said that no records were tabled. Well, that is true, because up until now we have never had to table any records, never had to keep track of correspondence. There never was any correspondence because agreements like this in the past were always made between honorable men.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — He mentioned he had no contact with the Premier. Well, the House Leader is the one he contacts, whom he has contact with, and I don't think he denied that there was contact with the House Leader, and that is in order. Why shift the blame onto the Premier when he was not really involved at all?

He also mentioned something about research, saying that he wants more money, that there is a desire, a drive for more money that they should have more money because they represent 124,000 people. Well I want to tell the Hon. Members, maybe you can relay that to your Leader, you used to represent 124,000 people. I'm not so sure that you do right now.

The Hon. Member, the Leader of the old Tories, also said the Attorney General misled the House. Now I am sure that anyone who heard the Hon. Premier come out with factual information the other day knows for sure who misled the House.

He talks about what has happened ins not in keeping with the tradition of the House. Well I ask the Hon. Member to find other Members who served in this House who have not kept their word in all party agreements, and I venture to say that you will not find any who didn't keep their word. But, of course, I would not question his integrity because he is an honorable man.

He says he wasn't even consulted because he was out of town. Well so be it, and nobody is going to question him for being out of the province. But after all, he does have some representatives and if they can't speak for him in his absence, I wonder who can.

I just want to say one other thing in regard to this. It would seem to me that the idol of the man is Mr. Diefenbaker. On numerous occasions he has mentioned that Mr. Diefenbaker is his idol, and I am just wondering what the Right Honorable John Diefenbaker would have to say about his involvement in so far as things that have happened recently are concerned. I am sure he would frown on it. Certainly it's not in keeping with the traditions as put forth by the Hon. John Diefenbaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, some time ago we had a lecture from the Hon. Member of the old Tories. Fresh in this House, we listened to him with rapt attention. A little while ago he stated we were treating him and the Conservative Members like intruders in this House. Well, I wish that Members present there would relay this to him. You know, when you are considered to be an intruder in any organization, it is usually because you are mistrusted, or not too sure where you are going, what you are going to say, etc., but I suggest that the Hon. Leader of the old Tories has been around this House for a considerable number of months, and I also suggest that you are not considered an intruder just because you do not have the confidence of the other Members of this House. I say that in order to have the confidence of other Members of this House, you have to win their respect. Now, respect doesn't come automatically. You have to earn respect. As a teacher I well know that. You certainly have to earn the respect of your students. If you don't have it, everything goes down the drain. And I suggest to the Hon. Leader of the old Tories, that if he earns the respect of this House, nobody will consider him or his seatmates intruders.

I also want to point out one other thing. The Hon. Member says much about abusing the tradition of sanctity of the House. I want to point out that not all Members of their party are free of guilt in this matter. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out an incident which occurred maybe a month or two ago. I am referring to the Hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman). He put out a little pamphlet on potash, putting forth the position of the old Tories, which is on the side of the corporations, naturally. But included in that, and there is nothing wrong with putting forth the Tory position, was an application form for the Progressive Conservative Party. Now I ask you, Mr. Hon. Member, representing Rosthern, I am wondering if that's in the tradition of the House? I suggest that that isn't, and I suggest that that's degrading the House, abusing your franking privileges, and I also suggest that the people of Rosthern will not forget that kind of nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the old Tories, the other day showed us that he doesn't know too much about the rules of this House. Nobody says that he should. After all, he is learning along with all the others. But I suggest that we have a Clerk who is available to interpret the rules for him, if he can't read. We have a Speaker here and we have various other people in this House who would be more than pleased to inform him as to the rules.

Now I want to get into the meat of things right now, and that's this dog-in-a-manger blackmail that the Leader of the old Tories came up with recently. His desire for more money, more money at any cost. It's money, money, money. Trading off, saying . . .

MR. STEUART: — Not like you guys!

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MR. MOSTOWAY: — That's right, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, I'm glad you said that. In his desire for more money, money, money, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition said, "Well, we'll hold up things in this House, we'll hold up the budget". I don't know whether he or other Members of his crew knew that it would cause severe hardship on school boards, municipalities, but obviously he did, because he is a reasonably intelligent man. So the only conclusion that I can arrive at is that he said "Oh, to heck with it, I want money, I want more and more".

MR. THATCHER: — Let's see how you vote on the salary increase!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Well, we'll see what happens Mr. Hon. Member when you get your salary increase, if, there is one. I expect that it will be donated to your favorite charity. A horse racing club or whatever it is. I don't know what you donate to.

But I suggest that the people of this province don't take lightly to the kind of blackmail as expounded by the Hon. Leader of the old Tories, and I think it will be the duty of every other Member in the House to drive this home to the people; this hood of trade-off, this dog-in-a-manger attitude of the Hon. Member.

He says there was no written agreement, but there should have been this time. Well that doesn't say very much for the Hon. Member if he claims that there should be a written agreement now, when there never has been in the past.

Now I am just wondering who controls the old Tory party. I am wondering if the Hon. Members, his six seatmates, really have any influence in the party. And I am suggesting that they probably don't. I am suggesting that healthy individuals certainly wouldn't tolerate that kind of nonsense one moment. I know what would result if it happened in our party. Well it wouldn't happen in our party, because the Members would certainly say, "look, we gave our pledge on behalf of the party, and it is going to be kept".

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Now it seems to me that the agreements made, while the Hon. Leader was outside the province, should have been kept.

MR. MERCHANT: — . . . in the United States on business.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — In the United States on business?

MR. MERCHANT: — I would never have said anything like that.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Oh! I see. Well I certainly wouldn't know, Mr. Hon. Member, and I would not want to suggest anything that may bring his reputation into question. I would be the last person to do that.

But I suggest that healthy and honourable men would not take that lying down. I suggest that healthy and honorable men would say, "we made a commitment on behalf of our party and by gosh, we are going to keep it, Leader or no Leader". That is why when I look at Hon. Members opposite, sometimes in consternation when their Leader is speaking, that is why I predict there is going to be a revolt in the old Tory party in the very near future, because I believe they are men of conscience, and I believe they will not be led around by somebody who says, "agreements, they go under the bridge", "agreements don't mean anything to us".

Mr. Speaker, I have more to say on the matter and right now I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: — The Member has asked leave to adjourn the debate. Is leave granted?

MR. KATZMAN: — No.

MR. SPEAKER: — The Member has asked leave to adjourn debate. Those in favour of adjourning debate say aye! Those opposed say no!

MR. KATZMAN: — No.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:02 o'clock p.m.