

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eighteenth Legislature
10th Day

Thursday, March 25, 1976.

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MRS. E. G. EDWARDS (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to welcome to the Assembly this afternoon students from the Sutherland School, 79 students with their teachers, Mr. Barry Hill, Mr. Crasby, Mr. Davis and Sonja Smithson. I hope they will enjoy the afternoon, find it educational and I will be pleased to meet with them when they leave this Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. H. H. ROLFES (Saskatoon Buena Vista): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity to introduce a group of Grade Eight students, 60 in number, who are seated in the west gallery. They are from Lorne Hazleton School. I had the opportunity to meet with this group about a week ago and inform them about the Legislature. I hope they enjoy their stay here. I will be meeting with them shortly after 3:00 o'clock. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Henry Wiebe, Archie Bolan, Bev Broadbent and Jean Forester.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E. L. COWLEY (Biggar): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and through you to this House, a group of 30 Grade Eight and Twelve students from the Harris-Tessier School in Harris. They are seated in the Speaker's Gallery. They are here, this afternoon, to observe some of the workings of the Legislature. They are accompanied by their teachers, Miss Pitsula and Mr. Hatcher; by their drivers, Mr. Hanson and Mr. Nelson; by Mrs. Mireau and Mrs. Clayton; and by a member who will be familiar to some of the Members of this House, Mr. Stevens who is the former MLA for Rosetown, as many of you will be aware.

I want to welcome them to this House. I know that today I am not likely to have any questions so I am sure I will be able to slip away and spend a few minutes with them as I understand they are on a rather tight schedule. I welcome them, and I hope the other Members will, to this House.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. L. E. JOHNSTON (Turtleford): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the Legislature, a group from the Debden district. They are seated in the Speaker's Gallery. They are attending an upgrading class in Debden and are accompanied by two teachers, Shirley Gerchuk and Mary Gareau. I will be meeting with them this afternoon to answer their questions and ask some of my own.

QUESTIONS

Cutback on Upgrading Programs

MR. E. F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education, but in his absence, perhaps the Minister of Finance who no doubt is responsible for the cutbacks. I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether as a result of the Budget yesterday, it was necessary for upgrading at St. Pat's Annex and Sacred Heart Annex and various upgrading courses operating in Regina, to be discontinued and I understand they received their notice? The same question applies to the adult education of Metis and non-status Indians and I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether he believed these programs were inadequate programs and that's the reason that they are being cut out?

HON. W. E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, there will be an opportunity to ask this kind of detailed questions during Estimates and I invite the Hon. Member to get prepared for the Estimates when they are before the House for consideration of the Department Budget.

MR. MERCHANT: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure there will be any Estimates at all since they are being cut out. Would the Minister indicate whether all adult education throughout the province is being terminated, whether there is a plan to terminate the provincial adult education as evidenced by the steps taken in Regina regarding the Indian and Metis adult education courses and life skill courses?

MR. SMISHEK: — No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MERCHANT: — A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The courses that are being cut out, it being indicated that they may be picked up by the community colleges, would the Minister indicate whether the community colleges will give preference to the many displaced teachers in seeking employment with the community colleges?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I should like you to rule on the urgency of the question.

MR. MERCHANT: — These are jobs where they were advised yesterday and today, it is urgent for them.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I think the Minister is not here that would usually be answering the question. I am not able to tell at this time how urgent the question is, there appeared to be some urgency about it. However, I think we have exhausted that at this point and I'll take the next question.

School Grants

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — The question I was going to direct to the Minister of

Education and again in his absence I will ask the Minister of Finance. Is the Minister aware that the increased grants announced yesterday for Education will likely do little more than cover the increased costs of teachers' salaries?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the Budget Address, \$28 million of additional funds are provided for school grants, it will pick up 70 per cent of additional costs for the cost of education.

MR. PENNER: — In the absence of an answer, the Minister really does understand that it is really going to do little more than cover the increased costs of salaries.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order!

MR. PENNER: — I want to ask in addition then, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister really saying to those involved in education in the province, that all local costs related to text books, supplies, hardware, maintenance, transportation, increased paper supplies, are to be picked up at the local level through taxation?

MR. SMISHEK: — No.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! Next question.

Transfer of Employees From Department of Health

MR. L. W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this Assembly I directed a question to the Minister of Health regarding the transfer of employees in his Department. I wonder if he would have the answer for us today?

MR. W. A. ROBBINS (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, I believe the question was: does the Department of Health plan to transfer 600 employees to some other agency of Government? The answer is, no.

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — A supplementary question then to the Minister of Health.

Has the Department of Health transferred approximately 600 employees from the Department of Health rolls to the SHSP pay rolls over the last two years?

MR. ROBBINS: — No.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health.

In light of the Minister's reply to the question I put yesterday and also in light of his answer to a question put by the Hon. Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) on the same day, I should like to ask this question. Did the Minister at any time between 1974 and 1976 transfer 335 employees of the provincially funded Souris Valley Extended Care Hospital to an organization

controlled by the Provincial Government funded out SHSP?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I am not convinced of the urgency of this matter either. Next question.

Lay Off of Hospital Staff

MRS. EDWARDS: — Mr. Speaker, Earlier this week in directing a question to the Minister of Health about the severe staff reduction being ordered by SHSP on our major hospitals and whether or not this would result in the closing of beds, the Minister answered that local boards managed the hospitals. He made a statement but he didn't answer the question. Of course, we know that local boards manage the hospitals, but within the restrictions of the Budget. Now, I should like to ask the Minister of Health whether or not he would admit that the fiscal policy that SHSP now follows, which requires these staff layoffs, are policies set out by himself and the Cabinet? Would he take that responsibility?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I believe the question is out of order.

SPC Salary Agreement

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — A question to the Minister in charge of Sask Power, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister realize that on recent SPC salary negotiations and settlements that increases in salary to the tune of 26 per cent over 16 months were granted?

HON. J. R. MESSER (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — I am aware that a contract or an agreement of understanding is signed between the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the OCAW and is now being forwarded to the Provincial Wages and Compensation Board for consideration and approval.

MR. LARTER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If this is the case is this in keeping with the Government's planned guidelines?

MR. MESSER: — Yes, it is in keeping with the guidelines as established by the Province of Saskatchewan, also keeping in mind the guidelines established by the Federal Government.

The Member will be well aware that the Oil, Chemical Atomic Workers are coming out of a two-year agreement and we have said that in relation to the provincial guidelines that we should, when negotiating with employees and trade unions in Saskatchewan, try and attain a parity with the prairie average for similar jobs in other provinces.

MR. LARTER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In lieu of British Columbia's predicted huge government deficit on its budget, is the Minister predicting through these wage settlements this year, a deficit budget for Saskatchewan Power?

MR. MESSER: — That is a hypothetical question that I can't answer

at this point in time, Mr. Speaker.

Current World Surplus of Potash

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Firstly, I should like to welcome him to the Question Period as I think this is the first time that he has been here since the House started.

The Minister, I am sure, is aware that IMC announced yesterday the closing down of their K2 operation in Esterhazy. The reason given by IMC for doing this was because of the current world surplus of potash. My question to the Minister is: in your capacity as being in charge of the Potash Corporation can you advise this House when in your opinion, the surplus position in the world will have ended and that the market conditions will return to normal?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the Member for Lakeview wasn't here yesterday, I was here and even answered a couple of questions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COWLEY: — I want to say also to the Member for Lakeview that I am interested in his question as to when the surplus may end. I may say that I am not the Minister in charge of IMC, at least not yet. However, with respect to the surplus, part of the problem is as you know that the inventories in Saskatchewan, particularly at IMC are of relatively high levels. The anticipation in terms of the fertilizer market in the United States, which is our major market, for this year which is just underway, look very good.

It is a question primarily of whether or not we will run into any weather problems during the seeding period in the spring in the United States; how fast potash can be moved; as to what the length of time will be as to when surpluses will disappear. I may say that the level of inventories from mine to mine, producer to producer, are at different levels as different producers have particular problems with their operations. But I would certainly be hopeful that we could work our way more or less out of this current and temporary surplus of stocks in the next few months.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Then I take it from your answer you can't give a definite answer as to when this situation will be ended.

In view of this will the Government then reconsider its position as to buying or expropriating a potash mine at least until such time as the market is returned to a normal situation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COWLEY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if I could give a definite answer as

to how much exactly potash would be sold and when potash stocks would disappear I would be working somewhere else for a salary in excess of the total received by all Member in this House put together.

Mr. Speaker, the Member suggests that we should wait on the acquisition of a potash mine until the market is at its highest peak and I don't think the Member necessarily suggests that one should always buy when the market is at the very top. We are looking, not at what the six months or the three months projection for sales for a particular commodity are, but what the projections are over the next number of years, when you are going to be getting the return on that investment.

So the short answer to the Member's last question, is, no.

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, another supplementary. Do you have any information as to what the projection is over the next few years?

MR. COWLEY: — Yes.

MR. MALONE: — A further supplementary. Would you be able to table in this House what those projections are?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, we have gone through that one before and the short answer is, no.

MR. MALONE: — A final supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister or has the Government issued any vesting orders pursuant to Bill 1?

MR. COWLEY: — No.

Washout of Rail Line Between Coronach and Poplar

MR. R. E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the Minister of Industry and Commerce.

Is the Minister aware that the water being held by the Poplar River Dam at Coronach has washed out the rail line between Coronach and East Poplar and can he explain what is being done about it?

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of water washing out a rail line. I will take the question under advisement and undertake to answer the Member in due course.

MR. NELSON: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister aware that the drainage culvert in the dam is too small to handle the water and that the dam . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

Cancellation of Veterinarian Inspection

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Agriculture.

Is it true that the veterinarian inspection of all livestock going to the auction markets will be cancelled effective April 1st?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Yes, that is true.

Deaths on Trans-Canada Highway

MR. D. M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, a question directed to the Minister of Highways.

Is the Minister aware that there have been a number of pedestrian deaths on the Trans-Canada Highway through Swift Current as a result of collisions between pedestrians and vehicles since the highway became a freeway?

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways): — I don't think we want to chuckle at anything as serious as highway deaths or deaths anywhere. We are aware of all accidents, they are checked very carefully. We have established the first Traffic Safety Division in a Department, housed in a Department of Highways anywhere in Canada, and the work that they are doing is they are supplying us all the information and we are trying to take all the best counter measures that we can.

MR. HAM: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister consider a system of proper lighting or other means on this portion of the highway to prevent further occurrences?

MR. KRAMER: — I am sure we will consider anything that is going to make the highway safer if it is within the realms of economic possibility.

Municipal Road Load Limits

MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Premier.

Would the Premier be prepared to give the House the assurance that any policy of uniform weight restrictions applying to municipal roads in the province would carry with it the discretion in the municipalities to have weight limits above the uniform weight limits provided for?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think the answer to that is, no. I think it is not possible in fact to have uniform weight limits which I think all of us agree have been requested by the SARM and at the same time provide discretion for individual municipalities to vary them up or down.

MR. CAMERON: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I am not impressed with the urgency of this matter. I think I will go on to the next question.

MR. CAMERON: — Mr. Speaker, may I say I direct my supplementary to the Premier on a related subject?

MR. SPEAKER: — When the opportunity arises you can ask a new question. I am not prepared to permit a supplementary on this because I am not impressed with the urgency of it at this time.

Nursing Home Increases

MR. E. F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance.

I wonder, in light of the announcements of the increases for nursing homes, I wonder if the Minister is, firstly, aware that those increases are not sufficient to meet the wage increases and, secondly, the contract, as I understand it, expires on March 31st.

Will the Government by Order in Council be making further increases in the subsidy to nursing care Levels I to III?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member admits that it is a hypothetical question. First of all the contract doesn't expire until March 31. He says that a settlement has not been reached and that somehow this will not meet the increased costs. Mr. Speaker, that is really a redundant question and the Hon. Member knows it.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I wasn't sufficiently clear. Would the Minister agree that the increase to date doesn't meet the last wage increase and I assume that that Minister would agree that there is apt to be an increase in the new contract? My question is: will the new increase be met by an Order in Council supplement to the rather paltry levels that have been given already?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, those are not paltry levels and the Hon. Member knows that, the increase for Level II care in the last two years is 34 per cent. In case of Level III it is a 72 per cent increase. We do not bargain as a government for nursing homes or special-care homes, those are handled by individual institutions or collectively by the association of the nursing homes. They determine the level of wages, the Government does not. We provide a supplement or a subsidy to individual patients, Level III patients as a matter of right get \$12 a day as announced as of April 1st. Level II patients will be getting \$4 a day. The Government does not say and has never said that we will pick up all the additional costs. Those are in some cases the responsibility of individuals and I trust that the institutions will make an effort to keep cost restraints in the

same way as the government is trying to do.

MR. MERCHANT: — I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether it is the intention of the Government to move towards the policy of British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba where in nursing care the patient, if they can pay, pays \$90 and the Government picks up all the remainder of the tab? Is it the intention to move towards that kind of a funding system and if so, when will the Government move to that kind of a funding system, instead of a dribs and drabs supplement and the patient has to pick up the remainder?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is, no, and the other provinces are now hoping that they had the formula that Saskatchewan has.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Permanent Positions - Civil Service

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Finance.

In light of the Minister's comments yesterday, that the number of permanent positions in the civil service was dropping by 75, is it true that many of the positions formerly rated or graded as permanent positions in the estimates are now graded as other personal services?

MR. SMISHEK: — No.

Credit Rating Study on Province

MR. W. C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, through you I should like to direct a question to the Premier.

Some time ago in the House the Premier admitted that a Wall Street firm by the name of Salomon was doing a credit rating on the province. Yesterday I noticed a representative of this company in the galleries. I should like to ask the Premier if this study has been done and what the results were?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Premier, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — That is a hark back to another day. My apologies to everybody in the House that I may have offended. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, if I left the impression that Salomon Brothers were rating the credit rating of the Province of Saskatchewan. Salomon Brothers are the dealers, the lead dealers for the province in New York. The rating is done by a couple of rating agencies called Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and Standard and Poor's. They have not yet proceeded with their rating and I don't know whether they will unless we undertake to sell an issue in the United States. We have no present intention of selling an issue in the United States. This is not to suggest we may not do so in the near future. I am simply stating our

present intention. We have not, therefore, had any response from Moody's or Standard and Poor's.

MR. THATCHER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, if I have misunderstood you in the past I am sorry, but I got the impression you were rather specific the last time in saying that a revised study of the province's credit rating was now underway. Now perhaps I completely misunderstood you, whether it was by Salomon Brothers or someone else, but I thought you were quite definite last time and if I am wrong, I apologize, but you were most definite in saying that.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to try to clear that up. First, I think a check of the record will indicate that I did not suggest that Salomon Brothers or any other dealer was doing it. I would have suggested either Standard and Poor's or Moody's the rating agencies, as they are sometimes called. I think that the statement is quite accurate, that we did make a presentation to them, a preliminary presentation to them and subsequent thereto some representatives of at least one of the rating agencies and perhaps both, came to Saskatchewan and are reviewing material. They have not advised us yet and I am not sure they will advise unless we indicate that we are going to make an offering in the United States.

Municipal Road Load Limits

MR. CAMERON: — Question, Mr. Speaker, for the Premier.

In view of the response given by the Minister of Municipal Affairs to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities that if there is a uniform weight system instituted in the province for municipal roads, the municipalities would still have the right to set weights below those limits. How then can the Premier square his answer today to my earlier question that there can be no discretion in the municipalities and still have uniform weights?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the assurance given by the Minister of Municipal Affairs along the line stated. If that is accurate then clearly there is a discretion on the municipalities to set weights at a lower level. This, however, at least in my judgment, certainly does not justify a discretion to set any weight at a higher level.

MR. CAMERON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. May I ask then the Premier in view of the brief which the Minister of Municipal Affairs tabled from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities requesting explicitly a discretion on the municipalities to set rates above the limits indicated, would the Premier then square his earlier answer with the request from SARM?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that any squaring is called for. You are not asking me whether I square things or round them, but presumably what the Government position is. And the Government position is that in our judgment it would be unwise to provide a total discretion, an unlimited discretion, to set any weight limit they wanted in individual municipalities. This

produces the very situation which people have sought to avoid, that is to have a different weight limit at every municipal boundary. Since we have 460 - or whatever the figure is - municipalities it seems inappropriate to have 460 load limits.

Permanent Positions - Civil Service

MR. COLLVER: — A supplementary question to the Minister of Finance, to a question I asked previously, perhaps I mis-phrased it. Is money allocated under other personal services in your Estimates for employees who were formerly classified in permanent services or permanent positions?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, we have had situations in a number of agencies and branches of government where the permanent positions were allocated and during the year, because of the qualification requirements for permanent positions, that the departments have had difficulty in finding the personnel to meet those qualifications and particularly in case of institutions, positions were not filled on a permanent basis, but were filled on a temporary basis, pending the finding of personnel who would meet the qualifications to fill those jobs on a permanent basis. That exists virtually through the total government. The answer is, yes, there is money provided for temporary positions because in many cases those are only temporary jobs and in other cases money is provided because you do consider the factor of whether some people will be able to find the people with the kind of qualifications for permanent positions.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. J. L. SKOBERG (Moose Jaw North): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce, and with the indulgence of the House a Grade Eight student class from King George School in the great city of Moose Jaw, the friendly city of Saskatchewan, under the leadership of Mr. Edward Segall and Mr. Henry Murray, their directors and their teachers. I am sure that all Members here today would join with me and with you, Mr. Speaker, in congratulating those students from King George School from Moose Jaw, being with us today and I can assure you that I will join you at about 3:10 o'clock to talk over what you have seen this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STATEMENT

Breach of Privileges of the Assembly

MR. SPEAKER: — Before we go into Orders of the Day I have a statement which I would like to present to the House.

Yesterday the Member for Regina South rose on a Point of Privilege to the effect that certain replies to oral questions in the Assembly had been misleading and therefore constituted a breach of the privileges of the Assembly.

I refer all Hon. Members to a ruling of the Chair of November 18, 1975 (Votes and Proceedings, November 18, 1975) which states in part that "a debate in the Assembly over the question

of whether something is a fact or not, cannot be ascertained by Mr. Speaker and does not constitute a question of privilege."

I refer all Hon. Members to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, page 102, cit. 113, which states:

"...a dispute arising between two Members, as to allegations of facts, does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege."

I further suggest to all Hon. Members that this matter is more properly a debating point.

MR. CAMERON: — Mr. Speaker, if I might with your leave address a comment or two to you on the Point of Order with respect to the question I asked earlier in the day of the Premier in respect to which a ruling prevented my asking further supplementaries. I should like, Mr. Speaker, if I may, draw your attention that I was asking the supplementaries in connection with a response by the Premier which was very significant, in that the Minister of Municipal Affairs had earlier indicated to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, that a system of uniform weight limits would carry with it a discretion in municipalities to set weight limits below that. Secondly, is that the Association brief specifically requested the discretion of the municipalities to be able to set by way of permit a weight limit higher than that. The Premier's response to me was that he would give, not be prepared to give an assurance to this House that any discretion would be vested in the municipalities, saying in argument that to do that would wipe out uniform weight limits. It was a very significant response in respect to a question, Mr. Speaker, that you ruled only on Tuesday last was of an urgent public kind. I should like, Mr. Speaker, to point out to Mr. Speaker in respect of the question that I asked and clarification I sought on the significant response today, to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: — That's on a point of Order? I was impressed with the urgency of this matter when it was first raised in the House, more than a week ago, and agreed with Members who rose on an oral question with regard to the matter. However, I have become less impressed with the urgency of the matter as time has gone on and that is the reason that I ruled further questions from the Member out of order. I was not, at this time, impressed with the urgency of the matter in view of statements that had been made in the House by the Minister, which leads me to believe that all the facts are not before us. This is one of the basis on which oral questions cannot be allowed. Consequently I ruled the question out of order on the basis of not being urgent.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might address you on the ruling before my colleague for Regina South made the comments to you. If I may, I should like to cast your mind back to the Question of Privilege raised regarding the Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) which continues to concern me somewhat, not only in relation to the Member for Wilkie, but I am very concerned about the matter in relation to the way the House might operate in the future.

Your Honour may recall that on one occasion a Question of Privilege was raised by the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) and in that case, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, chose to follow the proper course in dealing with that Question of Privilege, namely, you made the kind of decision that a judge, for instance, makes in deciding whether a thing is libellous or not. It is not good enough, I suggest, for a judge to say, "I don't know if it is true or not." One has to apologize or one has to say I accept the comments, as the Member making them, or the person aggrieved as an explanation and that, indeed, was the response to the Member for Cutknife-Lloydminster. But he in essence said, when it was called to your attention, "Well, I accept that explanation." But that is not good enough.

I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to Rule 128, page 115, which states:

Any expression that which may be disrespectful to the House or painful to the feelings of individual Members may be explained, apologized for or retracted.

Now let me first make a comment about the phrase which may be disrespectful to the House, because the nub and substance of a Question of Privilege is that it is not just the privilege of the Member, but House privilege. House privilege because unparliamentary language has been used and House privilege because when you hurt one Member of this House you hurt the respect to the House in general. That section then goes on to say - this would then be for the Member for Cutknife-Lloydminster - to either explain, apologize for or retract the statements that he made. I was concerned at the time and I am even more concerned now, that I see a Star Phoenix article about it and I am concerned that this House may be veering off down a wrong track in dealing with questions of Personal Privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: — Are there any further comments on that point? I hesitate to deal with this matter further unless the Member for Wilkie wished me to deal with it. I had sent the Member for Wilkie a private letter with regard to the matter and if you raised that matter with knowledge of the fact that she has received a private letter, then I will put the contents of the private letter on the record.

After the issue was raised a while ago, I received a piece of paper with a number of citations on it with regard to this particular issue. These citations were alleged to be in connection with the issue that was before the House at that time. I checked each of the citations and I was unable to satisfy myself that the rules of the House had been broken. The Member for Wascana raises the issue of a previous matter of privilege in this House between himself and the Member for Nipawin. I suggest to him that I have also checked that and I find that to be an altogether different case than this situation that is before us now. Therefore, I do not accept the comment on this piece of paper that there is a similarity in cases.

Now, in conjunction with this, I wrote a memo to the Member for Wilkie with a copy to the Member for Cutknife-Lloydminster. In the memo it says:

On March 22nd the Hon. Member for Cutknife-Lloydminster in debate made some remarks about the Member for Wilkie

which were subsequently objected to by that Member, and others, as being out of order. I have examined the unofficial transcript and find that the Member for Cutknife-Lloydminster said in part and I quote:

‘There was a liquor strike on and she thought her job was to get booze for people. Going to private vendors and saying there is a strike on and she thought it was her job to get booze for people.’

I suggest to you, in my view, no rules were broken. I would comment that the phrasing and/or tastefulness of the remarks may leave something to be desired. I suggest that it is a borderline case and in fact in my view no rules have been broken.

MISS CLIFFORD: — I would just like to comment. I am one person who would not like to see this discussion go on, but the only comment I should like to make on this as far as what has been in the press and goes into Hansard, is the fact that one quote that was made is: that because I was indeed helping the constituents, as many were. The Member for Shellbrook as I had mentioned, had ridden back with me from the Liquor Board Commission during this period of stress for some of the constituents. But at any rate it was commented that because of this assistance people were perhaps injured in car accidents, because of getting permits for people during the liquor strike. And it was all above board, it was not an impropriety, and I feel that in the future, although you have ruled against this, it should be perhaps taken into consideration that there are insinuations that have been made and could, indeed, affect the atmosphere and the decorum of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the Member had the opportunity during the other Members’ comments in the House to explain her position and she took that opportunity at that time. It is on the record and I think we can have the matter closed at this time.

MR. MALONE: — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. Arising from the Question Period, do you recall that the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland asked a question early in the Question Period that you ruled out of order and to me it was in order. But I am questioning you, Mr. Speaker, on your decision when you said it was out of order with no reason. Would you be prepared at this time to give us a reason as to why the question was out of order or give us one tomorrow if you want to consider the matter a little further?

MR. SPEAKER: — I think I could give you the reason now but I would like to check the record and just refresh myself on it. I can bring something forward to the House, possibly tomorrow, on the matter.

SECOND READINGS

HON. A. E. BLAKENEY (Premier) moved second reading of Bill No. 1 - An Act to amend An Act to provide a Superannuation Allowance for a Certain Former Member of the Legislative Assembly.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a small Bill. It deals with

the superannuation allowance of a former Member of this Assembly, a former Premier of this province and a former Lieutenant-Governor of this province, the Hon. W. J. Patterson.

In times past the arrangements for looking after the old age of people who served in the public life of this province were far from adequate. One of the persons who served in elected office, in the highest elected office of this province, and subsequently in the highest appointed office in this province - and I think the offices of the Premier and Lieutenant-Governor may be so characterized - was a person who did not have significant private resources. This was recognized in 1958 and a bill was passed providing for a pension for him. He had served at a time when there was no pension for former Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The amount payable under that pension was adjusted in 1967 and again in 1969 and has not been adjusted since 1969. I do not wish to discuss in detail the financial affairs of Mr. Patterson, but I will outline some facts which I think are relevant. He is now 90 years of age, his wife is of the order of 75 to 80 years of age. Both receive the old age pension. So far as we are aware they have no significant private resources of their own. For a period of time Mr. Patterson was in a Level IV facility and accordingly had much of his cost of care paid out of the hospitalization plan. He is now in a Level III facility and there are significant charges payable by him. The figures may have varied somewhat since then but when I checked this last January, the charge was \$723 plus drugs and there was an amount payable by the way of grant of around \$300 leaving about \$400 a month plus the cost of drugs to be payable in respect of Mr. Patterson's care. And, of course, there is Mrs. Patterson who must have some resources for her support.

Since the last change we have made in this Act, The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act has been changed so that a widow no longer receives 50 per cent of the pension of the deceased Member but 60 per cent.

The purpose of the Bill before us to raise the amount payable in respect of the Patterson pension to \$8,400 a year from \$5,400 and also to raise the amount that would be paid to Mrs. Patterson in the event of the death of Mr. Patterson and she surviving, from 50 per cent of that sum to 60 per cent of that sum.

I think that in all the circumstances this provision is not over generous for a person who has served our province in the way that Mr. Patterson has. I think if he had served at a later time the amounts would be very much more. They are greater for the widows of the two deceased Premiers. I don't think we can necessarily cover all that ground again, but in all the circumstances I think the amount provided is not over generous and the provision of 60 per cent for Mrs. Patterson rather than 50 per cent in the manner that our widows would receive is, I think, appropriate.

If Members wish to deal more fully with the figures involved, I would be happy to do that in committee. The principles involved are to raise the pension and to adjust the amount payable to the widow of Mr. Patterson should he predecease his wife. I believe that these principles should be acceptable and accordingly I move second reading of the Bill.

MR. D. G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to echo the words of the Premier and thank him for bringing this Bill in. I think it is a necessary Bill. I think that it is an indication in a relatively modest way, but it certainly is an indication of the respect that we held for people who held the office of Premier and the office of Lieutenant-Governor. While I am sure there are many other people who served this province and probably haven't got an adequate pension at this time, at least we can, I think, recognize that someone who was Premier and who was Lieutenant-Governor does deserve, and I am sure will be recognized by the people of the province, should deserve more specific recognition than maybe he has had in the past. I congratulate the Government for bringing this Bill in. We certainly will support it.

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, we concur totally with the comments of the Premier and the comments of the Leader of the Opposition. We commend both the Leader of the Opposition for suggesting it and the Premier for bringing in the Bill.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. A. S. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources) moved second reading of Bill No. 9 - An Act to amend The Forest Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in addressing myself to the proposed amendments to The Forest Act, I should like to briefly point out the purpose for the changes and at the same time deal more specifically on what the changes really are.

Although these amendments are mostly of a housekeeping nature, there are some which are significant to the continued production and utilization of our forest resources for recreational, social and economic benefit of the people of Saskatchewan.

The most significant change in the Act is to Section 5, subsection (1) which is amended by adding a subsection which reads:

The zoning of any portions of provincial forests for the purpose of regulating or restricting the various uses of lands in provincial forests.

This section has been amended to permit the zoning of provincial forest lands for specific uses and to more effectively confine the uses of provincial forest areas. Some of the uses referred to would cover timber production, recreation, stream protection, fisheries and other related uses. In the past the protection of areas in the provincial forest has been accomplished through approvals of annual cutting plans and policy directives.

There is a need to establish definite legislation to allow for the accurate designation of the lands. The amendment will help forest industries to identify these areas. Through this amendment the regulations covering the zoning of provincial forest lands provide for the best possible designation of natural, single or multi-use areas in provincial forests.

The balance of the amendments are under Section 36 and deal with changes in land descriptions and the transfer of lands. Changes in the northern provincial forest include the straight transfer of lands between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources as agreed by the inter-departmental co-ordinating committee on land use.

Patented agricultural lands have included in the northern provincial forest since it was established in 1952, have been deleted from the Act. As well a section of land has been transferred to the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources from the Department of Agriculture for recreational purposes.

A major land transfer in the Cowan River area to the Department of Northern Saskatchewan from the Department of Municipal Affairs has also been included in the amendments. The area has been kept as a reserve for the benefit of the Native people of Green Lake. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan has requested that this land be included in the northern provincial forest.

The description of the northern provincial forest has been changed to correct and simplify the description of the forest boundary using registered plans of the Tobin Creek drainage ditch which extends through the area south of Tobin Lake.

In the Moose Mountain Provincial Forest, a quarter section of land has been added to the legal description. This land was recently purchased by the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. Changes in the Nesbitt Provincial Forest include the deletion of a portion of the southeast quarter of Section 29, township 49, range 25, W2, which was sold to the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation and a transfer of a parcel of vacant Crown land to the Department from the Department of Agriculture as agreed to by the inter-departmental co-ordinating committee on land use.

Lands added to the Porcupine Provincial Forest include a parcel of vacant Crown lands transferred from the Department of Agriculture and the inclusion of lands purchased by my Department. A portion of land in the Porcupine Provincial Forest has been deleted to facilitate the establishment of a PFRA pasture on the west side of Klogei Lake. Lands under cultivation in the Porcupine Provincial Forest have also been transferred from my Department as they are more appropriately the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture.

In total, 204,640 acres of land have been added to the provincial forest and 1,440 acres have been subtracted under the amendments.

The amendments in this Bill are that of an accommodating and housekeeping nature rather than that of providing for some new and significant changes.

Mr. Speaker, I, at this time take pleasure in moving second reading of Bill No. 9.

MR. A. McMILLAN (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Members on both sides of the House welcome any amendments in The Forest Act, which, in fact, give the people of Saskatchewan through their government firm and accurate control over our forest resources and our forest

lands in the North.

I have myself, recently returned from having spent two separate weeks touring northern Saskatchewan. I am the Opposition critic for the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation, which in a very general way is responsible for at least harvesting the timber in the North. I have been on many occasions disappointed in what I have discovered in the North and the use of our vast resources in the North.

I welcome any attempts by this Government to see that our resources are put to use in the North in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. I must say that I am not convinced that amendments to The Forest Act are all that is needed to straighten the situation out. I wonder, for example, what is the advantage to amending The Forest Act so that zoning of any portions of provincial forests are more easily regulated, when in fact, in many respects the Provincial Government doesn't have an accurate inventory map of the timber that is available in the North, and I suggest any accurate idea of the resources that are available to the people of the North.

I say in a very positive way that as Members of this Legislature we have a responsibility to see that our resources in northern Saskatchewan, whether they be legislated under The Forest Act or other Acts, are properly handled. We, in the Opposition, certainly welcome this amendment, if it goes and it does I think, toward strengthening the control that the people of Saskatchewan have over their own resource.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

MR. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources) moved second reading of Bill No. 10 - An Act to amend The Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources Act, 1974.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to second reading of Bill No. 10, I would ask all Members of this Assembly to support two specific legislative amendments which seek to provide increases for commercial advance account, the forest protection and development advance account. I will deal with each account separately and hopefully I will provide the information necessary to gain your collective support in relationship to these proposals.

First of all the commercial advance account. The commercial advance account was originally instituted to facilitate the operation of commercial facilities primarily food and accommodation services throughout the provincial park system.

The rationale in providing the initial \$20,000 prior to 1974 was simply the aforementioned services were necessary to accommodate the general public visiting the parks. In addition a hesitancy developed among private investors. They believed the risk was too great and the season too short. Therefore, little or no outside investment capital was available to assist the construction of these various facilities.

As the park system expanded however, and the services became more popular, the demand for more services became very obvious. Once this increased, public demand became apparent, the private sector became more interested and was allowed into

the parks. However, the trend which developed was not in the best public interest. What happened, Mr. Speaker, was that facilities were built as cheaply as possible and with few exceptions, profits were not in any manner, reinvested in order to upgrade these individual operations.

Consequently the policy was changed. Presently we own the buildings and facilities. We keep them upgraded to a high standard. We also lease certain ones to the private sector. We are convinced this method is much more publicly acceptable and does provide a good degree of public service.

Mr. Speaker, the \$20,000 commercial advance account was in effect until April 1974, at which time the amount was increased to \$250,000.

Legislative approval was granted at that time, recognizing the need for an increase in funds to meet the requirements of a vastly expanded commercial operations network within the provincial park system.

In 1975, further changes were made. The advance account activities were expanded to include: entry gates, waterfront staff, wood supplies, ski facilities, campgrounds, cottage lots, subdivision revenue and expenditures, commercial leases and related expenses, golf course maintenance expenses and recreation equipment. Because of these added facilities in the commercial advance account, my Department through this amendment is seeking legislative approval to increase the amount from \$250,000 to \$3.5 million, allowing for effective operations for the next several years.

I wish to emphasize that this amendment represents nothing more than facilitating an accounting procedure and the rationale will certainly justify the change. Until 1975, funds to operate the expanded facilities were budgeted for jointly under the ordinary budget and the commercial advance account. Realistic costs and expenditures were difficult to achieve. However, we found that the recreation field was highly subsidized and decided to place these revenue bearing facilities under the advance account, in order to ensure an accurate revenue and expenditure picture.

Mr. Speaker, for the 1976 season, each facility will show accurate revenue and expenditure statements. At that time the Department can review each operation and be in a much better position to evaluate the role and extent the Government should play in subsidizing the recreation field. It would be reasonable to expect that \$250,000 would be adequate if our parks were operating on a year-round basis. However, because of the seasonal nature involved, a large percentage of the costs are involved in getting the parks system in shape for the upcoming season. Income is not adequate from early spring preparation time until July.

However, my Department is not suggesting that the profit factor is the sole motivation for proposing these amendments. I emphasize the fact that our initiative within provincial parks is geared toward providing recreational opportunity to Saskatchewan people. We are not proposing that each activity must show a profit in order to ensure that it continues. We do feel, however, the public should know what is being spent. And it is equally important for each of us to know the balance between

revenues and expenditures. It may well be that some of the activities are being overemphasized. On the other hand perhaps we should be doing more in other areas. The effect of this amendment will assist in future decision-making respecting park development and operation.

From a general point of view, much has been accomplished over the years in relationship to the development of our provincial park system. We have much to be proud of. Saskatchewan boasts some of the finest park facilities in Canada. The annual increases in traffic show clearly that these same parks are indeed popular with the public. It is reasonable to expect that added pressures in the future will be brought to bear, and as a government, we must be in the best possible position to ensure that the right decisions are made at the right time, particularly during the period of restraint.

Park visitations, expenditures and demands are increasing each year. This amendment is of a vital importance because the change will enable my Department to better determine the priorities for the future.

Questions such as, how much should we subsidize recreation, where if any should cutbacks take place? What facilities generate the most revenue and attract the greatest level of usage? What facilities or activities warrant continuation though not revenue producing? Stated simply, this amendment will assist in showing us where we are at.

Mr. Speaker, the second amendment I bring forward today pertains to the forest protection and development advance account. According to the Departmental Act, the forest protection and development advance account funds not to exceed \$1 million, are available and sum up as follows:

To purchase and maintain such machinery, equipment materials and supplies required in providing forest protection and development services; and, to pay salaries and wages, technical, supervisory and administrative costs and to meet other necessary expenditures relating to the provision of forest protection and development services.

Mr. Speaker, this Assembly is being asked to increase the fund from \$1 million to \$2.5 million. There are several valid reasons why this request is being made. We are all very much aware of the adverse effect of inflation. Inflated costs for new equipment, repairs and general operations are all combined to very seriously erode the capability of this advance to keep pace with its objectives.

Geographic isolation has resulted in decentralization of these services in the forest fringe area of our jurisdiction, as well as to the major provincial parks in the southern portion of the province. Dispatch centres at Hudson Bay, Prince Albert, and Meadow Lake have made it possible for our Department to better respond to the services which are required in relationship to not only fire suppression, but also to other activities as outlined in the legislation.

For instance, the success or lack of success in responding quickly to a fire is in direct relationship to the physical location of equipment and crews. It is very easy to recognize

the obvious problems which would be encountered if crews and equipment from Prince Albert had to be dispatched to fight forest fires at Hudson Bay or Cypress Hills Provincial Park. Relying on others to provide the various services just is not effective. In addition it is very difficult to rent proper types of equipment for fire fighting and development work. Many contractors, for instance, use mostly rubber tired equipment, hardly adequate for fire suppression work. On the other hand their crawler tractors are usually too large for efficient fire fighting. As in the case with the commercial advance account, task procedures have made it impossible for us to determine true costs in relationship to the various activities which now fall under this account. We wish to consolidate the accounting for all fire suppression and development activity. Appropriate equipment previously acquired under ordinary budgets will be transferred to this account to ensure effective use and to enable true cost determination for each project. This action will also provide an opportunity for equipment purchased and replacement to be handled in a more businesslike manner.

By including all major equipment under the advance account we will not only improve our development efficiency and capability, but we will have greater availability of equipment to do our many and various jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this Assembly's full support for these two specific amendments to Bill No. 10 and I now move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat amused about this Bill and several others that we will be dealing with today and in the days ahead, because the Bills are basically of a housekeeping nature. Most of them are increasing the statutory borrowing limitations, statutory spending of these various agencies and government bodies. My amusement comes that where this particular department comes in and asks for an increase to about \$3 million, they come to this Legislature and ask us to vote on it. There is no doubt we will vote in favor of it.

If you can remember back a few months when the Government wanted to spend \$1 billion or more they wouldn't dare to come to the Legislature and put any statutory borrowing limitation in Bill 2. Oh, we were told, it would be highly improper to do that at this time. So what I intend on doing, Mr. Speaker, and I think you will find the Members on this side will intend on doing, is to remind the Government every time they come in with one of these Bills as to their failure to do this type of thing, this simple basic thing, when they handled the potash bills in January and December of last year.

Mr. Speaker, the critic for the official Opposition, the Member for Shaunavon (Mr. Anderson) is not here today. I am sure he wants to respond to the remarks of the Minister in connection with this matter and accordingly I would ask leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources) moved second reading of Bill No. 11 - An Act to amend The Land Surveys Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this proposed amendment to The Land Surveys Act is consistent with an agreement reached earlier between Ottawa and the province respecting a national policy of metric conversion.

A federal White Paper of 1970, which received unanimous support of the Members of Parliament, sets out the national policy for a metric conversion in Canada over a ten year period. The Dominion Metric Commission was established and given the mandate to prepare a program of conversion to the metric system which would involve minimum cost and inconvenience to Canadians. The Metric Commission has developed an elaborate committee structured to facilitate the co-ordination of private sector plans and has established a liaison with Federal Government departments and the provinces. Each province has been asked to plan for metric conversion within their own areas of jurisdiction and to co-operate with the commission, other governments and the private sector, so that plans may be co-ordinated.

Within Saskatchewan these government agencies are responsible for planning and implementing its own metric conversation. In November of 1973 we confirmed the initial position of Saskatchewan. We authorized the establishment of an interdepartmental committee for metric conversion and the metric co-ordination division within the Department of Government Services. Subsequently, in April of 1974 our Premier Blakeney indicated by letter to the Prime Minister that Saskatchewan would endeavor to work within the framework of the Metric Commission Plan. The provincial interdepartmental committee for metric conversion has a task of studying the implications of the metric conversation program and to co-ordinate efforts in such areas as legislation education and land mapping. Saskatchewan is able to carry out its metric conversion program within the broad framework of the Metric Commission's four phases. In order to implement the proposed scheduling of the various departments it is necessary to commence land surveys with metric dimensions during the current year. By amending the Act the use of metric measures will be allowed by the Highways, Municipal Affairs, Attorney General and Tourism and Renewable Resources Departments in surveying, mapping and land descriptions. These proposals are permissive and would enable this action, action which is in keeping with the Government's intent. A metric office has been established in the Department of Government Services to co-ordinate conversion programs and to act as a secretary to the interdepartmental committee.

Upon checking the legislative authority required to pass the enabling regulations it was found that metric dimensions were not allowed according to the present wording in Section 94 of The Land Surveys Act. Whenever the term, metric conversion, comes under active discussion there is, of course, the immediate question of whether or not this move is necessary and advisable. Public response has been mixed and it would be fair to say that some questioned the change. We must, however, recognize the fact that 80 per cent of the world's population is on metric measurement and if Canada as a trading nation is to realize the full advantage, the merits of this conversion can be readily identified. Metric conversion on a national scale is still in

the future, however, as a province there are two advantages to be gained by taking action now. Firstly, Members should realize that the longer we wait the more money it is going to cost. Measurements as it relates to the Attorney General's Department, our Department and the Highways Department represent the key components of most leases and other acreage. However, by starting now we will effectively reduce the number of changed documents which will be required once full conversion takes place.

Secondly, education and an understanding of the metric system is going to take some time. With the responsibility for public education resting at the door of the Federal Government necessary legislative amendments by the provinces will pave the way for the Federal Government to become more active in its program to familiarize the general public with the radical measurement changes which, in the future, will become a way of life.

The proposed legislative changes are, as I said earlier, permissive and can be adopted in keeping with federal priority and I ask Members on both sides of the House to offer their support to the amendment before you.

Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in moving second reading of Bill No. 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would permit a question or two to clarify the practical intent of the amendments that are being proposed. Does he see surveys of land including municipal surveys and surveys within cities and towns of municipal lots, being conducted henceforward using the metric system of using the current system?

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Member's question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! If the Minister rises he will be closing debate now. Perhaps the Minister can answer the question at the conclusion of the debate or privately. Is the Member prepared to give us his right to continue to debate.

MR. CAMERON: — I think the practice as I understood it, the last time we met, was that prior to the Minister taking his seat he might be prepared to entertain some questions and answer them without someone losing his right to debate the thing further. Perhaps what I will do is address one or two comments to this matter and then ask the Minister if he would consider a couple of questions.

I am not entirely sure of the practical application of the provisions. The conversion to the metric system is I suppose as inevitable here as it is elsewhere although in doing so we ought to be very cautious not to create more confusion than already exists. I have always thought that the conversion to the metric system is really coming in a sense too hastily, particularly in some parts of the country. Particularly I think that applies in Saskatchewan. I am not sure that the same

compelling need, for the reasons indicated by the Minister, to convert to the metric system applies in Saskatchewan as it applies to other parts of the country. I have often thought that what we would have preferred to see is a slower introduction to the metric system than what we have seen. One generation could fairly readily be educated in the metric system by beginning in the schools in the early grades and by the completion of Grade Twelve most people would have the grasp of it. The difficulty is that people today who have long lived with the other system and who know the other system are being required without having had a chance to be educated at the early stages, to convert to the metric system and it is causing a good deal of confusion and not some little anger in some places. What I hope this measure will do, or at least the way in which it is applied, is I hope it will be cognizant of the difficulties that are being experienced and that it will not add needlessly to things being done in the metric system which are now being done in the current system.

So may I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that no doubt it is inevitable that we, too, are going to have to live with the metric system in every way the same as other parts of the country are, therefore, we will support the Bill. But I want to ask the Minister, if I may, a couple of questions particularly about the practical application of it.

For example, when does the Minister foresee converting from acres to, what is it, hectares? Do you see surveys being done now in the metric system with respect to lots in cities and towns and villages? Or do you see the provisions being applied in the immediate term to some other kind of surveys that are going on? May I ask the Minister if he might answer some questions of that practical kind with respect of the intent of these provisions?

MR. SPEAKER: — Before the Minister closes the debate I should like to make a comment with regard to the point raised by the Member for Regina South.

It has been the practice in the past to allow Members to immediately rise upon the Member taking his seat and asking if the Member would permit a question before taking his seat. I think it is a practice that we should not use too much unless it is a fairly serious question because we get into a bit of a committee then. We get answering back and forth. Had the Member done that before I put the question, I think I would have permitted a question at that time. But I think the Members should restrict themselves in the use of that, unless they feel it is absolutely imperative.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister was asking this weight measures Act of Canada to be amended, that you can authorize the use of the metric dimension for surveying in Saskatchewan. Does this necessarily mean that you are going to go full out on changing a direct question? There are many things that I don't think Saskatchewan is ready for, particularly the expense of changing, as the Member for Regina South mentioned. There could be some undue hardships forced on people by forcing it too fast and we do also. If it is giving them permission to do the converting slowly and as it is required, then we, too, will support the amendment.

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, in closing the debate and in answering the questions raised by the Hon. Member opposites, I should like to first of all indicate that we are certainly conscious of the fact that we have to move slowly in this area and it is our intention to do so.

With respect to land surveys, as I have indicated in my remarks, we do expect to move into the land surveys on the new subdivisions or on any new developed subdivisions. This is where it is our intention to start. Certainly this is going to be done in a manner that will be slow enough for the public to accept. It is not our intention to move rapidly and ahead of public acceptance.

I want also to mention, too, that we are intending to proceed in accordance with the federal priorities. These have been indicated to us and it is our intention to move in that manner. What we intend to do with the amendments to the Act is to simply co-operate with the Federal Government in this matter. I want to indicate to the House here that certainly we are going to move in a manner that is going to be slow enough and acceptable by the public. I realize the inconvenience and possibly even the hardship that this may have if we move too quickly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

MR. N. E. BYERS (Minister of Municipal Affairs) moved second reading of Bill No. 12 - An Act to amend The Rural Telephone Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I should like to offer a few comments on second reading of the Bill to amend The Rural Telephone Act. This Bill is designed to accommodate certain needs of many of the 720 rural telephone companies still operating in Saskatchewan. The directors of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephone Companies have requested the proposed amendment.

Briefly, the effects of the amendments are four-fold; namely, 1. To increase the borrowing power of rural telephone companies. 2. To permit companies some flexibility in making equitable adjustments to construction and reconstruction charges. 3. To apportion the special levy equally against run-off parcels regardless of acreage, in this case companies that have elected to tax only run-off parcels. For those of you who may not be acquainted with rural telephones, run-off parcel is the home parcel upon which a farm subscriber receives service.

The fourth effect will be to permit farmers to pay telephone reconstruction costs in cash, as well as by yearly surcharges or levies.

I should like to expand a little on the amendments. First the amendment to subsection (2) of Section 9 simply raises the capital of the company from \$350 to \$600 per route mile. The limits of a company's power to levy and to borrow are determined by its net capitalization. There has been no change in this levy since 1962 when it was set at \$350 per route mile. Since that time the combined effects of inflation and the more expensive buried cable program and the reduction in subscribers per line

have made it difficult for some companies to finance major rebuilding. Rural companies will have buried an estimated 3,400 route miles of cable in 1975, approximate costs varying from \$960 per route mile and up to a high of over \$7,000 per route mile depending on the size of the cable. This compares to an approximate average cost of \$530 per pole mile in 1962.

Also of significance is the reduction in the number of subscribers per circuit from nine or ten in 1962 to approximately half that number now.

Even with the Department of Telephones construction grant of one-half the cost of the cable itself, some companies have difficulty in raising the balance of the capital required because of the \$350 per route mile limit. Therefore, the increase to \$600 per route mile will help resolve this problem.

The amendment to subsection (5) of Section 20 will have the effect of extending the company's power to make adjustments to a subscriber's share of the construction cost where it appears equitable and the Minister approves.

Originally subsection (5) was designed to accommodate adjustments made necessary at the time the Act was rewritten in 1962. However, very occasionally rural telephone companies still ask to make some equitable adjustments which cannot be accommodated by a strict interpretation of the Act. It is believed that this flexibility should be allowed to the companies where the circumstances justify it.

Thirdly, the amendment to Section 44 has the effect of apportioning the total levy equally against the run-off parcels, regardless of size, where a company has elected to tax only the run-off parcels. At the present time one-half of the levy is apportioned according to the acreage. Now some farmers have separated their farmstead parcel title from the rest of the quarter section. Companies have complained that it is not equitable to reduce the levy against such farmers because of the smaller home parcel. The amendment will clarify the matter by making the levy equal for each run-off parcel regardless of the size.

Fourth, the new Section 46A and the amendment to the definition of construction levy in paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of Section 2, will permit subscribers to pay telephone reconstruction costs in cash as well as by yearly surcharges or levies.

I have already pointed out that the Department of Telephones pays 50 per cent of the cost of buried wire and cable in the form of grants to rural telephone companies. In 1974 this amounted to \$955,930. The balance of the cost of reconstruction is assessed against the run-off parcels of subscribers. Now there are some rural subscribers who have the cash and they want to pay their total share of the cost of a reconstruction project immediately. Others want time to pay. The amendment is necessary to accommodate this flexibility.

Let me make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment only affects those companies that have elected to tax run-off parcels only.

Subsection (3) of the new Section 46A is really an extension

or a specific example of my earlier comments on subsection (5) of Section 20. In effect it says, that a farmer who has recently paid for his share of the cost of a new system should not be taxed again for the cost of rebuilding the balance of the system. A company is empowered to reduce his burden under these circumstances.

These then, Mr. Speaker, are the amendments which hopefully will assist the rural telephone companies in continuing their efforts to serve the major portion of the farm population. I believe that the people who continue to operate and serve the more than 700 rural telephone companies deserve a special compliment of their work and dedication. It is a service that is often taken for granted and yet is one of the most valuable services to our farmers.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, I suspect there will be no problem supporting this Bill, however, we would like to have an opportunity to consider the Minister's remarks and accordingly I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. BYERS (Minister of Environment) moved second reading of Bill No. 13 - An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I should like to offer a few comments to the second reading of the Bill to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act.

The first amendment is to increase the borrowing limit for Sask Tel from the present \$250 million to \$500 million. In 1968 this limit was raised to \$175 million from \$150 million. In 1974 it was raised to \$250 million - now almost reached.

Sask Tel's gross construction spending for the last three or four years has been as follows: in 1972-\$25.6 million; 1973-\$36 million; 1974-\$54.1 million. In 1975 Sask Tel estimates a gross construction spending of over \$80 million. The forecasts indicate that in 1976 and subsequent years the capital program will continue to grow substantially. The number of toll calls have doubled in the last five years. Consequently it is essential that the borrowing limit be increased to permit Sask Tel to keep pace with the ever-growing demand for more and better telecommunications service.

Mr. Speaker, the second amendment has to do with buried cables, identifying their location and liability for damage. In the past few years Sask Tel's buried cable program has grown very extensively with now over 23,000 route miles of buried cable facility. Just in the three year period ending in 1975, Sask Tel will have buried approximately 17,500 route miles of cable in three years.

The problem of contractors and others cutting Sask Tel's

cables has grown with our program. Most people are aware of Sask Tel's "Dial before you Dig Program," which is designed to avoid such cuts. However, the incidents of cuts have grown from 132 in 1973 to 216 in 1974. The result is that service outages increase. The total cost of repair was \$47,626.97 in 1974. Now there is presently no legislation covering the responsibilities of the parties involved. The amendment, therefore, has three basic points.

First, Sask Tel must keep a record of its buried facilities and advise upon request. Secondly, a person intending to excavate in the area of a buried cable must give Sask Tel 48 hours notice to accurately locate the one before the excavating begins. Thirdly, assuming that Sask Tel has carried out its obligations to locate the line when requested, then the person doing the excavating will be liable for any damage he causes to the line, plus one-half the damage to cover loss of toll revenue. Now some explanation may be required here.

At common law the person doing the excavating would normally be responsible for the damage on the basis of his negligence in either failing to locate the line before digging, or in carrying out the work. He may also be liable in trespass. However, there is no law requiring Sask Tel to either record, mark or locate its lines. The amendment will in effect give legal sanction to the present practice.

Now as to the extra 50 per cent to cover the loss of toll revenue it is difficult and expensive to prove the net amount of toll revenue lost by reason of a cable cut. A toll revenue penalty will also help serve as a deterrent, especially since contractors will sometimes risk the costs of a cable cut, rather than the cost to avoid one. It is understandable that contractors have a great respect for dangerous power and gas lines, as hoped that the legislation will serve to clarify responsibilities and encourage precautions on the part of all concerned. The net result should be a more reliable and less costly communication system.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, I will in a moment be adjourning this matter because it is something where we would like an opportunity to consider the comments of the Minister.

I must say that our initial reaction on looking at the Bill was one of some surprise. I can't agree with the Minister when he says that at common law, the person breaking those lines, for instance, if that arose would necessarily be liable. Ordinarily in our law we say that the usual thing will be accepted by the law and usually someone doing excavation, and I suspect that that is usually small contractors who break Sask Tel Lines. Ordinarily someone doing excavations can expect that digging in the ground is a safe place to dig and that digging in the ground doesn't mean that they are going to break some Sask Telecommunication's line or something that Sask Tel has buried. Now it may well be that with the changed complexity of society and with the various numbers of pipes and lines and so

on that are buried in our ground that this kind of legislation is necessary. But I am a little concerned about the prospect of small companies and small businessmen and many of the people in the contractual business of a small nature, finding themselves faced with massive legal liabilities. Particularly when they are responsible both for the repair of the line, but secondly, responsible for the loss of revenue.

What the Government really is saying is over the years we have noticed that from time to time lines were broken and we have entered into an advertising campaign over that, but the advertising campaign hasn't been successful enough. So now we think that we should be punishing anyone who breaks a line. I accept that, I can see that it is quite logical that some direction has to be taken to ensure that lines aren't broken and that damage isn't done to Sask Tel, which is all of us, because it is a government operation. By the same token I am concerned about the possibility that a small businessman might find himself completely wiped out as a result of some negligence. Might find that having taken some action he cut a line which destroyed business and destroyed his livelihood.

It may well be that the Minister wants to consider an amendment which would allow the Government some discretion in whether the full loss should fall on a particular contractor if a line is broken.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said we want an opportunity to consider the matter further and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

HON. G. T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour) moved second reading of Bill No. 14 - An Act to amend The Department of Government Services Act, 1972.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the practice of brevity that was established by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Byers) my remarks will be short also.

The Bill to amend The Department of Government Services Act, 1972 is very straight forward. The proposed amendments will do two things, Mr. Speaker. They will more clearly define the nature and range of activities now undertaken by the Systems Centre and establish a statutory limit for its operation. Secondly, establish a new statutory limit for the operation of the Central Vehicle Agency Advance Account and the Office Supply Advance Account.

In respect to the System Centre I want to first bring to the Members' attention that this Advance Account is currently operating under the legislative authority of two abbreviated clauses in The Department of Government Services Act, 1972 and it is supported by The Appropriation Act, Vote No. 45. Some Members may recall that the nucleus of the System Centre was formerly located in the Department of Public Health where computer services were necessary to handle the hospital and medical care requirements. With the passage of time the advantages of computer technology have been applied in a broader range of activity in government and in business.

Members will note the present Department of Government

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Services Act, 1972 with amendments, does not contain a statutory limit for the Systems Centre Advance Account. The amendments before you today will set a statutory limit for this account at \$2 million.

It should be further noted that the services of the Systems Centre are provided on a cost recovery basis to those agencies requesting them and are accounted for in the budget of the user agency or the department.

To the degree that computer services represent a cost-saving measure in the long run, the activity of this account represents what we believe to be a prudent investment. Like the Systems Centre Advance Account, the Central Vehicle Agency Advance Account provides services on a cost recovery basis to those agencies requesting service from the Department. This account is established to provide transportation services. The new statutory limit is being established in large part to accommodate the requirements of the Fire Protection Service of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Members may recall a news release which we issued last year which indicated that the province had purchased seven aircraft from the Crown assets disposal corporation of the Federal Government for conversion into water bombers in the north for fire protection.

I want it to be noted, Mr. Speaker, that this Government was pleased to acquire these aircraft and, again, put them to good use.

You would no doubt be interested, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure all Members would, that these planes are some of the lingering remains of the HMCS Bonaventure fiasco and while these planes are in sound condition I don't believe the same could be said of the kind of government that allowed a refit originally estimated to cost \$8 million to subsequently exceed \$17 million and then three years later consign the Bonaventure to the scrap yard.

I finally want to comment, Mr. Speaker, on the concerns of the new legislative limit to be set for the Office Supply Agency Advance Account.

As its title suggests this agency has a mandate to provide office supplies on a cost recovery basis to the various agencies of government. This includes business machines. In the future ownership of the many business machines used by government agencies, including typewriters, adding machines, dictation equipment will be listed in the inventory of the Office Supply Agency and user departments will receive the regular monthly rental bill for services to provide it.

The new limit is necessary in large part to accommodate the bookkeeping transfer of the total inventory of business machines to the Supply Agency.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that there will not be a new increase in government assets, only a bookkeeping transfer of machine inventory now listed with the various agencies to the Supply Agency.

With this brief explanation, Mr. Speaker, I move

second reading of this Bill.

MR. E. F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, what on earth HMCS Bonaventure may have to do with the Systems Centre is beyond me. It crossed my mind that the Members opposite don't find that there are enough sins that they can visit from the past upon us from our own past, so they then pick on the past of the Federal Liberal Party to visit those sins upon us as well.

Mr. Speaker, I propose to adjourn debate on this matter in a moment. Let me only say at this time that though the Systems Centre is an operation of which I approve, indeed, I tend to approve wholeheartedly. I have long wondered why the Government operates the efficiency arms of Government Services on a permissive basis. There are, for instance, and I was shocked to discover this and to give credit where credit is due, I discovered it as a result of some comments made by Mr. Collver the other day in Public Accounts. I am disappointed, indeed, to see him leave Public Accounts. I thought that he was making a real contribution.

MR. LANE: — . . .the press wasn't there.

MR. MERCHANT: — I must say that he did discover quickly that the press wasn't there and one day was good enough for him. I thought that he was making a contribution during that one brief day that he attended.

MR. ROLFES: — Is that the reason . . .

MR. MERCHANT: — Well, Herman, this will come as a great shock to you, but I am on Public Accounts and I go constantly to Crown Corporations and I am not a leadership candidate. And Mr. Lane is a leadership candidate and he is the chairman of Public Accounts and he doesn't go to Crown Corporations.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I recognize the comments about the Bonaventure are strictly out of order and I give the Member equal time and now the Member is expanding it, getting into the leadership race. I wonder if he could get back to the principle of the Bill?

MR. MERCHANT: — I was just about to bring these matters to focus on the Bill, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the efficiency problems that the Government has and how a new Leader of the Liberal Party taking over the Government would have a great effect.

I only wanted to say that the Systems Centre, I am surprised as I said, that it is used in a permissive way. I am surprised that some agencies and some portions of the Government aren't, for instance, plugged into the computer facilities that are available. I am surprised, indeed, that the Government tends to operate as individual little units rather than operating under Government Services as a complete unit in various ways and that is a matter that at some more opportune time I may well be developing, Mr. Speaker, and I now beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. SNYDER (Minister of Labour) moved second reading of Bill No. 15 - An Act to amend The Queen's Printer's Act.

He said: Just a few brief comments, Mr. Speaker, before I move second reading of this Bill.

The Bill before us is a very straightforward and a very brief amendment to The Queen's Printer's Act. I believe, probably, the Bill belongs in Non-controversial Bills Committee but in my absence it finds itself in second reading at this point in time.

It is an amendment which establishes a new statutory amendment of \$1,250,000 to the Office Service Agency Advance Account. The Office Service Agency provides Central Services upon request to all departments and agencies of government including such services as addressing, off-set press work, machine collating, photography, dry printing, microfilming, etc.

These services are provided on a cost recovery basis to those agencies requesting them and are accounted for in the budget of the user department agency. In effect, the Office Service Agency is an in-house contractor.

The increase in the maximum level of the advance account is based on a projection of operating and capital funding requirements for several years into the future. There are a number of reasons why this increase is necessary, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, inflation, the cost of supplies and equipment purchased by Office Service is rising just as costs are rising everywhere else. Secondly, the new technology recognizing that in the past restraints have been placed on equipment replacing and updating and, of course, this can only be done for so long. And speaking of technology, Mr. Speaker, I think it should be noted that in some areas technology is changing significantly every year. In order to avoid being locked into outdated equipment as much as possible, some equipment is acquired on a lease basis rather than on a purchase basis.

Thirdly, growth in demand for Office Service. For the most part this growth is a reflection of the public demand to know what governments at all levels of responsibility are doing or are proposing to do. The printed word or picture is probably, and will continue to be, the major tool of communication.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, staff wages. Last and probably least, the wages of staff in Office Services are covered by the Public Service Agreement. Everyone agrees that an upward adjustment in wages under the terms of that agreement is warranted.

One expenditure that will be covered by the increase in the size of the Advance Account is, in the long run, Mr. Speaker, what we regard as a cost saving measure and I refer to the purchase of microfilming equipment. As rental rates for commercial space and cost of new construction rises, I believe greater use is going to be made of microfilming with the problem of storage of records. The Office Service Agency must be prepared to meet this requirement.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading

of this Bill.

MR. MERCHANT: — I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that even the Members opposite can see the ludicrous difference, the curiousness of coming before this House for \$850,000; to come before the House to deal with legislation of this kind of a nature which is really just a money increase, yet in potash we were not even told what the maximums would be. Mr. Speaker, there is an analogy, and those are really my only comments about the Bill.

I am surprised that the Government can't be made to see that where all of these Bills deal with money and where all of these Bills deal in the ordinary way, that a Parliament or a Legislature is supposed to deal, mainly to vote supply that it was most inappropriate for us to be asked not to vote supply under the financing Bill or Bills 1 and 2 of the last Legislature.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to study the Minister's comments that he made in presenting the Bill and therefore I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. SNYDER (Minister of Labour) moved second reading of Bill No. 16 - An Act to amend The Fire Prevention Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the Bill before the House today is designed to improve the standards of protection against fire and fire hazards in the province.

Fire protection, as all Members know, is a growing concern of all of us and this Government has recently enacted a number of important regulations to increase the effectiveness of the program.

You will recall that about one year ago we set forth new requirements for the installation of automatic sprinkling systems in certain buildings. We also amended the flammable liquids regulations and we updated the general regulations governing the existing apartment buildings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am asking The Fire Prevention Act itself be amended so that it will be as modern and as up-to-date and as realistically enforceable as possible.

I believe the public directly affected by these amendments should have the opportunity to review and comment before a piece of legislation such as this is actually taken before the Legislature. Accordingly, we have consulted with a number of concerned persons and organizations. Draft copies were circulated to city councils and to the appropriate Fire Chief for comments. Virtually all returns were in favor of the amendments which I am asking the House to consider today.

I should explain that the major portion of this Bill deals with broadening the scope of the Act to authorize local fire inspectors to do their job under the authority of The Fire Prevention Act.

Our present Act, for example, provides authority for the inspection of buildings to determine whether they are fire hazards. This authority, however, is vested in the inspectors of the Fire Safety Unit, which is a part of the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labour. Under the terms of the legislation as it now stands the only other people who have the authority to do these inspections are those who the Act calls local assistants to the Fire Commissioner, in other words, the Fire Chiefs of the various fire departments throughout the province. This, as you can imagine, seriously limits the number of persons authorized to inspect and as a result there are thousands of buildings, which through the years receive only a cursory check by the local fire inspectors. Unfortunately, correction orders are never issued on them because they can't be enforced.

In the past, to overcome this problem, we have encouraged municipalities to introduce their own local fire prevention bylaws which would enable local inspectors to follow through with valid correction orders wherever they see an unacceptable situation.

To-date, Mr. Speaker, however, only three municipalities have chosen to do so, Regina, Prince Albert and Estevan. Therefore, it appears that there is a need for the Government to take the initiative and give municipal fire inspectors the legal right to issue correction orders in their own jurisdictions when they consider them to be necessary. The amendment will do exactly that. However, along with extending the authority of local fire inspectors, there must be a concurrent section to provide for a grievance procedure when the owner of a building, for example, feels that he has been treated unjustly. This is what the amendment to Section 15 of The Fire Prevention Act deals with.

With the inclusion of municipal inspectors as persons who can issue correction orders, revised appeal procedure has been inserted for use at the local or the primary level. By this amending legislation appeals can now be made to the local fire chief, in the first instance, then failing satisfactory solution there it can be carried to the Provincial Fire Commissioner's office and then finally, as a court of last resort to the district court.

In addition to guaranteeing citizen's right of appeal this particular amendment will go some distance towards reserving local responsibility and local authority. Allowing the local Fire Chief or his deputy to handle appeals from orders made by his own inspector, seems reasonable in the first instance. Needless to say, handling complaints locally is far more satisfactory in most cases than referrals to some distantly centralized authority not immediately acquainted with the problem.

A further benefit is that adding to the Fire Chief's authority will certainly reduce the final volumes of appeal to the Provincial Fire Commissioner and this kind of efficiency, Mr. Speaker, should appeal to both the public and the Government administration as well.

These are the two major amendments, Mr. Speaker. The others contained in the Bill are concerned mainly with keeping the legislation up-to-date, bringing penalties and remuneration rates into line with today's dollar values and correcting out-of-date phrases in reference to other Acts.

The term 'portable' for example, has been added in Section 2 to more accurately identify the type of appliance intended. Another amendment defines the term 'municipal inspector' putting a territorial limit on the authority granted to them and furthermore making it clear that the Department of Labour inspectors are not required to enforce municipal bylaws.

Most of us are aware that the province's Fire Commissioner provides training courses in firefighting and fire prevention for volunteer fire brigade personnel. It might be of interest to Members to know that some 26 training schools are conducted annually on the average giving some 640 volunteer fire fighters essential basic training and providing them with the last information on new techniques and new equipment.

One of the amendments we are considering here merely makes this practice official, a practice which has been in effect for some years.

Fees for reporting on fires for provincial records have not been raised for many years and an amendment now brings them to a level where they provide a small incentive to those required to provide the reports. An amendment to Section 26 of The Fire Prevention Act recognizes that the expression 'property insurance' now more commonly includes fire insurance as part of the package.

In another amendment public halls, theatres and rinks are being brought under the terms of this Act to be certain that all places of public assembly will be protected by adequate fire safety and exit regulations.

Fines for those who violate any of the provisions of The Fire Prevention Act have become quite unrealistic in recent years for several amendments have been included to raise these penalties.

Now, for example, upon conviction for failure to comply with an order of the fire inspector a negligent owner can be liable to a fine at least \$25 per day or as much as \$100 a day for each day of continuing failure to fix up the premises. Such penalties appear to be in line with today's economic values and should act as a deterrent which they are intended to be.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that these amendments which we are considering today go a long way towards upgrading and standardizing the fire prevention service throughout the province. They will extend the authority of municipal inspectors so they can do their jobs more efficiently. They will provide for an appeal procedure which will in most cases have a local problem solved at the local level and this is certainly preferable, I suggest, to referral to a central authority in Regina where the people are generally unacquainted with the details.

The amendments, generally speaking, Mr. Speaker, help to modernize and make more effective a most central program and one which is held in high regard by our citizens.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that Members opposite have thought of this Bill because as I recall this is one of those matters of great merit and import which required special attention in the Throne Speech Debate. I have been waiting with bated breath for this momentous piece of legislation to come before us. We don't propose, Mr. Speaker, to oppose the amendments as put forth. We view the greater power from municipal fire prevention officers to be a good change.

I am surprised, incidentally, to see the Government making changes in fines and still leaving the fines at such a minimal level. It seems to me, if you are going to have fines, the fines should be of some consequence and the fines that you have in this Act are not of any consequence.

MR. SNYDER: — Try a House amendment.

MR. MERCHANT: — I might do well, would I. I want, Mr. Speaker, to say something about the operation of the Fire Commission's office in general, although it doesn't specifically deal with these amendments.

I think the Government has failed to appreciate the size of the cost of changes in apartment buildings which have been forced recently by the Fire Commissioner's office. The Fire Commissioner's office over the last couple of years has brought in some very sweeping changes for safety as required in apartment buildings. The situation then is that apartments which were built in a particular way and approved, perhaps five, seven or nine years ago, considered safe at the time, have now been indicated to be unsafe.

Mr. Speaker, if you are fumbling with whether this is in order, let me point out that I will only be seven or eight minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MERCHANT: — The landlords now find themselves in these current times under controls by the Government, rent controls and in the same year that they were faced with rent controls they were also faced with Fire Commissioner controls and recommendations which were very expensive for them. Sometimes a thousand dollars in an apartment depending upon the original construction, buildings which were perhaps five or six years old, and they were ordered to make changes.

To draw a comparison, Mr. Speaker, it would be like the Canadian Government telling Chrysler and Ford that they had to bring in all of their 1965 or 1966 automobiles because they didn't have overhead shoulder braces or because they didn't have disc brakes. That there was a way to make them safer now than had been thought to be safe at the time. The Government will no doubt argue that the changes are good, that these are changes in terms of safety. I agree with that. The changes are good. But, I suggest to you that it is somewhat surprising to see the lack of understanding of the NDP in maintaining the controls over these landlords and at the same time creating greatly increased expenses in the same year.

In major construction the Fire Commissioner's office is really the last word. It operates to a lesser extent in the same manner. The Fire Commissioner's office at the provincial level largely deals with large construction.

I suggest it is bad policy when an okayed building is still subject to review and change some years later and that is the way the law works now.

The Santa Maria, for instance, though built as I recall in about 1965, completed in 1967, was only last year given its final completion. It would be unfair to suggest to the House that that is the usual way that the Fire Commissioner's office operates. There were problems with Santa Maria which dated back to 1965. But when the 1975 order was given, the order was given for certain changes which weren't considered, the practice in 1965 or 1966 or 1967. The Fire Commissioner's office imposed fire safety rules today on Santa Maria and upon their owners. The owners of Santa Maria had to pick up part of the piece of some changes that are now going ahead because the Fire Commissioner's office has, if you like, a sort of a sliding scale of safety. As time goes on our safety requirements change. There is nothing wrong with that. But it makes it very difficult for people involved in large construction. And very difficult in the instance that I enunciated regarding landlords.

The argument, no doubt is that it is legitimate because safety is involved. That is an argument that I suggest that could be made with automobiles, could be made with standards of furniture, with electrical wiring for instance. We could be going back into our homes, into old construction and saying, that electrical wiring has to be fixed up. With standards of culvert work, with mining standards. With almost everything with which government becomes involved.

I suggest to the Minister and to the Members opposite that the tendency of the Fire Commissioner's office in that direction is an unfair tendency to people in private business who are planning to proceed with these construction projects. As I have said, we don't intend to take any particular fault with the amendments as such. I wanted to comment upon the remarks of the Minister about the appeal procedure from the local officers.

The implication was left with respect, and I am sure you didn't mean it, that as a result of going in with local Fire Commissioner's officers, that there would now be a new kind of special appeal to make sure that a local officer who may not have the good practice of the Fire Commissioner's office in general that that local officer will be subject to some kind of special appeal. Of course what the legislation really does, Mr. Speaker, it just provides the same kind of appeal from the local fire officer as exists from a fire officer dealing from the Fire Commissioner's office. So that the same appeal procedure is now available. There is nothing special to act against the local officer.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

HON. N. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Consumer Affairs) moved second reading of Bill No. 17 - An Act to amend The Provincial Mediation Board Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the explanatory notes, I think make it reasonably clear what this legislation does and if the Members of this House heard my speech when I introduced the second reading of the rent control legislation and my brief concise comments the other day, they should be aware of why we are doing it. I will deal with the Act very briefly, because I think it will be familiar to most Members here.

You recall that I said in second reading of the rent control legislation, that during the summer we set up a committee to review what problems might have arisen with the old Residential Tenancies Act. One of the problems was that tenants were not enforcing their rights under the legislation, mainly because of fear of eviction, particularly because it cost more to go to court than it was worth. In response to that and because the rent control legislation would have simply aggravated the problem, we set up the office of the rentalsman. The office of the rentalsman has the power to mediate disputes, it also has the power to order a settlement. In that sense the office of the rentalsman replaces both the Provincial Mediators Board and the courts.

Because the office of the rentalsman exists and because it replaces both the Provincial Mediation Board and the courts we are amending The Provincial Mediation Board Act to provide that the Provincial Mediation Board may still carry on its functions under the old Landlord Tenant Act, but may not carry on those functions under The Residential Tenancies Act.

The section which the Provincial Mediation Board used to justify its proceedings under The Residential Tenancies Act was Section 14. When you read it you may wonder in fact if the Provincial Mediation Board ever had the power to carry on those activities under The Residential Tenancies Act, but nevertheless they did. Section 14(a). It is very broad indeed. It gives the Provincial Mediation Board the power to prohibit any and all proceedings under The Landlord Tenant Act. A very broad power really. It also gives the Provincial Mediation Board the power to prohibit any action of a landlord for recovery of possession of the land and the power to prohibit the execution by a sheriff of a writ of possession.

In addition to those powers it also, the Provincial Mediation Board, also carried on very extensive mediation work. They answer a lot of inquiries by tenants who would call up and say, my landlord is doing so and so. The Provincial Mediation Board would call the landlord and were able to settle the vast majority of them simply by pointing out to landlords what the tenants' rights were. And they were called by a lot of landlords and the Provincial Mediation Board attempted to deal with errant tenants. But nevertheless they helped both sides.

Those functions will now be carried on by the office of the rentalsman. What this Section does is provide that the Provincial Mediation Board shall no longer exercise those powers given to it in Section 14, under The Residential Tenancies Act.

In summary then, the recent amendments to The Residential Tenancies Act removes the Provincial Mediation Board completely

from residential tenancy situations and substituted for that Board is the rentalsman who will have the broad, investigative and order-making powers not previously existing in The Residential Tenancies Act. For that reason and because there is an appeal from the rentalsman to a Rent Review Commission, it is considered to be appropriate to remove the Provincial Mediation Board powers completely with respect to the residential tenancies situation. This section presently provides that the Provincial Mediation Board may stay a landlord's action for a writ of possession or if he has already received a writ of possession, stay the sheriff's execution of that writ of possession. Any orders made by the Board are made effective only for a specific day and, therefore, there will not be any transitional problems caused by the coming into force of this amendment, since any orders would live their normal life and die at the end of a specified period of their effectiveness.

For those reasons, I move second reading of an Act to amend The Provincial Mediation Board Act.

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I must confess that the Minister hasn't convinced me that this is a good amendment. I want to consider the remarks of the Minister and look at the Act again before I make up my mind as to whether this amendment should be supported and in due course I will be asking leave to adjourn debate.

Before doing so, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that I am hesitating to give my support to this amendment is because it involves the rentalsman, because it involves rent control legislation. I think that in the short period of time that we have had rent control legislation and the office of the rentalsman, we have had more inequities created by that legislation than it sought to cure. In fact the result of that legislation, Mr. Speaker, has been to penalize the landlord who acted fairly and equitably with his tenants during 1974 and really reward the landlord who gouged as much money as he could in that year and in 1975. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the whole concept of this Government's rent control legislation must be re-examined as the result of the inequities that have been caused by it. One of the things that should be examined of course is the relationship of the Provincial Mediation Board to the rentalsman and the existing landlord and tenant law.

I, for one, feel that the rent control legislation to-date has been unfair and is not working. It is creating problems that perhaps were not foreseen by the Government opposite, perhaps we did not do our duty when this was before the House and bringing these problems to the attention of the House. But nevertheless those problems are there. I am sure the Minister and the Members opposite, or at least the urban Members opposite, have been flooded with as many calls as I have from landlords and tenants complaining about the operation of the rentalsman's office, complaining about the staff there, complaining about the provisions of the rent control legislation.

I think I can say to you, Mr. Speaker, that in due course during this Session, we will be having a Private Member's resolution on the Order Paper to debate the matter again and to bring these matters to the attention of the public. I will be speaking at that time and I am sure that Members on this side will be as well. For the time being, Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to support the amendment at least at this time and

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accordingly, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. N. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Consumer Affairs) moved second reading of Bill No. 18 - An Act to amend The Credit Union Act, 1972.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the amendment to The Credit Union Act I think deserves a bit of background and I will give it to you, on what the credit union movement has meant to this province and what it has done for us.

I should like to talk just for a very few moments about the credit union movement itself. It is a topic with which I think most of you are familiar. As of September 30, 1975 the total assets compiled for the 247 credit unions with 85 branches was \$1.2 billion. An increase of \$30 million in the last six months. With participation like that credit unions are more than just a going concern, they are a vital dynamic part of the Saskatchewan fabric. One of the things that makes Saskatchewan unique and a better place to live in.

Given the Saskatchewan history of involvement in the co-operative movement, the popularity of the credit unions shouldn't be surprising. What is remarkable though is that so much has taken place within the space of a single generation. It was only in 1937 that the first five credit unions opened in Saskatchewan. Those five credit unions have 268 members and assets of \$2,200, now their assets are \$1.2 billion.

I might point out in passing that the credit union movement here per capita is stronger here than anywhere else in Canada. I can tell you that one out of every three Canadians is a member of the credit union, but one out of every two people in Saskatchewan are a member of a credit union.

Total credit unions today are in a sense big enterprises. The largest ones handled millions of dollars and deal with a seemingly varied array of financial institutions. Yet even the largest credit union hasn't lost sight of its basic purpose, that of providing credit at a reasonable rate to members who need it most.

I think this is illustrated by the assets, by the kind of people who are credit union members. Credit unions have one out of every two people in Saskatchewan as members, but nowhere near half of the assets of financial institutions in this province. They only have a small fraction of the assets because they tend to deal with little people and their members tend to be little people, who need credit most.

The purpose, as I said, hasn't changed in credit unions over the years, nor has the concept of control by the members. No matter how complex the institution, each member has an opportunity to participate in policy deliberations. The management and the boards of directors may handle the credit union's day to day business, but in the final analysis it is the members who determine the organization's direction. I think that is what makes credit unions different.

I was out at Kamsack the other night and spoke to the

Kamsack Credit Union. They have a credit union there which is larger than the population of the area that they service would indicate, a very large credit union. I was interested to find out that the president and the vice-president have served in those posts since the credit union was incorporated back in the '40s and they have done so without remuneration. Served for over 25 years without remuneration. That is the kind of local control, local participation and local dedication to the credit union movement which has made it as successful as it is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — That broadly based control is in part responsible for another strength of the credit unions, that of community involvement. With so many local people involved in them credit unions reflect the concerns of their members. They become attuned to the needs of the area and are thus better to respond to local conditions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — They make a go of it in many communities where there are no other financial institutions. I am sure that all rural Members can think of quite a few credit unions that exist in towns where there is no other financial institution. They do so because of their democratic structure. And let's not forget the way credit unions help communities in other ways. They provide uniforms for junior hockey teams, family finance seminars, community contests.

In essence, then credit unions still practise their original motto of 'people helping people.' Their concern, and it was nurtured during the depression for farmers, small businessmen and ordinary working people and have helped make credit that much easier and less expensive. In this regard credit unions have set the pace for other financial institutions.

Credit unions still provide very reasonable savings to their members in credit costs. For example, the interest rate in a credit union loan for the purchase of consumer goods, such as automobiles or furniture, can be as little as one-half the cost of credit from other sources, although often the difference is not quite that great.

Low cost loans are also available in many other areas. Credit union members can obtain funds with which to purchase homes, operate farms and small businesses, pay education costs, take a vacation. Let me say that there is nothing motherhood about the kind of — Hon. Members across the way may laugh at the credit union movement — there is nothing motherhood about the kind of contribution that they have made. The credit union movement in this province, it is interesting to note, has provided 40 per cent of the mortgage money for housing starts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I haven't seen the relationship with the amendments to the Credit Union Act yet, perhaps the Minister is getting to it, but it sounds like the regime of the credit union movement in Saskatchewan, which is understandably acknowledged,

but I think the principle of the Bill is what we want to get at, if we can relate to that.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I thought a background and the role that the credit union plays in this province would be useful and the size of the credit union movement has some relevance to what is being done.

The credit union, indeed, has outgrown its infancy beginnings. Credit unions now provide loans for a broad section of people. They provide loans to people who have assets in different provinces. Right now under the existing legislation credit unions cannot grant loans on the security of property in a province other than the one they are incorporated in. Now that means that if a credit union in Virden, Manitoba, grants a loan to a farmer who has land across the border then it can't take the security of the land across the border.

Now the amendment to the legislation will allow Saskatchewan to register credit unions from other provinces merely for the purpose of taking security on a loan that has already been granted.

Credit union legislation in some other provinces, British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba have provisions making it possible for credit unions in other provinces to register for the purpose of taking security where necessary on loans to members who have moved from the province where they resided when the loan was granted.

This reciprocal arrangement has been in existence for some time and it is desirable from the point of view of providing some additional protection for the credit union lender when the members have moved away.

Credit union legislation in Saskatchewan has provision for a credit union from another province to register in Saskatchewan only for the purpose of taking advantage of the co-operative superannuation plan. And this, I suppose, follows along the same line. It is expedient, Mr. Speaker, that credit union legislation in Saskatchewan carried similar provisions to that of other provinces such as British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba, whereby extra-provincial legislation can be permitted for the purpose of taking security on existing loans, but not to carry on business.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, I am sure you would be very interested in the general comments that I have to make about the credit union movement as well and they will be just as incisive and to the point as the Minister's, although more brief.

The NDP are very fond of trying to paint this party into a corner that they think they can handle and credit unions and co-ops are one of the tools and they attempt to say we oppose them. They attempt to say that we oppose the credit unions and the co-operative movement because they have in their constituency a narrow 10 or 15 per cent, perhaps some of their membership holders who are prepared to believe that kind of an outright lie

about the Liberal Party because they are fond of hating and disliking the Liberal Party.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I want to bring the Member to order, the Member must talk about the amendment, the principle of the amendments.

MR. MERCHANT: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going to say and make some reference in passing, Mr. Speaker, which I won't do, to the long record of the Liberal Governments in assisting and furthering the incorporating of credit unions and co-ops and, indeed, in passing I was going to mention the involvement of my grandfather a sometime Liberal Member, in the credit union movement, sometime Liberal Member of this House. But I won't do that.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that we have taken the time to contact some knowledgeable people in the credit union movement and some people who act, from time to time, for the credit union movement. We understand that they approve of this proposed amendment and that they want the amendment to come in. We share the view of the Government that anything that can be done to assist the credit unions is a valuable thing to do provided they are expected to deal in a competitive way with the other forms of banking and near bank institutions. And we support this amendment - well that is a caveat because we are not prepared to say we would prefer a credit union to another form of a bank or a near bank and that is a caveat. We don't prefer the banks to the credit unions and we don't prefer the credit unions to the banks, because this side of the House doesn't believe that the Government should be meddling into everything that they do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MERCHANT: — Now, Mr. Speaker, with those few words I indicate to the House that the Liberal caucus will be supporting these amendments as we have supported the credit union movement over the years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to assure the Hon. Minister that the Progressive Conservative Party does share his enthusiasm towards the job that credit unions are doing in Saskatchewan. They do serve a real need in a community and we admire the terrific way that they have grown and have become a valuable part of these communities and we will be supporting this amendment to this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I understand that the purpose of the amendments are to help credit unions which are having difficulties at the present time, particularly those in the Province of Alberta. At present they may lend somebody money to purchase a car when he is a resident of Alberta. He then later may move to the Province of Saskatchewan. At that time the credit union in Alberta has a difficult time coming in and collecting the loan. In fact I understand that collection gets so difficult that they have almost to steal their car to get their property

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back and to get their money out of it. I think it is a good amendment and I am certainly willing to support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

MR. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Co-operation) moved second reading of Bill No. 19 - An Act to amend The Northern Co-operative Trading Services Act, 1959.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I gather all Members want to hear about The Northern Co-operative Trading Services Act.

I may say, Mr. Speaker, I think that many Members are familiar with the credit union movement, but I doubt that too many are familiar with The Northern Co-operative Trading Services Act, and I will, as briefly as possible, outline how we came to need this particular amendment.

Previous to 1948 in northern Saskatchewan, as I understand it, there was little available in terms of wholesaling or retailing services except that provided by the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1948 in a progressive move the CCF Government of the day set up an institution called The Government Trading Stores. In 1959 that operation had matured a bit and the CCF Government transferred that operation from a government institution to a co-operative and it then became the Northern Co-operative Trading Stores Limited.

They loaned the company \$200,000 and they provided that until the money was repaid the membership of the Northern Co-operative Trading Stores should be limited to other co-operatives in northern Saskatchewan.

The loan has now been repaid and now the Northern Co-operative Trading Stores Limited is anxious to broaden its membership basis. They are anxious now to take members who are not just co-operatives but individuals. They feel that that will broaden their base in northern Saskatchewan.

The Northern Co-operative Trading Services Act now provides that when the principal association is converted to a co-operative association under The Co-operative Association Act, membership in the continuing organization shall consist of co-operative associations, as I said. In keeping with the wishes of the members and the board of the Northern Co-operative Trading Stores Limited, it is now desired to change the Act to provide for direct membership in the principal association upon conversion to a co-operative association under The Co-operative Association Act.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that in the interests of the members in the North and for the good and welfare of the continuing principal association, it is expedient that Section 28 of the Act be amended to provide that membership in the principal association shall be governed by the supplemental bylaws, whereas the present section makes provision for membership to consist of co-operative associations incorporated or registered under any co-operative association Act.

The implication of the proposed change, Mr. Speaker, is to leave the decision-making, the democratic control process in the hands of individual members who would in turn appoint delegates at the local level, rather than having the members of the principal association consist of co-operative associations.

In the latter situations member co-operative associations could withdraw from membership in the principal association. Under the provisions of The Co-operative Association Act under conditions of withdrawal of a co-operative member it would take its entire membership, which could render a severe hardship on the principal association.

I, therefore, propose that this Legislature now move second reading of this Bill.

MR. STODALKA: — Mr. Speaker, in speaking for the Liberal Opposition in regard to this motion which is of a housekeeping nature, I guess you might say, and also it is fulfilling the request of the people living within the area and we are certainly willing to support the motion.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, speaking on the Progressive Conservative behalf we will be supporting this motion.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

MR. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Co-operation) moved second reading of Bill No. 20 - An Act to amend The Motor Dealers Act, 1966.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the next Bill amends The Motor Dealers Act. I think all Members will recall that when snowmobiles became popular about a decade ago, there were at least a couple of problems caused by the popularity of the snowmobiles. One was the damage that they did to the environment and the farmers complained that operators were killing wildlife and so on. But the other problem was the proliferation of manufacturers and the proliferation of dealers. Not all of them responsible as one would expect in any industry.

The legislation which I am bringing forward now deals really with the latter problem.

Historically it was in the early 1970s that the snowmobile became more popular. It was found that many persons were involved in the selling of snowmobiles, but not providing any service whatsoever, nor honoring any warranties, nor stocking any parts. It was a common problem to buy a snowmobile only to find three or four weeks later that the dealer had gone out of business.

Consumers were complaining of this lack of service and the availability of parts. Licensed dealers who had to be licensed under some other section of The Motor Dealers Act because they sold something other than snowmobiles were also complaining that the competition was unfair. There is a certain expense to being licensed and being bonded and those snowmobile dealers who only sold snowmobiles were able to escape that expense.

Now since 1974 the Department of Consumer Affairs has interpreted motor vehicle to include snowmobiles and there are presently over 160 dealers licensed under The Motor Dealers Act who sell snowmobiles and motorcycles only.

I am bringing forth this legislation. We already have licensed them, as I said. The legislation now is coming forward because a recent court decision has thrown some doubt on our right to license them. Just so that there is no doubt, absolutely no doubt, we are going to amend the legislation to be crystal clear that we can license them.

It will then be clear to all consumers and dealers that if they are involved in the selling of snowmobiles they are subject to the provisions of The Motor Dealers Act, 1966.

This will in turn provide that all snowmobile dealers will be licensed to provide protection to the consumer by that particular dealer meeting minimum licensing and bonding requirements. It will also provide some measure of equality in the motor dealer industry, by ensuring that all snowmobile dealers meet at least minimum licensing and bonding requirements which are presently being met by the vast majority of snowmobile dealers in the province.

I think most Members will be aware that licensing and bonding of retail dealers is the key to any kind of effective consumer protection. It is through those two avenues that the Consumer Affairs really works with retailers.

The Members of the House may not be aware that motor vehicles, snowmobiles included, constitute the vast majority of complaints coming to the Consumer Affairs Department. I just don't have the statistics with me, but it is really astounding the percentage of complaints that have to do with motor vehicles. It is very high. In part I suppose there are a lot of them and part, I suppose, they are fairly complex, they can break down easily. It is really, as I said, astounding the percentage of complaints that deal with motor vehicles.

Now there is a second part to the Bill as well. If it had been alone, I suppose this part could have been under the Non-controversial Bills Committee.

The second part provides for a change in the wording of the prima facie certificate. This amendment will establish the registrar's authority and preclude the necessity of issuing a certificate for each day of an alleged violation. Now, what had happened previously is that the department had got themselves into a fix whereby they had to issue a separate certificate for each day of the violation because of the way the section was worded. They are changing that now so that you only need to issue one certificate.

At the same time they are standardizing the certificate requirements so that the certificate they issue under this Act will be the same as the one they issue under The Sale of Training Courses Act and the Pyramid Sellers act and so on. The standardized certificate, the chances of there being an error in the making of them up is that much less.

So for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the objectives of the legislation as presented, but feel that I should like a little bit more time in which I can check into some of the details, so I would beg leave to adjourn the debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

MR. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture) moved second reading of Bill No. 21 - An Act to amend The Veterinarians Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the objective of the proposed amendment to The Veterinarians Act is to facilitate immigrants and newly graduated veterinarians entering into that practice. The Act which was enacted in 1960 did not provide for pro tem temporary licensing. This often resulted in unnecessary delay or in people practising illegally. The proposed amendment will allow for an individual to practise pending examination of documents, setting of examinees and the meeting of other pre-license requirements.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment is only one of the many ways this Government indicates its concern for the livestock industry of this province. We have recognized the fact that the veterinary profession has played and continues to play a most important role in our society. Veterinarians have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to our economy by curing and preventing disease in food producing animals.

It must also be recognized that the care and attention veterinarians afford companion animals is a major contribution to the joy and happiness in our society.

Our predecessors in 1944 introduced a veterinary services district policy which encouraged veterinarians to work in rural districts. In the past year nearly \$150,000 was supplied to rural municipalities in Saskatchewan so that livestock producers could benefit from the services of veterinarians.

This Government recognizes that it was a misuse of veterinarians' time to be travelling 60 or 70,000 miles a year on farm services. To correct this problem we provided \$25,000 grants to veterinarian serviced districts as financial support in erecting veterinary clinics.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is contributing and will continue to contribute, substantial sums of money to the maintenance and expansion of the Western College of Veterinarian Medicine in Saskatoon. VIDO, the Veterinarian Infectious Disease Organization, is a veterinary research organization, is being supported to the extent of \$1 million so that the infectious diseases which now cause severe economic loss to our livestock producers may be better understood and prevented.

These diseases include such items as scours, IBR, septicemia, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I think the Minister is straying from the principle of the amendments that are involved here. I stand to be corrected if he is in fact not straying and is dealing with the amendments, but it sounds to me like a resume of some nature.

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MR. KAEDING: — It will connect. In the 1976-77 budget of the Veterinary Services Branch, if approved, will provide funds for paid summer employment of veterinary students. This will enable first hand practical experience.

This Government recognizes the importance of backup veterinary specialists to whom the practising veterinarian can appeal for specialized tests and advice. To provide this aid, funds are made available to operate a diagnostic laboratory in Regina and at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at Saskatoon.

We recognize the importance of this professional group to the whole of society and will continue programs and policies which will make their services available to all people of Saskatchewan.

This program, over the years, will allow specialists to spread throughout the province to the benefit of all livestock producers. Because Bill 21 provides a further potential for improvement of an already good veterinary service, I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, my initial remarks in regards to this Bill were designed to be extremely brief in adding our support to it. However, in light of the many comments made by the Minister of Agriculture in introducing this piece of legislation I should like to have an opportunity to study those remarks so that I can adequately respond to them and with that, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:22 o'clock p.m.