

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eighteenth Legislature
24th Day

Thursday, March 24, 1977.

The Assembly met at 2:00 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — On behalf of the Member for Swift Current, Mr. Ham, who is not here today, through you and to this Assembly I would like to introduce a group of 55 Grade Seven students who are seated in the east gallery from Swift Current from the Schools St. Joseph and St. Patrick. They are accompanied by Miss Jordan and Mr. Shumay, their teachers, as well as their bus driver, Mr. Datter. We are very pleased to have them in the Assembly this afternoon. We wish them a successful day and a safe trip home.

I will be meeting with the students later on this afternoon to talk to them and perhaps have a few refreshments.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you through this House the 34 Grade Eleven students from Lampman High School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. K. Agyeman and their bus driver, Mrs. Boyer.

I would like to just make mention that Lampman is one of the fastest growing towns in the southeast and through the co-operation of this Government they were able to build a new hospital. It was opened this past year and this again helps to keep this community very viable and it is a very, very active community.

We wish these students and their teacher and their driver well. We hope you enjoy your stay here in Regina and that you have a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

MR. J. R. KOWALCHUK (Melville): — Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I, through you, Mr. Speaker, welcome to this House 14 Grade Nine students from the village of Goodeve, the village where I come from. It is not a big village but I think it is a pretty good little place.

I had the pleasure at one time of representing that area and that school as a unit board member and a unit board chairman for many years. I still take a great pride in the school system of that area.

The teacher that has come with them is the principal, Mr. Bohay, the bus driver is Kenny Rathgeber. They have visited quite a number of places in the city here today. I know they

have enjoyed it and I hope they do enjoy and benefit from the legislative session here this afternoon. I will be meeting with them at the well as usual later on and we certainly wish that they have a good time, an educational visit and a safe trip back home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear;

QUESTIONS

PUBLIC SECTOR WAGE AND PRICE CONTROLS

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister in his remarks on the Budget Debate indicated that his Government was going to be getting out of the public sector Wage and Price Controls at the latest by September 1st and perhaps earlier depending on initiatives taken by the Federal Government. My question to the Minister is, do you have a method devised at this time as to how the Government is going to move out of this area, that is, are the wage and price controls going to be peeled back for each particular public sector employee group that is affected by it or are you going to do it all at once? Would you just tell the House what plans you have, if any, at this time?

HON. W. E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member may be aware collective bargaining agreements of the public sector expire at different dates and different times. We have made this decision that in the event the federal program is discontinued before September 30th our program would be discontinued before that date, but at any rate, our program would not go beyond September 30th. In other words, every collective bargaining agreement in Saskatchewan in the public sector has been subject to controls for a period of two years by establishing that date. And similarly in case of the prices area, all price increases in the public sector have been under control for virtually a two-year period. Because collective bargaining agreements expire on different dates it would not be a sharp cut; they would in effect be under control for a period of two years. One of the fortunate things that we have in Saskatchewan compared with other parts of Canada, especially in the private sector, is many of the collective bargaining agreements that have been signed (maybe I shouldn't say many, perhaps I should say collective bargaining agreements) in the private sector in other provinces, become open once the controls are removed. We do not have that situation in Saskatchewan especially in public sector agreements; they will carry on until their expiry date.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, I understand that to be the case but it still is a concern to, I think, many people that at the time those agreements expire, whether it is sometime after September, six months, one month or whatever, that the particular union or bargaining group is going to try and catch up for what they feel they have lost during the two-year period or whatever time the controls were in effect. The

concern is that because of all the catch up provisions or the attempt to catch up we are just going to blow the lid off again and be back where we were two years ago. Now is the Government intending to meet with individual bargaining agents, SGEA, OCAW, any of the various unions or bargaining agents that are going to be affected to see if there is some way to develop a plan at this time to avoid the possibility of bargaining on the basis of catching up and throwing the economy out of whack once again?

MR. SMISHEK: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the Budget speech we are certainly hopeful that unions as well as employers in the public sector will co-operate with each other as well as with the Government to ensure that once the controls are removed that we do not return to double digit inflation. Mr. Speaker, up until now we have not met, at least I have not met with unions or any of the employers in establishing any formal type of discussions but I can say and I think that unions as well as employers in the public sectors are conscious of their responsibilities and of the problems of inflation. I have a feeling, even though I can't prove it at the moment, that there is a concern by all people in our society that when controls are removed we don't create the kind of pressure that we had before and return back to double digit inflation.

MR. MALONE: — Final Supplementary. In view of that then, Mr. Minister, everybody in this House, and I think everywhere shares your hopes that double digit inflation is not going to come back, but unfortunately history has shown that hopes are ill-founded and it usually does, if there is not some sort of spirit of co-operation developed before a negotiating process starts again. So I am asking you as Minister of Finance to undertake to develop a program now to talk to the union leaders, to talk to the bargaining agents and to try to get them to realize that all of the good effects of the wage controls over the past two years could be wiped out if there are demands that in many cases may be too high because of the desire to catch up. My question is, will you undertake to do that, to talk to the other union agencies that are involved and see if some understanding cannot be arrived at at this time before the controls are finally removed.

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is, Yes. We do have, I think good communication between the unions and the Government. From time to time there are difficulties as everyone may understand and appreciate but all you have to do is look at what has been happening and as the press reports indicate there is a new kind of atmosphere in the whole area of collective bargaining. Many of the collective bargaining agreements that the Government is directly or indirectly involved in have been receiving a good deal of co-operation and settlements have been within the federal guidelines or within the range of the Saskatchewan or federal cost of living index in the last year. I think that there is recognition of the problem and the answer is yes, we will be talking formally and informally with various unions as well as employers in the public sector.

WATER SUPPLY IN REGINA AND MOOSE JAW

MR. A. N. McMILLAN (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure

Members are aware of a program or documentary program last night dealing with the potential hazard to Regina citizens as a result of the deteriorating water supply and I should like to direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Byers) and the Minister responsible for the Water Supply Board (Mr. Bowerman).

In view of the fact that the Provincial Government has had four year's notice about this growing problem with pollution in the drinking water supply to Regina and Moose Jaw, has the Government finally come to any decision about action that might be taken to correct this potentially hazardous situation?

HON. A. E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of any impending great problem faced by the citizens of Moose Jaw or Regina with respect to the pollution of their water supplies.

MR. McMILLAN: — Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this matter was brought to the attention of the Government four years ago, because 200,000 people in Saskatchewan are directly affected by the hazard, will you give this House the assurance that you will undertake to investigate the potential problem in the near future?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of what may have been brought to our attention four years ago with respect to pollution of the Regina and Moose Jaw water supplies. Accordingly, I cannot give the Hon. Member the assurance which he apparently requests.

MR. McMILLAN: — Would the Premier not admit that it would be strange that when a potential health hazard is brought to the attention of the Government which may affect 20 per cent of the population of Saskatchewan, that the Premier might find it a little strange that that problem never reached his office, or at least the departments that are necessary in the Government?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I do not find it at all strange that the problems which apparently reside primarily in the minds of Members opposite do not reach my desk.

The facts are that I am unaware and so far as I am aware my Ministers are unaware of any great problem with respect to a health hazard caused by the water supplies of Regina and Saskatoon. There are, of course, possible problems if there is a drought and possible problems if Buffalo Pound became totally polluted. The City of Regina and the City of Moose Jaw have a filtration plant at Buffalo Pound which they operate and which they presumably operate successfully and if they are having difficulties of a major kind, they have not reported them to us.

LAND SALES IN LAND BANK

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the

Minister of Agriculture.

It is a long stated policy of the Government that the Land Bank was established to assist young farmers to get started and that Land Bank lands, according to the Government, although not accepted by the Opposition, would be for sale after five years of purchase. Has the Land Bank Commission not, in fact, already been selling or disposing of lands prior to the end of the five-year term?

HON. E. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — No.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Minister of Agriculture I have before me a transcript of the public hearings on the Green Water Lake Provincial Park, established by or under the jurisdiction of the Department of Tourism and Natural Resources, the particular transcript was chaired by one, Harvey Dryden, Director of Extension Services. In that, pages 89 to 92, they discuss the policy of the Department of Tourism and its relationship with the Land Bank. In there, under questioning by Mr. Dryden, and I am sure the Hon. Member can get it as it is a public document, they admit they have, in fact, swapped lands with the Land Bank Commission, that the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources has communication with the Land Bank Commission and if lands are not suitable for farming in the Land Bank's opinion, that they swap the lands with the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources.

Is the Minister aware of the practice that is going on in the Land Bank Commission?

MR. KAEDING: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is a policy there which does permit us to swap lands between ourselves and Lands Branch, between inter-governmental departments. Sometimes it is desirable to have some of the lands which are purchased by the Land Bank which are not good agricultural land transferred to the Department of Tourism because that is where they can best be served. The same could be true in the Lands Branch. We may have some areas which are strictly grazing lands and they are best handled by the Lands Branch. And so we are able to make some transfers in that regard.

MR. LANE: — By way of supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are you not, in fact, breaching the rules of the Land Bank Act, first of all on your authority to dispose of the lands and I submit it isn't in the Act, but secondly, you have made a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan through your Land Bank that the farm lands would be bought, would be available for purchase by the farmers of Saskatchewan. And, in fact, by what you have just said your policy that the Land Bank lands are for sale, is in fact not true in many cases. Secondly, why is the Land Bank Commission buying lands that are not suitable for farming; surely it shouldn't be in that practice?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, it is often the situation that when you are purchasing a piece of farm land that you will have a piece of land that goes with the package, which is not good agricultural land in terms of actual cultivation and it makes real sense, in my opinion, that that kind of land should be transferred to a department which can best handle it, in this case either Tourism or the Lands Branch. I don't see why he would argue with that policy. It seems to me that that makes good sense.

FACILITIES FOR PURCHASING MOTOR LICENCES

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of motor licensing vehicles.

I should like to ask the Minister if he believes that a community of 3,000 people should have facilities for the people to buy motor licences without leaving the community?

HON. E. C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — Yes, but on occasion an issuer will resign and as soon as we can replace that person we will do so. I know the community that you are talking about and we have six applicants although we are told we don't pay adequate compensation. We have six applicants and we have to interview each one of them before we decide.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Minister does know the community. It is the town of Assiniboia and there is a great inconvenience for these 3,000 residents driving 12 miles to purchase their motor vehicle licences.

MR. WHELAN: — I should like to point out just for the Hon. Member's own information, that in the Province of Newfoundland there are only three locations and only 170 issuers in the whole province of Ontario . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order:

RENT CONTROL LEGISLATION

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance.

I was encouraged to hear your response to the Leader of the Opposition's question with regard to talking with people prior to the cessation of Wage and Price Controls. Is it the responsibility of your Department or your officials to look at the question of the rent control legislation at the same time that you examine the whole global question of wage and price controls?

HON. W. E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PENNER: — Would the Minister not accept the proposition that it is part of the overall global situation and that, in fact, if wage and price controls are coming off all other sectors of our economy that it is unfair to keep controls on those who rent property or apartments?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Liberals should get together on what their policy is. I have had the opportunity of attending a number of federal-provincial conferences. It is interesting that Liberal spokesmen in other provinces, as well as even in Ottawa, do not agree that there should be a common date for the expiration of the wage and price control area and rent controls. In fact, it has been suggested by officials and expressed, I believe, by the political representatives, that rent controls should carry on beyond the removal of wage and price controls per se. So the idea that everything must come to an end at one particular date is not one where there is common agreement

MR. PENNER: — Supplementary Mr. Speaker, is the Minister not aware of the fact that when the program was announced initially it was a three-pronged attack, the first being wage and price controls federally, the second being wage and price controls provincial, and the third being rent control, and that, in fact, it is part of an overall, and was intended part of an overall package?

MR. SMISHEK: — The answer is Yes, I am aware.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Supplementary Mr. Speaker. Do you have any plans for the withdrawal of rent control or any specific proposals as how to phase out rent controls in the Province of Saskatchewan.

MR. SMISHEK: — The Government is certainly going to be observing the problem, but there is no particular or immediate plan.

FOSTER CHILDREN AND ADOPTION PROCEDURE

MR. E. F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, over a year ago I spoke in the House about the absence of an appeal procedure from Social Services decisions in foster child and adoption matters and Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister no could advise the House that there is an appeal procedure and by way of background briefly Mr. Speaker, all of this flowed from the Doucette case, when all of Saskatchewan was surprised to find that there was no appeal procedure. I wonder if the Minister would comment on the way the appeal procedure will now operate. I have before me Mr. Speaker, a letter to one of the people who is entitled to an

appeal. It is very brief and says:

I wish to advise you that you have the right to appeal our decision to remove Denise from your home. I have informed you that Denise was placed for adoption so she cannot be returned to you.

And then goes on to say how they can carry on with that appeal, of course, which won't have any effect because they can't get the child back anyway. This reminded me, Mr. Speaker, of the movie Catch 22, and I wonder if the Minister would comment on it.

HON. H. H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, I can't comment on that particular case; I haven't got the details with me. If the Member would make those available to me I will get the answers to him as quickly as I can.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary Mr. Speaker, would the Minister not agree that, in general, the way the procedure is set out it may be that an appeal could result in someone clearing his or her name, so called, if a child has been taken that is a bit of a besmirching of their name, they can clear their name but the way the procedure is planned it won't be possible for them to get any real remedy, namely, they won't be able to get the child back in an adoption case or get the children back if it is a foster parent situation.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I can't specifically comment on that but I don't think that that is the case. I think that they could if it could be proven in the appeal that the Department has made an error, but certainly that would be corrected under the appeal. But as I said I want to have a look at the details of that particular situation and then I will make further information available to the Member.

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Surely, Mr. Speaker, you are not trying to tell us that an appeal procedure is established, but the client is only informed of the appeal procedure after the child has already been adopted for then the appeal is a worthless thing. Would the Minister comment on whether or not an appeal procedure has been established to protect a foster parent so that a foster parent, at the time of the removal of the child is informed as to whether there is an appeal procedure or not and second, that no permanent plan is established for that child until that appeal decision is completed in order to give the real protection to that foster parent.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, as the Member well knows, every individual who has a child away from a particular family, they are informed of their rights and of the appeal procedure. I cannot

comment again on that particular case that the Member from Wascana has brought to my attention, but I want to observe the details first, because very often what appears to be the case isn't the case, and I think most of you are aware of that.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Supplementary Mr. Speaker. The Minister I believe was having a committee study on adoption policy for the province, in particular, who would have first priority in adopting either the childless parents or whatever. Are you able to report on that committee now to the Assembly as to the policy or proposals that that committee suggests.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order: I think it is a question under the guise of a supplementary but in fact is a new question because the original question dealt with the appeal procedure, and that has nothing to do with it.

I will take the Member for Rosetown-Elrose. I will give the Member one more supplementary.

MR. MERCHANT: — I wonder if the Minister would comment on the fact that apparently the appeal procedure has been set up under Judge Raynell Andreychuk. All of the procedures are laid down. Yet for some curious reason the Government chose not to announce that in the House, not to make that public in a way that it was obvious to the Opposition and other people throughout the province.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, this is simply preposterous because that decision was made last summer and a news release was issued. That news release went out to all the media in the province and it is not my fault if the media did not make it known to you and you will have your opportunity, I would assume, in Estimates, to ask me. That would be the first chance I will have since this House has opened.

LACK OF WATER RUN-OFF

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). I am sure that he along with all who are in this Assembly, and indeed most of the people of this province, realizes the potential hazard that could be faced by thousands of farmers and ranchers in Saskatchewan due to the fact it looks as each day passes that there will be no run-off for the dams and the dug-outs. I am wondering, Mr. Minister, if you have any plans as to any survey that is presently being done to ascertain the seriousness of this problem, should there be no run-off which it appears that there won't be?

HON. E. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I know that the people in my department who are charged with that duty have been looking at the problem quite extensively and that certainly they will be looking at what we

can do to help anybody that needs some assistance in pumping water from dugouts and so on. I am sure that any area needs assistance should be asking, because we can't possibly discover the areas that need assistance. We need somebody to come and tell us where they are.

MR. BAILEY: — Supplementary question Mr. Speaker. I take it from the Minister's response that you have not made a survey then of the rural municipalities throughout Saskatchewan to try to zero in on these potential areas of deep concern. My question at this time is, do you have any specific plans or are they just in the making to deal with the situation?

MR. KAEDING: — No, I wouldn't say that we have any specific plans, but I think it is wrong to say that we haven't made a survey. Our regional offices are all being asked to examine the situation very carefully and to alert us if there is a problem in any area.

MR. BAILEY: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I would assume that in many cases, of course, Mr. Minister you will be involved with the PFRA. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could give some assurance within the next few days to this Assembly so as to eliminate some of the concerns, that something will be done. Let it be made known through the media as to the way in which someone can apply early enough to prevent a disaster in the industry?

MR. KAEDING: — Well, certainly I think that I could possibly undertake to do that, but I think again that it is a very general problem and I don't know how you would, for instance, guarantee any area that we could provide water for them in specific form. If it is a wide-spread situation I don't know how you would get water, for instance, into a whole municipality that would be short. It would be a very difficult procedure. We may be facing some situations 'like that, where we will have to remove the livestock.

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister of Agriculture not aware and the Member for Rosetown not aware that the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture announced its policy today on CKCK Farm News Broadcast with regard to exactly what they are going to do in terms of farmers and ranchers around the province that may have a shortage of water for this spring and summer.

DEBATE ON CATTLE MARKETING BOARD

MR. W. C. THATCHER (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, I would address a question to the Attorney General. The Attorney General may or may not be aware of the fact that the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Whelan, at the recent SARM convention challenged any and all comers to a debate on beef cattle marketing boards. The Attorney General may or may not be aware that this challenge was accepted by myself. The Minister of Agriculture has declined to answer and in view of the fact that the Minister of Agriculture may be very hesitant about facing Saskatchewan cattlemen and may be concerned about the fair and correct treatment he would receive, is the Attorney General available to handle the format and be the chairman of

such an undertaking.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, they tell me that in Ottawa there is a practice from time to time to give notice to the Ministers of any tough questions that they might ask. I wish that he would have given me notice of that. I am making a very quick decision and a quick answer to say, regretfully, that I don't think I could accept the position as chairman. I don't think it would be a good idea to get myself involved in a fight between Conservatives and Liberals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — CULTURE AND YOUTH- VOTE 7 (cont'd)

Revert to Item 9.

HON. E. L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Culture and Youth): — Mr. Chairman, the reason we stood Item 9, was because I had agreed to bring to the Members an answer to a question of which I was not sure, and I wanted to check. The question, I believe, was whether I had received from the Board of Directors of the Centre of the Arts, communication about their decision on the status of the executive director. I knew that I had received some communication, but I did not know when or of what form so I went back and we did do some checking. I received a letter on May 20th, from the chairman of the Board and on behalf of the Board of Directors, informing me that the Board of Directors had confirmed the decision of the executive committee expressing that they had lost faith in the executive director and that they were wanting to see a change. After that I received a letter of resignation from the executive director and I think it is common knowledge as to what transpired after that.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Is that the only communication you had with the Board of the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts on the whole matter of the dispute and the forced resignation of Mr. Wood?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — That was the official communication, Mr. Chairman. Of course, as the Minister in charge, I get the Board Minutes what the Board has passed in resolutions and so on.

MR. LANE: — Did you attend any Board meetings?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No.

MR. LANE: — You perused the minutes, you just indicated that you perused the minutes. The press statements, I am being cautious here because I don't — you know if the Minister is prepared to tell me that the information should not for the effect it may have on an individual, then I am prepared to ride with that.

There seems to be a pretty basic dispute because, Mr. Wood indicated publicly he was being criticized for not following Board policy and guidelines. He said publicly that he would follow the Board policy and guidelines if he knew what they were. He said that the Board policy and guidelines have been very big. Now you have admitted that you read the minutes of the meeting during the dispute and you, by implication, said you certainly had unofficial communications, and I would expect you would have; can you indicate what Board policy Mr. Wood allegedly was not following and what guidelines allegedly he was not following?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, as I said, I know what the Board does because I do get regularly the Minutes of the Board meetings. I have full confidence in the Board as it has been ever since I have been the Minister in charge in 1972. I think the boards which have changed every year to some extent have done a good job. As to whether there was a precise, single item that was of concern to the Board, I can't tell the Member. I think, in a general way of speaking, that there was a general opinion that the Board had. I am not going to go into any specifics for the very same reason that the Member mentioned. I don't want to be implicating either Mr. Wood or the Board in this matter. The dispute was there; there was disagreement. Mr. Wood resigned. I think the matter to all intents and purposes because of that has now been resolved is closed.

MR. LANE: — Except the one thing that isn't closed is the implication and the feeling of many people that the firing was political and not based on competence. There has been an impression left, that you as the Minister, in fact, disagreed with the firing of Mr. Wood, and, in fact, on several occasions had defended Mr. Wood in Board deliberations. That is the public impression. If the Minister is to stand by his statement that the matter is closed, then as far as the public is concerned, it has some very nebulous statements from the Board; it doesn't have any delineation of the Board's position other than vague charges. I say that that is very, very unsatisfactory, to say the least. Perhaps the Minister should investigate the individuals on the Board who are responsible for that decision. If it was a matter of strict personality clash, which you seem to be falling back on, then obviously there is something wrong somewhere. It may well be the appointments to the Board, in which case I think you should be more cautious. We haven't got an answer. The impression has been left as I said. I think that impression is one that the Minister has had an opportunity to put to rest, the Board — has had an opportunity to put to rest and they have failed to do so.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I just don't want to pursue this but I think I have to correct some of the things the Member has said. He is the only one, I think, who seems to have that impression, that it was a political situation. Had it been a political situation it would have occurred five years ago; it did not. I think the events speak for themselves. You keep saying it was a firing. Obviously there was a disagreement. Mr. Wood took it upon himself because of this disagreement, because of the understanding on his part and on the part of the Board clearly knowing that the two were not working together, to resign. I want to reiterate what I said earlier. I have full confidence in the Board. I had full confidence in the Board

and if I appoint a board or the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council appoints the board, I think I owe it to the board to have that confidence their decisions and in their recommendations.

MR. LANE: — What severance compensation was given to Mr. Wood.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Three months.

MR. LANE: — Does that enter into this particular Budget item?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No, it was in last year's Budget.

Item 9 agreed.

ITEM 13

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the Minister what process he is going to use in establishing the priorities for grants under the Recreational and Cultural grant, the \$30 grant to communities. I presume you are already getting applications flooding into your office. I think the deadline if I remember correctly, is for April 1st, or something like this. How are you going to sort these out? Are all applicants that are approved locally going to be accepted by your department; are you going to weed any of them out? What procedures are you going to use?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — It is on a first come, first served basis. Communities that have made applications and have met the requirements and have indicated that their planning was complete, have been approved already as a matter of fact. There have been no delays in any way. That is the procedure that we have been using and that is the procedure we intend to continue to use.

MR. STODALKA: — Did I understand the Minister to say that some communities have already been notified that their projects are acceptable and they can start the work

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes, a small number of communities have already been approved. Everything is complete.

MR. STODALKA: — Will the necessary funds be available so that each community during the coming year that applies with an approved project, is going to be able to get it this year? I don't know if you got my question. The question was, you may have more applications than expect. Is every community going to be able to start this year, or are you going to have sort of a cut-off date somewhere along the line?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I don't know at this point in time whether there will be more applications than there are allocations. As you can see, here is \$4 million. Early indications are that it will probably

be adequate. But if there are some later that we can't provide under this allocation of money then we will have to provide for it in the next year's allocation of money.

MR. STODALKA: — In other words you are saying that there may be some people who are going to have their project postponed until next year.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I don't know that. Certainly if all the communities or if half the communities in Saskatchewan applied for their complete allotment in this year we would not be able to accommodate them. I don't think that in the practical sense that will happen.

MR. STODALKA: — The communities that have already been approved and the amount of their projects?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Would you prefer that I get them photo copied and send them over to you. I can read them but it will be time consuming .

MR. LANE: — I've got a series of questions.

MR. STODALKA: — Could the Minister give the approved projects over to me as well.

MR. LANE: — Could we stand that particular item until we get the copies.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I can send them to you right now. We'll get another copy xeroxed. Let's stand it.

Item 13 agreed.

ITEM 14

MR. A. N. McMILLAN (Kindersley): — I should like to ask are museum grants allocated. I understand it's a per capita grant. What do they take into consideration when they put the grant out? I am aware there may be a problem with the eligibility of those museums applying. I would like to know on what basis those grants are sent out?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am assuming that the Member is asking about the granting program provided for the small museums. It is in the regulations and I will take them from the regulations and give you the information. We may make a museum and gallery operating grant to a museum or a gallery in the amount of 60 per cent of the approved operating costs for the previous year to a maximum grant which does not exceed 60 cents for each of the first 200 persons served in the community, 30 cents for each of the next 800 persons served in the municipality,

and 15 cents for each of the next 3,000 persons served, not to exceed \$1,000. This is for the operation. If a museum needs to take on a particular special activity such as doing an inventory, this sort of thing, then there is another amount of up to \$1,000 available.

MR. McMILLAN: — The wording of those regulations restricts that grant on a per capita basis to only those people who are located in the municipality in which that museum is located.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes.

MR. McMILLAN: — Do you feel that that is an equitable situation in view of the fact that, and this is certainly the case in the Kindersley constituency, the museum is located in the town of Kindersley, the grant is based on the people that live in the community of Kindersley. Naturally support goes to that museum from local areas surrounding the town of Kindersley and certainly patrons of that museum come extensively from the rural municipality surrounding that constituency. I am of the opinion that it might have been an oversight in the Act. Rather, those grants should be paid on the basis of those people in the community that that museum serves rather than the community in which that museum is located. We have the peculiar problem in Kindersley, of course, that our census was dropped from 3,431 to 3,120 last year, yet 140 rural municipal families live in the town of Kindersley in the winter time and are not included in the June census and there is that particular problem. Is the Minister aware that those grants are based only on the population of the community in which the community is located?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Well, first of all I certainly want to agree with the Member that the last federal census certainly had some problems with it. I had a few of them in my constituency. But in answer to the question, let me clarify. Where there is more than one municipality that co-sponsors a museum, be it maybe the town of Kindersley and the rural municipality around the town of Kindersley, if they both co-sponsor the local museum then the regulations will apply to them as one unit. So I don't think that there should be a real problem.

MR. McMILLAN: — Well, if that is the case then I suspect that the Kindersley small museum grant will have to be re-adjusted because it was apparently based only on the population of the community itself.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Okay. I don't know what the form of the application was. If the application did not indicate that it was co-sponsored then we would certainly be most happy to review the application because I think the Member might have a good point. I have already indicated that the policy and regulations certainly provide for the kind of thing that the Member is requesting.

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — I should like to direct a question to the Minister and a very brief one on this. I understand that the Department of Tourism, I believe, transferred the grant program for historical sites to the Department of Culture and Youth and that this particular program now is stagnant and in abeyance until the Department of Culture and Youth, for some strange reason, makes a determination as to how they are going to handle it and what they are going to do with it. I want to ask the Minister, is it the intention of the Minister of Culture and Youth to continue the historical sites grants? Are they intending to change the criteria? When the heck are they going to put it back into operation?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — There is no great problem. It is true that there is some delay. We are reviewing, as I think Government must from time to time, review programs and their regulations. Right after the 1st of April when the transfer is made, it is not officially made yet, when a transfer is made, the Member can be assured we will be acting very quickly on any outstanding applications that are around within the Department.

MR. McMILLAN: — I should like to ask the Minister if Section 14 Heritage and Museums, includes the grants that are available for the publication of local history publications that are done in Saskatchewan?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — That is under Item 3.

MR. McMILLAN: — Would the Minister be good enough to answer one question I have on that. I didn't want to bother him on Item 3 on that because I thought .. I would like to know what the specific purpose of that grant is because there is considerable frustration in rural Saskatchewan about applying for the grant and being eligible. We have heard it as Catch 22 earlier today. This, in fact, is sort of a similar situation.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Okay the Member raises a good point. I acknowledge that the program has not been as successful as it was originally intended to be. The criteria of the program and its intention was to assist in the publishing of local historical documents or local history publications that met a certain standard. That obviously created a sort of rigid standard. In attempting to adhere to it few applicants have qualified for that standard. We are presently reviewing that program. We are planning on establishing a program of workshops with communities to assist them to a greater extent so that they can better utilize the program that exists or as the program may be after it is changed, to better suit the needs of the community.

MR. McMILLAN: — Well, if I could take the liberty of pointing out to the Minister, the problem with their last program and this one, is that I don't think workshops will correct it. The grant is named a grant for assistance for the publishing of local histories which leads everyone in Saskatchewan, I assume, who is interested in doing a local history, to believe they can't have funds made available, if they get together co-operatively or individually to do a local historical publication for their community. Many, many communities have done this. Some very talented people in Saskatchewan, lay people as far as the writing profession goes, have gotten together and spent tremendous amounts of their time assembling very colourful and very interesting local histories. Those items and stories are of interest to local people. That is what a local history publication is. Yet when they apply to the Provincial Government they are told that the reason they don't qualify for the grant is not because their material is improperly put together, but rather that because it is a local history they don't qualify. And that is in effect what your people have been telling them. They say we would like to give you aid in publishing this but it is not of interest to the rest of Saskatchewan. We put these publications on stream with the Provincial Library and circulate them through high schools in Saskatchewan and if we don't think it is of interest to the rest of the people in Saskatchewan, we are not liable to give you a grant. And that has happened in many, many cases. On the one hand you are encouraging them to get together and spend tremendous amounts of their time to do a local history, which is self explanatory, and on the next you are sitting them down when it is completed and have sent the work in and said, I am sorry but you can't have the grant

because this is a local history.

Something has to be changed there; either you make funds available for people to publish local histories or you make funds available for people to publish historical documents that will be of interest to all of Saskatchewan. The workshop won't change that. A workshop may increase the expertise of those people putting that material together. You may, in fact, increase the quality of local history publications but until you provide funds for the publication of local histories, that workshop program will be a failure. If you are interested only in providing assistance to people who are interested in publishing histories of the Province of Saskatchewan and items that are of interest to the entire province then I suggest you change the nature of your program.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Well, the Member, as only anyone in true Liberal fashion can do, misunderstands to some extent what the purpose of the program was. I have already indicated in my previous answer that the program was under review. Let me clarify though. The program was established for the publication of the kinds of works that would be of general interest and value throughout the province. I am not suggesting that all local histories are not of interest and value. I think they are. There is not a great deal of cost involved in putting together a local history in most cases, maybe not in all cases, but the program as it was established and as it is clearly outlined in the information that is provided, was not meant to cover all the local history projects that are started. It was for those reasons that a selection committee has agreed to have published a form that could be distributed on a provincial basis.

Now, I said earlier also, that the response to the program which was established because of a sincere response to certain requests over the years, has not been that great because of the nature of it, which we both have outlined. It is under review and we are looking at making some changes that will help to improve it and we will.

MR. McMILLAN: — I hope you are aware that your program as it stands now is really only of benefit to those people in Saskatchewan who could be considered professional writers. Those people who are capable of writing historical documents that will be along the lines I suspect of 'Ten Lost Years' or that work done by Barry Broadfoot and even that under the terms of reference that your department has given to people who have applied for the grant, even Barry Broadfoot's work wouldn't qualify for your publication grant. So I suggest that if you want your emphasis to be directed towards those people in Saskatchewan with professional expertise, to write professional documents for the Provincial Library system or whatever, then fine, operate your program like that. But if, in fact, your aim is to provide assistance to people and communities that want to do local histories, then please change the nature of your program.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The Arts Board provides the funding for professional writers and professional arts; the program does not provide such funding. If you will look at the list of some of the projects that have been approved you will find that the people who have been involved with them are far from what I guess you could define as being professional. True, I have already said we will have to change the program as we do with a lot of the programs from time to time to better accommodate the wishes of local communities and we are in the process of making that review.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I should like to direct a question to the Minister

under this particular item, item 14. Appearing on the Order Paper tomorrow will be a resolution which I hope will gain the support of the people on both sides of this House. Mr. Minister, as you know and certainly I would assume that many Government departments are aware that really within a few months, when you look to the year 1980, Saskatchewan as a province will be celebrating its 75th birthday and, no doubt, at that particular time there will be a lot of activity related to the Department of Culture and Youth. I would hope Mr. Minister, that while you are the Government until 1979, that you will be, in fact, laying some ground work, making some plans for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, in some areas of Saskatchewan, we are but three generations away from the original homestead, the original opening of our country and at that particular time we set up the local rural school, rural churches were built, many community halls and similar buildings marked the beginnings of the settlement of our province. And there are a number of people in the province at the present time who would, in some way, like to preserve the local heritage in particular of rural Saskatchewan, the rural school, the rural church and so on and I would hope that the Minister's department would give us some consideration in advance of me speaking in the House on the resolution of providing such groups as women institute groups, 4H Clubs and so on across the province, an opportunity at the local level to go out and mark the original site of the school or the church and to make available, at cost, to these organizations, a plaque or a cairn whereby the very spot in which their grandfather, or in some cases their grandmother, attended church services or went to school.

Now I know, Mr. Minister, that you already have a program to assist them. I would think, Mr. Minister, you would agree that by the year 1980 the amount of activity related to the preserving of our heritage will increase. At least I am sure that everybody in this Assembly hopes so. So I am putting in the pitch, you might say, in advance, that we can get something going even in advance of our 75th birthday so that the Department of Culture and Youth possibly co-operating with the Department of Industry and Commerce can put people at work in Saskatchewan making a plaque or a cairn, whatever it may be so that it can be readily distributed across the Province of Saskatchewan. If ten per cent of the original school districts, or the original school sites were marked in the Province of Saskatchewan, your department along with the Department of Industry and Commerce would, in fact, receive thousands, you might say, of requests and certainly these requests will be forthcoming by the year 1980 and I would very much appreciate a comment from the Minister at this particular time on the plans of the department and what plans are being made to assist the citizens of local organizations across Saskatchewan to help celebrate our 75th birthday.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Member for making his speech now and, therefore, he won't have to take much time on the resolution.

We are formulating plans which are way ahead of you. We are starting in July. We have money allocated in the department Budget to initiate planning for the 1980 celebration. We will be bringing in a very small number of two or three staff members. We will be involving communities throughout Saskatchewan. We will be looking at the establishment of a fairly large citizen's advisory committee as has been the case in other provincial celebrations in the past. We are looking at the providing of identification markers for communities. I can assure the Member that it is all in hand. Over the years we have had programs which you have alluded to which in fact have provided provincial markers on sites which are of major provincial significance and there are in Saskatchewan 174 of such sites now in existence. We have three to four that seem to be added on the average every year. We have the Historical Marker Assistance Program

through which we provide plaques to communities and organizations at no cost and there are some 150 of those kinds of plaques which communities have established, some of which are churches and I, in fact, used to have one in my constituency under the old boundaries where a church has burned down. I had a particular interest in it and helped the community organize to be able to take advantage of the program.

We have also the Heritage Site Assistance Program which was initiated last year or a year ago which is continuing and is providing funds to local organizations and local communities to preserve historic buildings and historic sites in communities. And so I think the best I can answer the Member is what you have in mind we have had in mind for about a year and we have been doing some planning and as of about July we will be in good shape to make sure that 1980 is remembered afterwards as a very memorable year for the Province of Saskatchewan.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the Minister make those announcements because I think he should be aware that while you have a number of markers and signs and what have you along the highway, the historical points coming up, I think we have to look more to the grass roots, more, Mr. Minister, in that in some communities, in many communities I should say there is a growing consciousness now that we are in this province at least letting our heritage slip by if we don't get a hold of things in the next few years. I am pleased with the Minister's announcement. Perhaps what the department has now made available has not been made known to more people in the province. I wish that within the next few months you would in fact, through the media, make it known to the various organizations throughout the province of the availability of the plaque, the availability of the support from your particular department so that they, too, can begin planning for the year 1980 and they too can make it a very memorable year in Saskatchewan. I think the Minister would have to agree that a number of people in the province are not really aware of what is available in the way of the preservation of sites and markers and heritage and so on. I am quite sure if they were aware your department would have a lot more inquiries and a lot more requests than it presently has.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I want to assure the Member that it has been the philosophy and the approach of not only my political party but the approach of this Government since 1971, to use the grass roots approach. The funding we provide is funding on the basis of making it possible and facilitating people to be able to do something in their community for themselves. That has been sort of the whole concept behind which our programming and especially programming in the Department of Culture and Youth has been developed upon.

As for sending out the information, every Secretary-Treasurer of every municipality in the past has received an explanation of the program so certainly the information is available. We are printing brochures this year and they will once again be distributed widely because I agree that sometimes the programs that we have in Government are not understood and sometimes the programs that we do have in Government are misinterpreted by other people for whatever reasons they may want to be misinterpreting them for. But I can assure the Member we will do all we can to better inform the public about this program and other programs in the department.

I want to take advantage at this time also to point out another initiative that we have taken as a government. I agree with the Member that the heritage of Saskatchewan is a very interesting one and a very rich one and no one will disagree. One of the parts of our heritage that is particularly valuable is our multi-cultural heritage. It is the heritage

of the people who have settled this province from every place in the world and who have made a contribution, and who have maintained, to some extent and some to a large extent, their cultural heritage as it was brought over by their ancestors. We have endeavoured through our funding and our programming to encourage the development of that heritage. And I think we must.

Further I think if the Federal Government would use a similar kind of approach of providing an opportunity for people to develop their cultural heritage in such a way that they can share it with others around them, we would have less of the misunderstanding probably in Canada that we have today when we hear people talking about the country falling apart and so on. I think because in Saskatchewan we have this heritage of people from everywhere in the world who have seen each other and have heard different languages spoken on their street corners, we have an understanding here that I think can be used as a model for the rest of this country and probably as a model maybe, for other parts of the world.

MR. WIPF: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to zero in on one project, Mr. Minister, and that is the River Heritage Project in Duck Lake which comes under this item of which, I'm sure, you are very aware. The project that was started about three years ago with a group of citizens from the Duck Lake area was to develop, as you've been talking about, the heritage in that area.

Firstly, I'd like to know how much money have you set aside this year for that particular project.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — A meeting I know has taken place between officials in my department with my Deputy. A conversation has taken place between my Deputy and some of the local people involved with the project out there. We certainly consider it a high priority. We are in the process of setting up negotiations, along with the local people, with Parks Canada, which obviously has an interest and a concern. So what is happening in the immediate future is the discussions between local people, the establishment of a local committee, advisory in nature, and with the federal authorities and with the provincial authorities will determine what funding is available from all sources and where, in fact, the project ought to be going. Rather than using an ad hoc approach we have funding in the Department now to do a recreation resources survey and it's provided in the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources' budget. I am told the survey will be undertaken. Until these negotiations are completed which I hope will be done fairly quickly, I cannot tell you what amount of money will be allocated.

MR. WIPF: — Could you tell me when you expect this meeting to come? Also you mention the Federal Government, the local people and the provincial people. In what ratio will these people be appointed?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am told that the federal meeting is being arranged for early in April. The formation of the committee and the numbers of people on the committee will be determined in this meeting with the federal people. We don't know what their position is on it at this particular time, and I can't answer that until we do and until we have had an opportunity to negotiate it.

MR. WIPF: — Okay Mr. Chairman. In talking to these people I want to commend you on the project and your input into it as a worthwhile project. What will be the criteria or do you know this yet? What will be the criteria for picking your local people?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I was asking somebody a question and I missed your question.

MR. WIPF: — I said; what would be your criteria for picking your local people?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — We are right now looking at representatives from the participating municipalities, that's both town and rural, local Indian bands.

MR. WIPF: — Okay. Can you guarantee or say that the local people will have some meaningful input? As you get information from your hearings or your meetings, will the local people be supplied with the information that you get. What has happened in the past is that the Federal Government funded a project and received the first report. They feel that they were never given the initial or the first draft of the findings and would like to know if, as you go through this you will keep them informed on the findings, before the first draft is re-written.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — That's the way we have always operated. The local people now have all the past reports. Yes, I'm correct on that. We have always as a government used the approach of involving the local people, where a local project is involved and we will continue to do that. I can certainly assure the Member of that.

MR. WIPF: — Okay. The other thing — there will be two projects out there — probably the museum and this River Heritage Project on which they've used most of the money from the museum to get their studies done. It has cost a fair amount. The other thing I'd like, could you supply me with a list of the projects that have been submitted to you from the Prince Albert or Duck Lake area?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I don't know what you mean by the list of projects.

MR. WIPF: — If there have been applications, if you've received applications from the Prince Albert or the Duck Lake area for projects, could you supply me with a list of those.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Are you asking for a list of projects that have been funded in your constituency or are you asking for the applications that the local people have made? If you are asking for the list of projects that have been funded, I can certainly arrange it, probably not right away, but I can give it to you after my staff has prepared the list. I can give you that. But if you're asking for applications that the local community has provided I've got some problems, because I think it's something that is the property of the local community and I would have to, I'm sure go and see than. They

MR. WIPF: — Okay, Thank you.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a couple of comments and ask the Minister on something. This year in Estevan, people have been working for a number of years on a museum which is a scaled-down version of what they had originally planned and it's going to be used as a Centre of the Arts as well. There is a history of coal mining in the Estevan area and there is a

certain history of rum running. I'm not asking you to go back and take down names of the fellows that were doing the rum running and put them on rocks, but I am wondering if your department is looking to and going further, and I'm not talking about a year of restraint, in preserving some of the coal mining features or some of the coal mining history of the past. I'm talking about a miniature mine and things like this that were planned until we were cut back this year on our grants. I believe that with Highway 39 being the main artery from the United States right through to Alaska, that certainly this area can attract a lot of tourists, but we do have to have it spelled out loud and clear just what the history of the Estevan area is. I wonder if there is anything in the future for the Roche Percee-Estevan area as far as preserving this heritage?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Okay, I don't know what you mean by the cut back in grants. I don't think we have cut back in any grants because we have never made a commitment to any grants to the project, although I am familiar with the project in that I have had some discussions over the last two years with representatives from Estevan. There was a proposal I can recall, that was made by the Estevan committee to the Western Development Museum and I know the Western Development Museum people considered the proposal. They were at that time, very much involved with a fairly extensive project at Moose Jaw, with the transportation museum and so it is my understanding that the Western Development Museum did not agree to work on this one at that time.

If you are asking whether we as a department, have a commitment at this time to the project in terms of dollars, No we have not. There is nothing in our Items to provide funding for that project at this particular time.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, then can I ask the Minister if, and I'm not trying to get commitments of funds and I realize that originally the Western Development Museum was involved and this would have made a larger project, if your department, before it's too late and some of these historic sites are fading away each year, I wonder if your department in the future could consider something like this in protecting this area and the history of this area? This has nothing to do with the rum runners.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I just ask for a little further information. There is now, I am told, a quarter section of land that is owned by the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. It was purchased some years ago with the intention of providing some protection in the same way that you are talking about it. There has been some dialogue with some local community people on developing long range planning and it is certainly the intention to do some work in this field at some future time. In the meantime efforts are being made to make certain that destruction does not take place to some of that very important history that you talk about.

Item 14 agreed to.

Item 15 agreed to.

Item 16 agreed to.

Item 12 agreed to.

The Committee reported progress.

PROVINCIAL LIBRARY — VOTE 29

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Would you introduce your staff please.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Let me introduce Mr. Don Meadows, who is the Provincial Librarian and Mr. Marcel de Laforest, who is a Director of Administration, seated directly behind me.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We are on page 77, Provincial Library.

ITEM 1

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by commending Mr. Meadows and his staff for the very fine library system that I feel is operating within the province. I realize there are some weaknesses at times, when some of the local governments decide not to participate within the regional libraries in their area, and thus, deprive some of the residents within their area of some of the services that are available.

But I would like to direct a couple of questions to the Minister about the financing of the provincial library system, particularly as it relates to some of the grants that are available to the regional libraries. I notice that last year, looking at the Estimates for the previous year, your grants to the libraries were increased by approximately 25 per cent. This year, an analysis of your library grants are just 10 per cent. You are only increasing your contribution, if you relate it to last year, to 40 per cent of what it was last year. My question is to the minister. Does he feel that this 10 per cent increase is going to take care of the additional costs that these regional libraries are going to be having in the coming year?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes, I think it will, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for commending the provincial library for the excellent work that it does. I agree that it does. I think to get an accurate assessment of the funding that's available and the significance of it, you have to take a look at what has happened in the provincial library and libraries throughout the province during the past four, five, six years. You will find that the funding has increased in that period of time by some 276 per cent. These were very substantial increases in funding. Earlier in this session, I gave figures to show the funding, or the operating grant that was provided to the Wheatland Regional Library when we were involved on another matter and I think that that pretty well indicates the kind of commitment that we have had the provincial libraries. The answer to your question is, yes. I think that the level of our provincial library service will continue to be a very high calibre of service and will continue to keep our provincial library, the model for the rest of Canada like it has been in the last several years.

MR. STODALKA: — Could I re-phrase that question? Has the Minister

had any comments or any correspondence with any of the existing regional libraries in which there have been complaints about the lack of funds and financial problems that they may be having in the coming year?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No, I have not received this year, any communication expressing that kind of concern, and I don't think Mr. Meadows received any. That's not saying that we may not receive some such communication; we have not up to the present time and I am glad the member asks that, because I think it's important that I clarify something that arose in the House earlier in this Session. The Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) in another debate said that he had received a letter from the Parkland Library, and he said that in that letter it was stated that the Parkland Regional Library had received grants, received grants in 1975 of \$69,512, 1976-\$40,768, 1977-\$30,000, 1978 projected-\$20,000. Now, I hope that he can correct what he was saying; because I am sure he didn't mean to say that. If he did, then I would not want to suggest what he might have been trying to do, because if you look at the correct statistics for the Parkland Regional Library, Mr. Chairman, and I'd like to see that copy of that letter, you will find that in 1973-74, the grant was \$159,393 — the operating grant. The grant in 1974-75 was \$243,468. In 1975-76 it was \$302,212. In 1976-77 it was \$390,690, and it is estimated that this year in 1977-78 it will be \$429,760; which I think is a fairly substantial operating grant which has helped communities to provide a very important service. I think libraries are a very important part of educational and recreational functions of any community and to the extent that we are able as a province, I think that we should continue to make it a very high priority, in the same way as we make education or any other social services of that kind a priority.

MR. STODALKA: — I agree with the Minister and his comments about libraries, but you used a phrase in your initial answer that said you didn't have any complaints about funding this year. What about last year then?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I don't think I can recall having any last year, to speak of.

MR. STODALKA: — Would the Minister then assure us that this increase in grants of 10 per cent will sort of maintain the relative balance that has existed over the last few years, of local contributions for the support of the library, as compared with the provincial support for that, particularly of the library system?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No, the balance of anything will change so that the proportion of provincial funding in this year of the total operating costs will be higher than it was last year.

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon — Eastview): — Mr. Chairman, a couple of further questions on that.

The Minister in his response, indicated that circulation, or pardon me, that funding over the last few years was up 276 per cent. I wonder if he could give us an indication of what's happened to circulation during that same period of time.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I can't give you the figure on total circulation, but I can give you the well, it's in the annual report, but the jump in circulation in 1976-77 over 1975-76 was about 16 per cent, and that's sort of indicative of the kind of increases that there have been over the past several years.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, many of the books that are going to rural Saskatchewan, are going via truck and trailer. Would the Minister care to comment about plans that the department may have to increase the number of units that are circulating to smaller communities? The problem, as I understand it, is that the units, the trailers that are now going from town to town have reached the point where many people who are utilizing them are finding or feeling that they are too small. Has your Department grappled with that question, and what kinds of alternatives do you see, or do you see any?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am informed that besides the existing book-mobiles there are now, the south-east region is just in the process of adding or just has added another book-mobile. The Wheatland region is in the process of adding another book-mobile. Those are the two that we know are going to be our new additions to the existing set-up as it is. The capital grants program that we provide and have provided for the last four years, through the provincial library, can be allocated to this kind of a development, and we anticipate that there will probably be more. As to your question about the size of the book-mobile, and this sort of thing, I don't have an answer. I think that that's basically something that the region will have to determine and does determine on its own account. We don't. We provide the funding; the municipalities within a region nominate their representatives to the regional board; they allocate their local funding to the regional board along with the provincial funding, and then they basically make the decisions on how that region will provide its service.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask a number of questions of the Minister for information purposes only. I am not in any way critical of the provincial library system. I would like to draw to his attention an incident which happened to me and it has not happened once but I think it has happened twice over the last four or five years, where a very irate parent phoned me and said that he wanted to see me immediately, and there's a real problem with a library book. Immediately I thought that it was a book out of the school library where the child was attending.

We have been talking in this house over the past few days about blue movies and the number of restricted movies coming into the province, and so on. It's my understanding, Mr. Minister, that in dealing with these two problems in particular, that a student of almost any age can go to a regional library and take whatever book he wants off the shelf, and — this happens to be in the Wheatland Regional Library area — and he can take this copy, sign it out, take it home and indeed take it to school.

It meets with a fair amount of animosity from the school, in particular, if it is moved around from student to student. I was wondering, is there any policy or any regulation in regards to the age at which certain students can go in and obtain a book from the library shelf?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I noted the member says he is not doing it in a political or critical sense, and I hope that that's the case because were he doing it any other way, what he would in fact be doing is condemning the regional library board and local libraries, and I know that he's not doing it, and therefore, I am quite confident he's not condemning them. Were he doing it, he would be. There is no restriction, Mr. Chairman, on this kind of a thing and I am not sure there should be, certainly not from the provincial level. If we sincerely believe in having a library system such as we have, which is run by local library boards and regional library boards, they have the responsibility and should have the responsibility for making those kinds of rules and regulations.

At the same time, surely Mr. Chairman, it is the role of parents to be able to decide the kinds of material their children will be reading and the kind of material that children will be getting from the library, and I'm not sure that the Provincial Government, the big brother, or whatever you want to call it, should be interfering with that right of the parent and with that right of the local library board. But if you're asking specifically no, there is no regulation.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I can assure the Minister that I am seeking information only, and it's not being done to place any condemnation whatsoever on the provincial library. You mentioned a very valuable point in that the parents should be responsible, but if the Minister thinks for one moment that we have all parents who are as concerned as he believes they are, let me assure the Minister that there are many youngsters who go to the library, and I am quite sure that their parents don't know that they're even at the library, and could care less what book they take out. We have to admit that there are a few of these people around. The problem that comes up is when the book is taken to school and used in a manner other than for which the book was intended in the first place. This causes a fair amount of rumpus at the school having this type of material there especially when there are no restrictions exercised by the local library boards.

Another point I want to mention, Mr. Minister, is that eventually I would hope that there would be a savings not only to the provincial library board, but also, perhaps to the school boards, as eventually it comes out of the same pockets, the people of Saskatchewan. Does the Minister feel that the school is making enough use out of the various regional libraries? I am very concerned about this and I have another couple of questions in regards to this for the Minister.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — There is, in fact, a very heavy demand by school-age people on the public library system. I know of particular situations including the school that I taught in, where there was very considerable involvement with the public library system

from the point of view of educating students on how to use the library and from the point of view of utilizing the service that the library provided for students. There in fact, is directly, in answer to your question, a very heavy demand by students from schools on the library system. It will, of course, vary from community to community and from school to school. That's I think, understandable.

MR. BAILEY: — The reason I asked that question Mr. Chairman, of the Minister, was that in October, the latter part of October, I attempted, on my own, to do a bit of a survey with the four offices or four libraries that cover schools in my superintendency, and I find that they were able to provide me with information that went something like this — some years they make great use of them, other years they drop down, and some schools at a particular time have more use, and so on. Mr. Minister, perhaps the Provincial Library Board could, together with the Department of Education, come up with some savings, if the schools — let me put it this way — we have a bit of a duplication of services, if you will. If the library budget at each school and the library budget of the regional library were in the same town, and somehow, I think if we encouraged them to have the two get together in the way of ordering to prevent duplication within a very small community involving a very limited number of people, I think this would result in an overall savings to the school boards and to the individual school concerned, without depriving that particular community of any library service.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I think, certainly we have to be concerned and try to find solutions to situations where there is duplication. I am not convinced you are ever going to do away with the kind of duplication that the Member talks about. The Public Libraries are set up to serve a total community, that's everybody in the community. School libraries are set up, to a large extent, to serve the school curriculum and the students in the school dealing with that school curriculum. I would hope that in most communities there would be a great deal of co-operation, and I am convinced that in Saskatchewan, there is in many areas that kind of co-operation. That is not to say that there should not be a continuing effort to increase that, a continuing effort by schools to use the public library system for the kinds of materials which obviously, will not be in schools because the duplication you talk about. I think that there is a great deal of effort being made to utilize both of the functions that are provided, so that both the total community, as well as the students in the school, can have the service of a good library.

MR. STODALKA: — Mr. Chairman, I should like to pursue what the Member from Rosetown-Eston was saying just a bit further.

One of the areas that schools seem to have some difficulty with, is this business of cataloguing books and classifying materials. I noticed in your brochure, reading the Annual Report, that one of the things that you do, is you provide this particular service to all the libraries within the province of Saskatchewan, other than school libraries. Schools, I know have attempted to use Josten's and the Library of Congress and other people or groups, to have their books catalogued and classified, but it hasn't always worked out satisfactorily.

I was wondering if there wouldn't be some way in which the Department of Education could make some sort of an arrangement through the provincial library, so that they could handle some of these things for the schools within the Province of Saskatchewan.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I think that's certainly a possibility. It's something that the two departments have talked about, and I think it's something that we should be pursuing to the extent that there are available personnel and resources to do it. You've got to keep in mind that the resources we have, the personnel we have dealing with the public library system or the provincial library system are pretty well committed to that work, from the point of view of time, but to the extent that it's possible for them to also assist schools, I see no reason why we shouldn't be able to do it.

MR. STODALKA: — Even suggest, that even to the extent that it might be a fee for services arrangement in which some of the school systems could pay the Provincial Library to handle this type of arrangement. If money is one of the problems, we are paying anyhow and we are not having what I might say is a satisfactory job done at the present time.

MR. BAILEY: — I should like the Minister to explain the procedure by which library books are ordered for the various libraries?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — All the ordering for library books is done by the staff of the individual regional libraries. They all have in each individual library region, their own specific policies that they establish for the ordering of books.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, you have pointed out that none of the responsibility rests with the Minister or his staff, in the ordering of books. I am wondering, Mr. Minister, if in fact some of the material that is to be found, and I get back to my original question, if it would not be advisable to have libraries and those who are in charge of a particular library, exercise some discretion as to the type of material that falls into the hands of a seven or eight year old. I am very concerned about this because it has happened and I am sure it has happened many more times than I am aware of. I am sure that it has happened with some amount of confusion and some animosity which need not happen. Obviously it is not likely that the complaint would ever come all the way up through the ranks to the Minister or to his advisors. I think some discretion should be used. After all, we do the same in the way of other media. We try to prevent certain programs from coming on television at a time when children would be the audience. We classify films and yet we have our libraries wide open. I suggest that some precaution should be taken.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, that wouldn't be discretion; that would be censorship. Pardon me if I leave the impression of being a little disturbed, Mr. Chairman. But I find it interesting, if not frustrating. I feel a little bit angered and yet have

some degree of happiness and glee, all put together, when I hear the Member pursue this line of questioning. I guess that wasn't a question; that was a statement. True. I want to correct myself.

We have always wondered what really the policy of the Conservative Party is on some issues. I think the suggestion we hear, if it is a reflection of the thinking of the Conservative Party, is an indication of the kind of heavy-handed dire control that any Conservative Party government would have on local government, local library boards, regional library board and so on.

I know that we are in Estimates and we have been getting along very well. I shouldn't be getting upset about it. I think though at the same time that the point has to be made. Where does the Conservative Party stand? Would the Conservative Party say to the Parkland-Wheatland Regional Library you are going to do this, this and that. We are not going to give you your \$429,000 in operating grant this year. That's not the position we take as a government, Mr. Chairman. I am saying that the regional library is an autonomous body; it consists on its board of people who are nominated by the municipalities who pay their share of having that library service. It is a decision that they ought to make and they have a right to make and we are going to give them that right to make it.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I was asking the Minister a question, no a question on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party, he knows that, not a question on behalf of my caucus, I was asking a question of the Minister because I have as an individual a very deep concern for young people. He tries to make a political issue out of a very direct question. All I am saying is, that a drug store which would sell some of the material to an individual is liable. He knows that as well as I do. I am saying that some encouragement should be given to the local libraries to try to see that some of the material that is on the library shelves designed for adults does not fall into the hands of those who are not capable of handling that material.

It is not a political issue at all. I am putting forth a suggestion to the Minister, that's all I am doing. If these books were in a school library, the school would probably be sued for contributing to juvenile delinquency. We would have to take those books out of the school.

All I am asking the Minister is this: that we have a problem, it arises every once in a while. It is not a problem that is based on a policy of my party at all. He knows that. He is trying to make some cheap gains. All I am asking is that some discretion should be used. A drug store, a book store, could be sued for selling this material that is often it the hands of these young people. All I am asking is for him to give some direction. I am saying they are local autonomous boards, and I agree with that. We should take steps together, not in opposition to one another, to see that this doesn't happen. It isn't in good taste — by the way it doesn't help the provincial library or the local branch. They come under criticism. That's all I am saying, Mr. Minister. I wasn't hoping to attain any great amount of publicity over it all. I am simply stating a case that exists. You were the one who

politicized and if you want to continue on politicizing something, then you are dealing with the right individual.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I agree, Mr. Chairman, I am dealing with the right individual.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I think the Hon. Members have both had a chance to express their views. I wonder if we could go back to the contents of Item 1 in a realistic way.

MR. STODALKA: — Mr. Chairman, I have a question. With regard to the contribution of the local governments, who is it that sets the rate that local governments must pay in order to participate in the regional library program?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The regional library board sets the rate and negotiates it with the local municipalities which participate in the library region.

MR. STODALKA: — Could you just give me a bit of information if you have it available. What percentage did the Chinook Regional Library increase the local contribution by?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am informed that they are just entering the second year of a three-year agreement. In that agreement there was provision for an escalator clause which provides for, I believe, something like 10-15 per cent increase in each year.

MR. STODALKA: — That's the point I wanted to make, Mr. Minister, a little earlier, the provincial contribution going up 10 per cent in comparison to the 15 per cent for the local governments.

Just to go into another area with regard to the library service which is available to people who do not participate within the regional library program what about the adults and the students who live in one of these local government areas where the local government itself has decided not to participate in the regional library program? At one time we used to have a sort of mail-order service through the Provincial Library. I understand that no longer exists. If the local government does not participate, does this mean then that there is no library service to the people in that area?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No. Residents of a municipality that is not participating in the regional library pay non-residence fees which are set by the regional library and in that way can have access to the services of the regional library.

There is another mechanism, and I do want to make the point that 85 per cent of the municipalities now are members of the regional library. This has increased quite dramatically over the last three or four years, and we are pleased indeed to see that. I, as a Minister, and my predecessor have encouraged, and we continue to encourage municipalities

to become members of regional libraries, because I think it is a very important service that their people ought to have.

There is also a provision in legislation where the residents of a municipality, that is not a part of a regional library can petition the local government, their municipal government to hold a vote on the issue. So therefore, that provision is there providing the citizens with an opportunity to decide by vote whether they want to be part of the regional library.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, on Item one you show seven employees again, and an increase of roughly \$27,000. Yesterday in another Item you told me that you include a 10 per cent raise, a five per cent increment and a 10 per cent for the upcoming year. That brings the figure from your \$71,560 up to \$90,971; once again you are missing approximately \$8,000. Where is that being used?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am looking at the blue book, Mr. Chairman, and I don't see any \$90,000; I don't see the figure that the Member is talking about.

MR. KATZMAN: — Figure number one. Item 1, \$71,560 for seven employees. Okay, I built a 10 per cent increase plus a five per cent increment plus a 10 per cent increase that you suggested was built in for this year, which gets me up to the \$90,000, and once again, you have approximately \$8,000 there that is not accounted for. Now, yesterday when we got into this discussion you told me that was the only thing that was involved. Now where's the \$8,000?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Okay, I get it now, Mr. Chairman — the \$98,160 — Personnel Services Permit. This whole Item — in 1976-77 — the base was \$71,560. There were re-classifications which brought in \$3,570, therefore, the adjusted base is \$75,130. Salary adjustments were \$12,020 because of the negotiated salary agreement. That is an increase of 16 per cent. You've got to keep in mind that in negotiations there is an average increase that takes place but in lower classifications where the pay was lower, the percentages were greater. Okay? There were increments of five per cent for \$3,740 for \$90,870, provision for anticipated increases because of on-going negotiations — \$7,270, for a total of \$98,160.

MR. KATZMAN: — Would you please give me the information on the total seven and how each one of them moved at a later date?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Can you just come over afterwards and tell me and my staff precisely what you want? O.K.

Item 2 agreed.

Item 3 agreed.

ITEM 4

MR. KATZMAN: — What percentage of operating costs do these work out to be?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — On the average it is about 75 to 80 per cent of the total operating cost of regional libraries.

MR. KATZMAN: — Is that basically a constant figure you try to work through each year, and that's why the increase is shown?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No, I'm not sure what you mean.

MR. KATZMAN: — 1976-77 estimates to 1977-78 estimates there is an increase. Is that because you figure the 75 to 80 per cent will increase, therefore, you are trying to stay in that ball park?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — No, not necessarily. We don't use that as a criteria necessarily, because the proportion of the provincial share this year will be greater than the proportion of the provincial share last year. We look at overall increase in costs and we try to accommodate that, rather than the proportion.

Item 4 agreed.

Item 5 and 6 agreed.

Supplementary Estimates

MR. KATZMAN: — The first part of the administration \$16,890, I believe that refers to Item one in 1976-77?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes.

MR. KATZMAN: — What portion of Item one?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — . . . services.

MR. KATZMAN: — Personal services?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes.

MR. KATZMAN: — Not to . . . it does not in . . . A permanent position is none of it?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I am sorry, it's both personal services and permanent positions.

MR. KATZMAN: — Could I have the breakdown please?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — It can be calculated. That's obviously not something that is sort of calculated right on hand, but if you want I can get it worked out for you; we can calculate it; we don't have it ready on hand. I don't think we have ever been asked that kind of a question before, but if you want we can calculate it and I can provide it for you.

MR. KATZMAN: — I'll accept it later on.

Vote 29 agreed.

Supplementaries agreed.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION — VOTE 16

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Mr. Minister would you like to introduce your staff please.

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation): — Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, I didn't know that you were ready. We could have started five minutes ago.

Mr. Gentles, our Deputy Minister; Jack Sutherland, Associate Deputy; Doug Simpson, director of Support Services; and Glen Middleton, director of Financial Services.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We are on page 52, Highways and Transportation.

ITEM 1

MR. E. ANDERSON (Shaunavon): — I should like to ask the Minister if he has any overall plan for highway construction in the province. It would appear, on looking at it, that it is quite a willy-nilly process. For instance, if you go along the No. 1 Highway once you get west of Swift Current it becomes very heavily overloaded. We have an alternate route available in No. 13 highway which becomes No. 2 in Manitoba and is paved from Many Days over to Lethbridge. It is about the shortest and most scenic route between Winnipeg and the Coast. We find we are lacking a 12 mile stretch of it between Govenlock and the border that makes a good alternate road impossible to use. We also find that in 1975 when the upgrading on highway No. 13 was done between Consul and Govenlock that it was put out as a 24 foot top road which doesn't even come up to super grid standards. It would seem odd, with the pressure on No. 1 due to heavy traffic count that this alternate route is left lacking for a 12 mile stretch. We find when we go further south that on No. 18 highway there is an 18 to 20 mile gap which in time, with the talks of the grassland park, is going to be part of a system that connects the Big Muddy up the grassland park and back out to the Cypress Park system. As I say, it would seem that while I know there are, in a province of this size, roads

in cases like these, no forward planning is being done because it allows these small gaps in different roads of this sort to exist. We find that No. 1 is overloaded and we have double-laned it out as far as Swift Current (and I commend the Minister for that), but from there West it is a very tricky thing in tourist season.

I would also like to ask the Minister: When you build on highways do you use traffic count only or do you use other criteria to build it up? We have been told that on No. 21 west from Govenlock the traffic is down, but it is bound to be down when the road-bed ends in the middle of the prairie. I wonder if you use any other criteria other than traffic counts to build these roads?

MR. KRAMER: — I gather there are three questions from the Member for Shaunavon. The continuity of No. 13 and 18 certainly requires continuing consideration and is being attended to, but the priorities I have to admit are not high when you have vehicle counts down as low as 110. I accept your point that the vehicle count is going to be lower when the roads are not passable, or marked. However, I think your main criticism was not No. 1. I said in the House the other day we have 50 per cent of our Trans-Canada Highway in Saskatchewan four-laned, which is far more than our wealthy neighbour to the West; the Highway from Swift Current west is in better condition to the border than from the border west to Calgary. I think we can take pride as a province in that. I believe that if we are able to persuade the federal people, and this is not only Saskatchewan's request, to re-instate the former sharing program that was brought about back in the '50s when we first built Trans-Canada, the situation would improve; it was a 50-50 sharing right across Canada from Newfoundland to Victoria, and it was considered necessary then. Traffic is probably five times higher than it was then, so it is five times as necessary now to have a sharing not only on No. 1, but also on the Yellowhead and other Trans-Canada routes. I don't think that's an unreasonable request, especially since last year, for instance, with the 10 cent a gallon tax that was imposed by the Feds. They took about \$35 million out of the province with very little return for us. We are continuing to upgrade; the priority is mainly on traffic count; sometimes there are other considerations. Now, if I haven't answered all your questions, come again.

MR. ANDERSON: — Yes, I think I agree with you that the Trans-Canada Highway in Saskatchewan is much better than the Alberta portion and I commend you for it. But what I said is that with the single traffic . . . west in tourist season we run into an awful heavy traffic flow on No. 1 and this traffic flow could be alleviated if this 12 miles was connected up with the road in Alberta. You would have a lot of your tourist traffic coming through what they call the Big Muddy, the Fierce Rock, up past the proposed Grassland Park and out through the Riding Stone Park in Alberta. Alberta is connecting up and it would take this slow tourist traffic off No. 1. Obviously we are not going to have No. 1 double paved, you know, double laned from Swift Current for a while. It is very expensive and I agree with you and I feel that the Federal Government was very niggardly on that too because it is one of the basic routes on Trans-Canada. I know when you had traffic counts, we've been

through this before, that these are very low on No. 21 where 13 becomes 21 because the road doesn't exist, you can't expect much traffic. I feel that if you would connect that route up you would find traffic would be very heavy in the summer and for 12 miles of road, if you are going to do it only on traffic count that traffic count will never rise. I hope you will give that a consideration.

MR. KRAMER: — All right, we haven't been standing still. Old 46 is being rebuilt and we have been moving on both those south routes. They are not forgotten and we recognize that there is a fair bit of interest in travelling in that direction. There is another matter that should be considered and that is that we have the Grassland Park discussion. I don't want to get into that debate, but there will be 200 miles of road in that area constructed solely and totally by Parks Canada. This was the proposal when I was discussing it as Minister of DNR back in 1971. They then said they would build 200 miles of road in that area. Now if the Federal Government is going to go ahead with this, and we can get 200 miles of good road we are not going to start building them on our own ahead of time, already and every area needs some attention. I am sure other Members will attest to this.

MR. ANDERSON: — I have one more question that interests me in the Item No. 1 here. It is that while you dropped one permanent position your cost has come up \$54,000. You are short one man and I was curious on that.

MR. KRAMER: — On the surface it seems like a large amount but you must remember that it embraces two years of increments. The increment prior to federal controls and the one pending both had to be absorbed and so you have increases over the two years. It is not a large increment compared to the private sector or with other departments.

MR. MCMILLAN: — I should like to direct a question along the same lines as the Member for Shaunavon has directed his. It is strange, or it certainly seems strange, to people in the country when work and I suspect much need work is going ahead on roads in Saskatchewan, that you have a particular situation where one small segment is missing under the highway system which if completed could greatly enhance the convenience for people using the highway system much better. I refer specifically to one mile stretch of highway, or pardon me, municipal road that falls on the end of Highway No. 44 at Alsask. That municipality has been pressuring for sometime to have it taken into the highway system. It connects Highway No. 44 with a highway in Alberta. The Department of Highway continually uses the municipal road to move its equipment on and yet will not even plough the snow off it in the winter time. The municipality has to travel 16 miles to service that road for the people. When they first asked the Department of Highways why that couldn't be taken into the highway system, the department said, well, the traffic count isn't high enough. The same situation applies here as applies in south-western Saskatchewan. It won't be high enough until the level of the road comes up to a position where people can use it. They rejected that answer from the Department of Highways and wrote back and said this would be a convenience to

people in Saskatchewan, to people using the trading area. It couldn't be anything but reasonable and the Department wrote back and said, I'm sorry, we would love to take it into the highway system but the base isn't built up to highway standards. The Municipality turned around and built the base up to highway standards and still nothing has been done on it and I want to know what it is about your highway policy that prevents the Department of Highways from taking action in these two specific cases. Is it a question of the lack of funds? Do you have priorities established such that maintenance comes before improvements in the highway system or do you have no policy at all?

MR. KRAMER: — We have had a policy that is considerably better than some we have enjoyed in the past. For instance, I would like to remind the House that more than a thousand miles of Municipal roads have been taken in the highway system, since I have been the Minister of Highways. A number of miles were taken off the backs of the municipalities; the total maintenance is now met in our budget rather than the municipal budgets. The Member raises a good point; I have to remind him and my staff could correct me, if I am wrong, but no one has personally approached me about that mile of highway over on the west side of the province, no one. I would be interested in discussing it, but right at this point in time we are talking in terms of super-grid. Our policy is not to take any more miles into the highway system this year. The SARM indicated about two or three years ago that they didn't really want to have us take more miles into the highway system. That was the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities. They said that it was starting to interfere with their jurisdiction and they would just as soon we left highway extensions alone. That was the majority in convention but I am still getting a number of requests from municipalities in various parts of the province to take over certain roads; when I attended the SARM there were several delegations which met me with requests, but yours was not among them.

MR. McMILLAN: — Well, I sympathize with the Minister of Highways for the fact that this has not been brought to his attention and he and I both are well aware of the fact that problems of this nature that have been brought to the attention of the Department of Highways in the past have never reached his desk. You and I dealt with one of those problems last year with regard to the highway sign at Brock. I understand that it took you three months fighting your own department to have that sign put up. Now this matter was raised with your particular Department of Highways at least 18 months ago and I should have thought that it would have crossed your desk, I feel sorry for the conditions you have to work under if matters of this importance aren't brought up. As far as the Association of Rural Municipalities is conceived, I don't doubt that perhaps they have made a general resolution that they don't particularly want highways taking more of their municipal road into the system but in this one particular case the Association of this particular local municipality has approached the Government on several occasions to have this particular piece of road reconsidered and has been met flatly with refusals time and time again.

As I did with the situation of the Brock highway sign last

year, I would ask you to personally investigate this situation and certainly apply your findings in that situation to this situation as it exists throughout Saskatchewan and with the Members problem in south-western Saskatchewan and a problem that certainly exists elsewhere.

MR. KRAMER: — Well that was a pretty long speech for one mile of road that the Honourable Member forgot to ask for.

MR. L. W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Hon. Member responsible for the Department of Highways could give me some indication as to when some improvements will be made on Highway 16 which extends from Regina through to the Manitoba border. I am sure you are very aware and you have in fact been made aware of the problem in that highway. You have some improvements that have been going on for some time now, and I refrain from travelling that route as much as possible, because it's always under construction but it doesn't seem to be proceeding that much further to the east. Furthermore, in answering the question, you might be able to tell me if, in fact, it's going to be the same type of highway, the same quality right through to the Manitoba border, or if, in fact, there is going to be a section just short of the Manitoba border, extending to the Manitoba border, which will be of a different quality.

MR. KRAMER: — I couldn't give you the exact up-to-date plans as to what is going to be built. I know that we are going to be building a section of that highway at Wawota. Mr. Speaker, 16 and 33 will be included, as they have been included in the tremendous amount of work done on 33. The Members from that area know that we're nearly completed down to Stoughton. We have, if you had taken the trouble to look at the project array, 13.5 miles of 16 included for this year and at Wawota and if you are complaining about 16, I've travelled that road too and it is in just as good a shape and somewhat better than approximately 6,000 miles of similar road in the Province of Saskatchewan.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I think that's a rather poor justification for Highway 16 to say that it's in just as good a shape as 6,000 more miles. I feel very badly for the people of the Province of Saskatchewan, who use 6,000 more miles like that and heaven help me, I don't have to travel on them. You're aware that last spring on Highway 16 and Highway 8, which comes down from the Langenburg area right through to the US border, both of those highways were flooded completely out. And, in fact, in the one just east of Maryfield, a car that was driving along and didn't even know that the road was washed out, went bang right into that. I even have the pictures up in my office, which I would be glad to bring down and show the Hon. Member if he hasn't seen them. And, I think that a road that has been that poorly planned and there has not been any effort, whatsoever, put into getting that road into a proper condition so that it's not going to be just a general menace to the public, I am going to tell you, Mr. Minister, that I am going to be putting pressure on your offices to see that something is done with that Highway 16 and Highway 8. I would like to know and you haven't given me any idea, can we count on it being done in the next five years, in the next 10 years

or what will it be — 20 years maybe. I would like to have some indication as to when it's going to be done. Can you give me an idea that — well, you've got 13 miles done. Thirteen miles doesn't pacify me.

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Chairman, I would like to put forward a comment before the Minister does. I want to tell the Member, that if it takes as long to construct the 40 miles between number one and Montmartre as it will to construct the rest of it, you won't have it by 1995.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I want to reply to the Member from Moosomin first. The Member for Moosomin -Indian Head has had more work done in his constituency than was done when his government was in power.

MR. MacDONALD: — Five miles a year.

MR. KRAMER: — That is nonsense. That is sheer, absolute nonsense. Now I've sent you the figures and you know it's nonsense. Number 16 is passable, based on the traffic count and the condition of the road. It's all very well for the Member for Moosomin to complain about an area that was flooded out. I'm not the Minister in control of floods. We take care of them roads after they are built, and your roads are getting as much attention as roads in other parts of the province. It will be re-built as finances permit.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I would just like to tell you that you may not be in control of floods, but it's in fact, your highways that are causing a lot of the floods. If your Department would put the culverts in these roads, and put sufficient culverts in to handle the expected high level of water that has to pass from one side of a road to the other, then we wouldn't have those road sections washed out. And, I went home right from this Legislature on the bus on number 8, and good heavens, it was a good thing it was night time because we were driving along in the water and we had a road washed out and I think that's deplorable. But at any rate, you haven't answered that question, so I maybe should ask you another one in the hope that you might answer that.

What is the criteria for which your Department would provide what would be a slower speed zone area, for instance, for highways that are approaching parks where the traffic is very heavy as they are nearing that park? Is there any problem in having the department put up a sign, say maybe five or 10 miles short of the park, that the speed limit be decreased to 45 or 50? We've got campers and half-tons and cars pulling outboard motor boats, and this type of thing, and the general flow of traffic is slower. You've got a few automobiles and a few single vehicles that are travelling the speed limit 60 and they're trying to go 60 while the rest of them are going 45 and 50. Would it not be a good idea to put up a speed zone sign to reduce that speed limit in that particular zone? Is that any big problem to request from your department?

MR. KRAMER: — No, I don't think that's a problem. I think it's a request that you could make and we'd give it consideration. It is done, but we're very careful about this because sometimes it's difficult to enforce speed limits, if they seem ridiculous. I don't say in this case that it would be ridiculous. I think there should be a study made. You are talking about Kenosee — No. 9, I believe?

MR. BIRKBECK: — No, Mr. Chairman, I wasn't specifically referring to any park in particular. I think all of them have similar problems in that respect.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I think if there is a request, we would give it consideration. Mr. Chairman, you know what happens with our present posted speed limits. Sometimes even 65 miles an hour is ignored. The RCMP with the present staff, have difficulty in catching more than one in 7,000 according to statistics, so it's little use, if not reasonable.

MR. MacDONALD: — Boy, they sure get me!

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, well some people are luckier than others. They get me too. But, I smartened up; I keep my cruise control on now. So I suggest you might use the same thing, and you know, when you're not watching blue movies, that you can use your cruise control.

MR. BIRKBECK: — That's a half an answer. I'm sure that the Minister responsible for Highways can give a more appropriate answer than just to say that the speed limits that are posted on our highways are inefficient, that they really don't do any good anyway. That's in effect what you said.

MR. KRAMER: — I never said that, I said we were cautious about posting speed limits unless they were absolutely necessary. We would be pleased to have a suggestion; when we get suggestions from communities that say there is a dangerous area, we take a look at it; we have corrected some of them in various parts of the province; we will give consideration. But, if speed limits don't make sense to the travelling public, they only create more problems for the law enforcement people.

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — Mr. Chairman, I have a few brief comments and a couple of questions in regards to this particular budget. First of all before I begin, let me say that I believe that the majority of the highways and roads in the Morse constituency are in pretty good shape and pretty well looked after. There are a couple though that I am planning on raising with the Minister. I don't think that I should waste the time of the House to discuss my singular little roads or some of the ones that may have problems in the House. We can get down to that later on.

Let me as well, congratulate the Minister for first of all finally getting the provincial budget for highways up above the \$45 million mark. You go back to 1971 — the total budget for highways in the province was \$42 million. And, in a period of six years it only came up \$3 million. This year we've finally

seen a whopping jump of \$12 million and Mr. Minister, congratulations on being able to scrounge a little bit more money out of the Minister of Finance and devote that to highways. Now the points that I was going to make are two things that disturb me very much; and one of them, first of all, is the announcement that the Minister made that he's proud of the fact that since he became Minister of Highways, over 1,000 miles of grid road have come into the provincial highway system. I congratulate you for that, but I don't congratulate you for the statement which you made in Moose Jaw about two or three months ago that the provincial Department of Highways is not going to take any more grid roads into the highway system, so, that as far as the people of the province are concerned, no more grid roads will be coming into the highway system. The excuse that he used at that time was that the Department of Municipal Affairs' supergrid policy was the one that was going to be looking after these kinds of areas.

Let me remind the Minister that the local tax burden on RMs throughout the province cannot bear the costs that they are subject to in regards to hard surfacing and oiling many of our grid roads, mainly, because the majority of that traffic on that road now is being used by people who live outside of that local municipality. So, what's happening is that the Department of Municipal Affairs is saying that we will give you 60 per cent of the cost of that road. That means the RM has to look at 40 per cent. Well, 40 per cent of \$18,000 to \$20,000 per mile is a fantastic amount of money and this is what that super-grid is going to cost.

Another thing the Department of Municipal Affairs is saying to the RMs is that before you qualify for any super-grid you must establish a maintenance unit. You must have the equipment on hand so that you will be able to use it to maintain the road two or three years after you build it. So, they've got money invested in maintenance equipment that they're not able to use for two or three years that could have been spent on highways.

I think it's unfortunate that the Minister and the Provincial Government have taken this approach that they will not be accepting any more requests from municipalities to bring their highways into the ..or their grid roads, into the highway system. I think, especially in terms of grid roads that connect major towns or major communities — these types of grid should definitely be taken into the highway system, mainly because it is people from outside of that municipality that make the majority use of that particular road, and I think we can and the Government can justify asking the taxpayers of the province to pay for the maintenance and up-keep of those particular stretches of road.

Let me say as well, in regards to maintenance units and what the Provincial Government is asking the RMs to do in regards to the super-grid policy. They're saying, in effect, that before you qualify, you'll have to spend thousands of dollars on buying equipment to maintain your super-grid road which is your oiled, hard-surface road. I suggest that it would be much simpler, much cheaper for the province as a whole if the Department of Highways took over the responsibility of maintenance of the super-grid roads. You are in a better position to buy the equipment, you are in a better position to

operate that equipment, because you won't need as much equipment to look after the same number of roads as each and every RM will be in the province. Some of the excuses that are used when we have made this suggestion before is manpower. You only have maintenance of roads during the summer time, two or three months in the summer time. Maintenance of super-grid road or hard-surfaced, oil-treated road is not that difficult a job. We've got hundreds of university students during the summer months looking for jobs, and if the Department of Highways would accept the responsibility of looking after the maintenance of those grid roads, it would not only save the municipalities a lot of money, you not only in the long run save the taxpayers of this province a lot of money, but you'd provide jobs as well, for many of the university students that would be looking for work during the summer months.

With these two points in mind, I would like to hear the Minister's comments as to why he has taken this approach of no more grid roads to come into the highway system, and what he thinks of the suggestion that maintenance units be looked after by the Department of Highways instead of by the RM's. I am glad that the Minister of Municipal Affairs is here and I'll be posing that same question to him when we reach his estimates.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I am mystified. First of all, in reply to the Member for Morse, I think he's been back of the barn too long. What he's been reading in order to prepare himself for these Estimates, has to be something other than the facts.

He mentioned that the last Liberal budget was \$42 million. In fact, it was \$66,933 million — that was the last Liberal budget, compared to this year's \$143 million gross. I'd like to provide other gross budgets 1973-74 — gross \$69 million; 1974-75 — \$96 million; 1975-76 — \$110 million; last year — \$129 million; up this year — \$143 million. I don't know where the Hon. Member has been, but I just thought I'd read the record into the House so that maybe the next Hon. Member that gets up will be a little better informed.

Now, he mentions the policy of not taking any more grid roads into the highway system. Let me remind him that the last year the Liberals were in power, they took over 95 miles; the year after that, 1972, we took in 168 miles; the following year — 422 miles; the year after that — 355 miles; the year after that we took in 324 miles. Now, Mr. Chairman, at some time Hon. Members should have to take a look at the facts; we put a crash program on to take care of the deficiencies that these people had suffered for years in the country. We took the main highways to small urbans, we provided roads to 400 communities through Operation Open Roads, gave them oiled roads and got them out of the gravel, the mud and the dust and the broken windshields; four hundred communities embracing about 240,000 people that the party opposite had forgotten for seven years.

Now, Mr. Chairman, surely we could have a little more reasonable approach in our criticisms than simply saying, look — sure you took in 1,000 miles but what have you done for us lately, what have you done for us lately? Now, we are going through a transition period. There's a study being done by the municipal people, led by the former president, Mr. Murphy, as head of the commission, to take a look at what was needed

further. During this transition period we are waiting for the municipalities to study the situation. I didn't say we weren't going to take any more roads into the highway system. We might ' even take that mile of road over there by the Alberta border in if we . . .

MR. McMILLAN: — I'm listening.

MR. KRAMER: — . . . if I get budgetary permission to do so. We'll take it under consideration at least; we'll give it the Diefenbaker treatment; we'll give it continuing consideration.

MR. WIEBE: — The Minister has just finished saying, first of all, let me say that regarding the budgetary Estimates — yes, let's look at that, and if anybody's been behind the barn, and I think the Minister is the one that's been behind the barn — where in the world do you get figures like \$69 million. We're looking at the Estimates that you will be spending in 1977-78 and the Estimates that the Liberal Government spent in 1970-71. Those Estimates in 70-71 were \$42 million. Your Estimates last year were \$45 million an increase of \$3 million, exactly what I said. And I congratulated you a little bit earlier on the fact that you were able to get an extra \$12 million out of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) to raise that to \$57 million. So where you get your figures of \$69 million and so on, I don't know, and that must have been from behind the barn.

Secondly, we are talking, no I am on my feet and you will get your chance to answer after I am done, talking about a short memory, about being repetitious. First of all, I congratulated you on the fact that you had taken one thousand miles of grid road into a highway system. Let me say something else. You said that you did such a fantastic job for the people of this province in terms of roads. In 1964 when the Liberal Government took over in this province, the former CCF Government after twenty years spent the least amount of money per mile, per vehicle, per person of any government in Canada. And it was a Liberal Government in 1964 that took the highways out of the cow-trails and put them into something decent that people could drive on. You look at a budget in 1971 of around \$300 million and our government spent \$42 million for highways. You look at your budget last year of \$1.2 billion and what did your government spend on highways — \$45 million, a \$3 million increase over a \$1.2 billion increase in budget, and you talk about who took the highways out of the cow-trails in this province. It certainly wasn't you people there. Mr. Minister, I have made the suggestion from a constructive point of view that I feel that more highways, or grid roads in the province should be taken into the highway system. I maintain that view because I think it is right. It is the only reasonable approach for any government to take, in terms of the costs that we are looking at now in oil surfacing and hard surfacing the grid roads of this province. As well, the position I have taken on maintenance, I think is a good position and a position that the people of Saskatchewan will support. I know they will certainly support our policy and I suggest to you that if you want to get some support in that area that you adopt the policy as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know what figures he is using. The records show, there was \$69 million (approximately) in the last Liberal budget. I don't know where you get your figures of \$42 million and \$12 million, I just don't know.

MR. E. C. MALONE (Leader of the Opposition): — Page 55.

MR. KRAMER: — Page 55, well he had better get up once more and see if he can articulate well enough to relate to a \$142 million budget as compared to a \$68 million budget in 1971-72. Now please explain that to me Mr. Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe). Show this House your figures. Everybody else over there is not as confused as you are I hope.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer), the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) mentioned that you had made a statement about not taking any more grid roads into the highway system. I would like to mention, and I don't want to be specific, but I would like to mention a stretch of road between North Portal, Portal, North Dakota and North Portal to Hirsch. There is a stretch of road that, through no fault of the rural municipalities, is the most direct route to Kenosee and Carlyle Lake. If you remember, for the last three to four years they have been attempting to get together with the Department of Highways to see if they could get some help on the maintenance of that road. That road with the amount of traffic over there along with some of the oil-haul equipment and even possibly the odd truck that likes to by-pass the weight scales at Estevan, go straight on north. This road does take a heck of a beating, and I really believe that this RM of Coalfields has a legitimate beef and I think you know the case. They have been trying to get the Department of Highways to takeover that stretch of road. Now, ordinarily, I am not in favour of the Department of Highways taking over some of these grid roads because I think some figures have proven that it does cost more for the Department of Highways to maintain a stretch of road than rural municipalities, but in this case I do believe they really do have a legitimate beef and I wish your department would look very carefully at them.

MR. KRAMER: — We are continually looking at the traffic patterns and the traffic needs and continually taking, as are the municipalities, traffic counts to determine where the need is. Let this House remember too, that we have, as I have mentioned before, 13,000 miles of highway in this province and that is just about the combined highway mileage of Alberta and Manitoba. There may be various reasons for this. Certainly the mountains encroach very much on the settled areas of Alberta; they haven't got the vast settled expanses of scattered population in that province that we have; similarity, Manitoba has just a small triangle down in the SW corner. Suffice it to say we have a problem that we can't ignore. Our enemy is distance in this province whether it is power lines or highways or municipal roads. So delegations have met me from the area you have mentioned and a good many other parts of the province. The Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy) and his rural affairs branch is working constantly and in liaison with those municipalities.

Another year will show just how the municipal pattern falls into place. I want to repeat, we were given a fairly stern warning by the convention a short while ago saying that they didn't look favourably on too many more highway extensions. That doesn't prevent us discussing and considering, that door is always open, and I am sure it is to Municipal Affairs Department as well as mine.

MR. G. N. WIPF (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Chairman, I have a short talk for ten miles of road not a long talk for 1 mile of road. You are talking about including a lot of rural road or grid roads into the highways system. There is one grid road, the old Highway 11 between MacDowell and Red Deer Hill. Okay I understand that in the last year the residents that use that road have asked you to take that piece of road back into the highways system I believe they have done it through a petition and I wonder if there is any consideration of doing that at this time- it is a mess. The road is being used by trucks which instead of going up to Prince Albert and back, use it like a highway and I was just wondering if you are planning to take that road into the highways system. I don't know if it was forced on to the municipalities by the Highways Department but they do want that back in the highways system.

MR. KRAMER: — The terms of reference of the jurisdiction of the Department of Highways is to build roads from one main centre to the other, to take care of the provincial traffic. The core of municipalities is to take care of the municipal traffic and some, certainly some through traffic. They determine whether a road or a highway is abandoned. I abandoned one right in my own area 18 miles of old No. 4. Once we had completed the new No. 4, it became the responsibility of the municipality. That is what happened, I presume on old No. 11. It may be that they would like to see us maintain both of them, but it is a municipal responsibility. I believe that it may, I am not sure, fall into the super-grid category, and I think that you might raise that when municipal affairs estimates, Department of Rural Affairs, comes up for consideration.

MR. WIPF: — Mr. Chairman, did the Minister receive a petition from these people? I understand they sent you a petition. Their complaint is that they have never received an answer from

MR. KRAMER: — If they sent a petition they will have received an answer and I think I remember something about a petition. We get a number of them, but that doesn't mean that their wishes will be granted. We would have mother 5,000 miles of highways in the highway system in another two years if we granted all requests.

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon-Eastview): — A question to the Minister. A couple of years ago the city of Saskatoon indicated a desire, and plans to go ahead with that northern river crossing that you people are all very familiar with, certainly the people in your department are familiar it, and when the suggestion was made here, I think your department felt there was need for stalling or delaying.

The suggestion was made that it ought to be part of the transportation study and until the data got back on that nothing would be done. I think probably most of the people in your department were as aware as we were in Saskatoon, what the transportation study would show. Indeed, anybody who gets close to the 25th Street Bridge anywhere near traffic hour, peak traffic hours, realizes that the northern river crossing is something that is necessary. What may have been significant was the matter of timing. Was it five years down the road or six years down the road or four years down the road or what? There has been some talk about the location. We realize that there have been some people in the rural area that have suggested that maybe it ought to be a 51st Street instead of 42nd Street, you know, and that kind of thing. And yet I think that everybody realizes if you look at a map or fly over the city that the route and so on has been pretty carefully looked at and thought through for some time.

I wonder if the Minister would care to comment about what kind of time line his department now sees for the construction of the Saskatoon northern river crossing?

MR. KRAMER: — First of all the Member for Saskatoon-Eastview knows that this is basically a city responsibility. We did accommodate the city with a transportation study, part of which was the Forty-Second Street Bridge project, a two hundred thousand dollar study of which the province generously paid \$150,000, I think when this took place the Member was an Alderman. The study is still on going, and it is true that most people take for granted that the 42nd Street location is probably where the Bridge ought to be. Far be it for me to make up the mind or make judgment for the city of Saskatoon. December 17, 1974, I wrote to Mr. Sears and I will be happy to table this letter, one paragraph, the pertinent paragraph says:

We would be quite prepared to consider an application from the city of Saskatoon, for the design of the bridge this forth-coming year under the Urban Assistance Policy. I believe that this usual procedure would involve the city hiring a consultant. The choice of the consultant is usually made after discussions with our bridge branch under the direction of Mr. L.O. Thompson.

That was 1974, December 17. After our budget was all used up, late last fall, the city made the request. And when I say where it was. Now we have a budget in place to do the functional design, I want to say functional design, and the city has assistance to do that. When that is completed, whatever the judgments are they will be considered. It is not a commitment at that time to share or proceed. The functional design has to be done first. We have the money now and we will be proceeding with this study but I don't like the innuendo that suggests that it is us, my department, that is causing delay, because after about eighteen months the council of the city of Saskatoon finally made up its minds that they were going to do something about it. At the end of the budget year, they made their request. Now you can't possibly start until the budget is placed.

The Assembly recessed from 5:00 o'clock p.m. till 7:00 o'clock p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF GIRL GUIDES

HON. E. C. WHELAN (Regina North West): — Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Hon. Member for Regina North East (Mr. Smishek), I should like to introduce to you and through you to other Members of the House, 35 Girl Guides from Company 73 at Gladys MacDonald School in that constituency. They are seated in the west gallery with Lieutenant Alice Fuchs, Lieutenant Jean Butler and parents Murrey Fox and Elsie Medlacote. We welcome them here and we hope that their stay with us will be pleasant and informative.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS (CONT'D).

ITEM 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I believe when we adjourned the Hon. Member was on his feet so we will let him proceed with his remarks.

MR. KRAMER: — Thank you Mr. Chairman. I had just finished tabling a letter which I had written two years ago to the Mayor of Saskatoon for the information of the Hon. Member for Saskatoon-Eastview (Mr. Penner).

Before I proceed, I would like to re-introduce my director of support services. Would you please stand up? I want you to know that he is now properly dressed after the lunch hour. I am not quite through yet, Mr. Chairman. I want to point out as well to the Hon. Member for Saskatoon-Eastview (Mr. Penner) that we are prepared to consider all the suggestions from the elected council members of Saskatoon and that the new mayor seems to have things very well in hand. He has assured me that they will be making their requests, those that are necessary in the future, in order to get the programs under way. Mr. Chairman, the 1974 letter has been tabled and is probably on the desks of the Hon. Members now so they can bear witness to the fact that we did accommodate and did advise the city of Saskatoon, on December 17, 1974. It is now 1977, and it was a long, long while before we ever got the request that could have been made in January and December of 1974 or even 1975. I don't know whether the Member for Saskatoon-Eastview was an Alderman at that time. I don't know whether he drew this to the attention of the Mayor at that time or suggested that he should have proceeded with the request for the study that he is now so anxious to proceed with.

MR. PENNER: — I am glad that the Minister tabled the letter, a letter of which I have been aware. What the Minister attempts to do is to place the responsibility for the delay on the shoulders of Saskatoon City Council. The fact, nevertheless, remains that it was the department that suggested to the city of Saskatoon that before anything was going to be done that the data from the transportation study had to be in. You now have a request that has been brought before you, with regard to the functional design.

The Minister, in addition, Mr. Chairman, neglected to answer the question that I put to him earlier with regard to the time lag. I would like to start him off on it. If I am

right he can continue, and if I am wrong, then he'll obviously attempt to correct me. As I understand it the functional design request is in. The funding for the design, or the functional design as I understand it is a 50-50 cost sharing which would mean approximately \$100,000 from the department and \$100,000 from the city. The functional design is likely to be something in the order of seven or eight months before it will be completed. That, of course, is as you indicated earlier, sort of the first step} you can't go ahead and build a bridge until you have a design and you know what you want to do with it.

From that point on what does the Minister in his department see as a reasonable time-line for the completion of the bridge and the approaches on the east and the west?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, the functional design will necessitate a traffic study, whether there are going to be six lanes or four lanes, all these things certainly. We don't want to have a bridge that is going to be obsolete 10 years down the road. All of those things, are part and parcel of what the Member has said correctly is the functional design. After that is in place we will then discuss again with the city the evidence that has been brought forward by the functional design. I think the next time will be an actual design for a bridge if the functional design indicates that it should be built and can be built in the 42nd Street area. It seems to me that that's roughly the way it ought to be,

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, the Minister again ducks the question and does a reasonably good job of it. Anybody, as I have indicated earlier, who knows anything about it all, knows that the bridge is going to go there. The question may still be outstanding as to whether it is a four-lane or six-lane or an eight-lane or whatever. But the bridge is going to be built; the need is there. Once the seven or eight month period goes by during which time the decision is made about whether it ought to be four or six or eight or whatever number of lanes, from then what kind of time line does the Minister have in mind? Surely his people realize that it is something that is in the works, in the next period of years. Do they see, assuming the city agrees, a construction date completion by '82 or '81, 80 or '83? I don't expect the Minister to lay it down to the month, or the day when the thing will be built. I would like to know just roughly what decade if he has one in mind?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I haven't got my crystal ball but I will look through the bottom of this glass to try to define what the city will do. Obviously he is trying to get me to state what the decision of the city will be. It is a city bridge. You people talk about autonomy and decision making by the municipality. Surely you don't want me to stand in this House, a year prior to the event and tell the city what is going to happen before they have had a chance to look at the functional design. The request will come from them to us, Mr. Chairman, and we'll be glad to discuss the building of the bridge, a further design study at that time of that bridge, by whatever consultant they may engage.

I hope I have explained the situation to the Member for Saskatoon-Eastview sufficiently so that he can go back and inform whomever he wants to tell, what the situation really is.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, if I could follow that just a little bit further. The Minister says it is a city bridge. I think the Minister and his department have indicated in the past that not only do they not believe that, but they are of the view that federal funding should be a part of that bridge. Are you suggesting with it being a city bridge that there is going to be no contribution from the province at all, toward the funding of that particular structure or the approaches?

MR. KRAMER: — No. I don't know, the Member Mr. Chairman, is a school teacher. I am beginning to wonder about teachers that we have teaching our young. I find difficulty in communicating with him. Fifty-fifty is the standard formula for sharing. The Hon. former Mayor, his Worship Bert Sears, and myself, thought that some of the Yellowhead traffic might proceed on that, rather than taking the freeway through Saskatoon. At the request of the Mayor I asked the Hon. Otto Lang if he would consider sharing. I have a letter from the Hon. Otto Lang, (I don't know whether it came airmail or not). Let me quote a small excerpt from this letter of which I just happen to have a copy. It is from Mr. Lang, dated October 16, 1976.

Transport Canada has two highway funding programs, and possibly if I could have the attention of the rest of the Members over there who were discussing sharing of highway costs they might be enlightened a bit by this information. Mr. Lang says, quote:

Transport Canada has two highway funding programs in the province but neither of them permits federal participation in the construction of the proposed Saskatoon bridge.

He goes on further to say:

The northlands program is inapplicable by virtue of the geographical restriction in the northerly part of the province.

He says something else that I think is interesting.

The highway strengthening program and other routes used by truckers apply but it is not applicable to new construction and new routes

"New construction and new routes," you will remember that this question was raised a little earlier in a former debate in this House suggesting we were receiving federal assistance four-laning No. 1.

I don't know whether this was enlightening to the Hon. Member for Saskatoon-Eastview, but he raised the question of federal participation; we did ask for it. Mr. Lang flatly says No, there is no policy and we accept that.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, I am not surprised by what the Minister

has read out. I assume from your response to an earlier question that the amount of money in this year's budget for the functional design is in the range of \$100,000, from your department.

MR. KRAMER: — Yes.

MR. PENNER: — Are you attempting to suggest knowing what you know about the bridge that your department has done no projecting at all about what kind of commitment is going to be required over the next two or three or four years with regard to that Saskatoon or 42nd Street bridge.

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, surely the Member doesn't want me to anticipate what the decision of the elected council members of the city of Saskatoon is going to be. It is certain that they will be making this decision after the functional design is done. They will be getting in touch with us, either to say no, we don't want to move there or yes, we do. Maybe the reeve of the Municipality of Cory may prevail on them and say that it should go on 51st Street. There are a lot of unknown quantities here. We will have to wait for the request from the city of Saskatoon. I am sure than when that request comes if positive, we will be budgeting according to our policy of 50-50 sharing.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, is the Minister suggesting by what he just said with regard to the reeve of Corman Park that his department isn't necessarily of the view that the bridge ought to be at 42nd Street right now?

MR. KRAMER: — No, I am leaving that to elected municipal officials to argue out. We will rely entirely on their recommendations.

MR. PENNER: — It is your view then Mr. Chairman, through you, to the Minister, that 42nd Street as far as you are aware or your department is aware, is the correct location for that particular bridge?

MR. KRAMER: — We rather think that that seems to be the best location as indicated by studies thus far.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, does the Minister agree that a reasonable target date for completion then would be something in the order of 1981 or 1982?

MR. KRAMER: — My crystal ball isn't working worth a hoot. I cannot anticipate, or read the minds of the honourable mayor, his Worship, a very intelligent gentleman, or the aldermen. (I think there has been an improvement on the slate of aldermen recently) . . . I can't answer that question, Mr. Chairman. We are prepared to co-operate to the fullest extent, according to the parameters and the terms of reference that normally fall within the jurisdiction of the city and the province.

MR. PENNER: — Well, finally, Mr. Chairman, that statement is one that I

very much appreciate, a commitment to fully co-operate with what the elected people in Saskatoon finally determine as the target date. That's the kind of commitment that I was hoping that the Minister would be prepared to make.

MR. KRAMER: — I think there is one thing that the Member must remember. I have to speak on behalf of the Mayor, and the city of Saskatoon, because they share the transportation study, by paying a smaller portion. They are the people that engage the consultants,. I am not prepared to stand in this House, Mr. Chairman, and say that we are going to go ahead without recognizing the fact that the city of Saskatoon and ourselves will have to look at the final transportation study, and that obviously the Member, as I do, somewhat takes for granted what the final outcome will be. But it isn't any use trying to second guess or anticipate an expensive study that has not yet been completed.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Chairman, I should like to address the Minister. I am in complete sympathy with the Department of Highways on this Saskatoon bridge. I feel that you have conformed completely and are meeting everything that has been passed to your department. I feel if there is any laxness it could be on the part of the MLA for Saskatoon-Eastview (Mr. Penner). I feel that there is something that has gone wrong here and I don't think it is on the part of the Department of Highways. I think you have done your job completely. I would also like to mention though that I have something else to give you heck about.

In hauling to the Pulp Mill in Prince Albert the truckers are faced with a dilemma, and that is the trucks hauling pulp both in from Hudson Bay and from Big River, have a maximum load of 110,000 depending on the time of the year they are hauling. They can haul 110,000 pounds on the truck without too much restriction on size, or weight. Yet a trucker, a free enterprise trucker hauling chips to the pulp mill, the same pulp mill in Prince Albert, can only haul 74,000 on a 40-foot truck. This is on the same road, passing the same trucks which are far more unsafe than this truck hauling the wood chips. He is completely confined to 74,000 pounds, could load heavier, could load higher, and still be far within the weight limits of the pulp hauling trucks. We wonder if there isn't something unfair in this hauling licence. This fellow has to pay so much a ton mile, per month, to haul extra chips. We think this is a very unfair law at the present time.

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, I would be inclined to agree with the Member for Estevan. Unfortunately, we are saddled with an agreement that was made in 1967 with Parsons and Whittemore, PAPCO by the former government which allowed them to haul overloads as a special consideration and in order subsidize them indirectly. This is an agreement that we must either honour; or abrogate. One government usually tries to honour commitments made by another. We recognize the unfairness of that agreement in retrospect, but we don't think that one mistake deserves another, when we consider limits on the general highway system in Saskatchewan.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Minister, I agree with

you. I am not trying to change one thing to offset another. But I still say that when one truck can haul 110,000 pounds and another 74,000, then all of a sudden a grain truck on the same road can only haul 58,000 pounds . . .

MR. KRAMER: — Well, you have to remember that in order to be completely fair, if we are going to increase load limits for one group, or that trucker who is hauling over that particular road with the same material, in order to be fair, we would have to extend the same privilege on all roads, equivalent roads all over Saskatchewan.

We just simply could not afford to keep up a road system carrying those kinds of loads. We just have to make the best of a bad job, as long as that one agreement prevails, but it is only maintenance on those trucks that are hauling to PAPCO that fall within that original agreement.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, I just can't see though, that if this Government is capable, and they have their right I guess to break an agreement, such as no confiscation of potash mines to 1981, why they can't let a small trucker, hauling 74,000 pounds to increase to the same weight as the trucks he is passing on the road all day long, hauling chips to the same pulp mill, as these fellows are hauling the pulp logs. I just can't see the reasoning in that. You can make exceptions or you can't make exceptions. Here is the small individual operator of northern Saskatchewan that the whole north made up of individualists keeping a viable industry going and I'm very surprised that you can't; I can't justify this, 74,000 and 110,000 pounds on the same road going by each other.

MR. KRAMER: — The Member for Estevan has trouble justifying it. I have no trouble justifying what we are doing. It may be that the former government may have some problem justifying what they did. I would like to also inform the Member that in any case I do not have the authority; it's the Highway Traffic Board under the Minister of Municipal Affairs that has the authority over those trucks. If the Highway Traffic Board decides, not us, because it is an independent body, to continue to protect the total highway system and not spoil the whole barrel of apples because there is one bad one in it, I will support them. This is where you and I disagree and I think that is the only answer I can give you.

MR. LARTER: — Could the Minister of Highways tell me if it was their recommendation on the 58,000 pounds versus the 74,000 pounds that the Minister of Municipal Affairs accepted. Is this one of the reasons that this is accepted? Was it the tests of the Department of Highways that influenced them or was it an outside source.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the Minister in charge of the Highway Traffic Board can answer those questions. As far as I am concerned I want to say that I agree that we must be cautious about load limits on our secondary highway system. I want to tell the House again as I've told them before that it is impossible to carry a constant load, constant

passage of heavy loads over the thousands of miles of our secondary highway system. We've had some experience. It was three years ago when the Minister in charge of the Wheat Board, the Hon. Otto Lang, decided that he was going to haul 89,000 bushels from Rabbit Lake, Saskatchewan to Saskatoon. We had a section of highway, the Operation Open Roads section which was similar to those 6,000 miles I mentioned earlier, with a light asphalt top. For two years that road carried the farm traffic, the farmers' trucks, the odd overload, the odd permit overload and carried it well with a reasonable amount, a normal amount of maintenance. But all of a sudden when the Hon. Otto decided he was going to empty those elevators in about a week's time and take 100 loads in one week, legal loads incidentally, in one week over that road, the outgoing lane went all to pieces and that cost us \$4,000 a mile to repair. One week hauling 89,000 bushels of grain when one diesel engine could have hauled it all in boxcars. There is a good railroad track all the way to the Saskatoon terminal. I fail to see the wisdom of that. That experience and other experiences indicates to us that a constant haul does damage one load or two loads of road. A load of cattle does no harm, but when you have consistent, constant hauling on that light oil surface it simply brings the moisture up to the top and as soon as the moisture reaches that surface it breaks up. Our experience indicates that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has used wisdom and the Highway Traffic Board used wisdom in being cautious about the kind of loads that are carried on a highway system that was never intended to carry the loads that were intended to be carried by rail.

MR. LARTER: — One last question, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure whether it's bricks or grain or whatever it is; I thought they all weighed the same. I am a little surprised at the response. You are almost programmed in with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I feel that the Department of Highways and the municipality have complete control over the load limits that are going over the roads at certain times of the year. I don't think there is any doubt that, as long as I've lived in rural Saskatchewan and farmed and sold farm machinery and in our hauling we have been restricted at certain times of the year to hauling certain loads by certain pounds per square inch per tire, and what makes me sick is what is happening right now, for you all of a sudden restrict grain hauling as being different from brick or farm machinery over these roads. You restrict the roads at certain times of the year. I agree with this. The Department of Highways, as far as I am concerned, is probably the worst offender of not looking after those roads at certain times of the year. I will give you an example. Just in the last two weeks on Highway 18, west of Torquay, all of a sudden, they decide they are going to stockpile some gravel which is wonderful because I like to see that road improved. That road wasn't too bad but they just tore the hell out of that road from Highway 18 west from Torquay. Now what is good for one is not good for the other, now I think the department . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, please! I believe just here a day or two ago I asked one of the Members to refrain from using language such as that in here and I have to make no difference with any of them.

MR. LARTER: — . . . two long sticks.

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Chairman, I was a little bit disturbed when you indicated earlier that you are going to be a bit reluctant to take any more of the grid roads into the provincial highway system. I presume you can guess already which particular road I am going to be asking a question about. It is the one that nobody wants, the road that angles off from Maple Creek into the Fort Walsh area, the one that has such a heavy tourist traffic on it, the one last year that the local council threatened that they would not maintain because of the abuse that the road received from the traffic of the people who are visiting Fort Walsh on the west walk of the Cypress Hills Provincial Park. I know the Minister has been trying to work with different groups within the Federal Government of Parks Canada and also with DREE. I was just wondering if you have been able to come to any arrangement with Parks Canada or with DREE concerning that road from Maple Creek to Fort Walsh?

MR. KRAMER: — That's a good question. The Hon. Member for Maple Creek raises a question that has been vexing us for some time. We have for some time now been indicating to Parks Canada, and the federal people, that we are prepared to participate in that road to Fort Walsh. We believe that the great percentage of the traffic using that road will be tourist traffic. The road is not fit to carry that traffic and it is not fair. Now the federal people have spent millions of dollars in reclaiming and refurbishing Fort Walsh which is a credit to western Canada and we think that it is rather bad judgment to fix up the guest room when you know you can't even get to the door with the road. We are committed, and I have met a delegation from your area at the Municipal Convention and I indicated to them that I would attempt getting a meeting of the federal people, the local people and ourselves in order to see if we can't get something moving, because I agree completely that the situation is not good. They are thinking in terms of coming through Cypress Hills. Cypress Hills cut-across is not the one that is going to be used and is going to be necessary as well. The Cypress Hills cut-across should not be a super highway.

MR. STODALKA: — The Minister is then indicating that there will be some meeting with the federal officials. Really then there has been no progress made since last year at this time because I asked the same question last year.

MR. KRAMER: — I can't speak for Parks Canada. We will attempt to do what we can.

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Perhaps the Minister could help me out a bit. When you go outside of my constituency just into the Kindersley constituency, (I want to make sure that I have an understanding from the Minister so that this picture is clear in my mind), there is a stretch from Highway No. 44 just on the east side of the town of Eston that goes down to the Riverside Park in Eston. Now as I understand it, the highway crews came in and together with the RM of Snipe Lake had that stretch of road hard surfaced. Now how long an agreement did you have with the RM of Snipe Lake that that road leading to the Riverside Park would be maintained by the Department of Highways?

MR. KRAMER: — I think this is MRA responsibility. I think it was the grid road authority that entered into this agreement. Would you ask that question when Rural Affairs Estimates come up . . .

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I am fully aware that the MRA, the Municipal Road Authority is in charge of this road. The question I want to direct to the Minister is, at what time or does the Department of Highways have the option when they will or when they will not provide the service for maintenance for that road? Who decides what time will the maintenance to that particular road, any road, be cut off?

MR. KRAMER: — We will discuss custom work at the request of the RM whenever necessary or desired at cost at the request of the RM. That's the only way we become involved.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, so that in other words, once a municipality has entered into an agreement with MRA in the hard surfacing of a road, because an RM does not have the facilities to keep up an oil surface road, they are completely, at all times, as long as that road is a hard surfaced road at the mercy of the Department of Highways for repairs?

MR. KRAMER: — No, they are not at their mercy. They are at the mercy of themselves. They have the opportunity to establish a maintenance capability. A number of municipalities, I think Snipe Lake is one of a group of municipalities, are going together and establishing a maintenance capability for blacktop. The Gull Lake area is also going ahead with plans. Now, you people support local autonomy. It is their job; it is their responsibility and it is their road. They will plan the future maintenance.

MR. R. E. NELSON: — Mr. Chairman, I was wondering if the Minister of Highways could tell me if he expected to put out a supplement to his yellow pamphlet. I've just been a little disappointed for the second year in a row that Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has been left out of the book. As a matter of fact, I think the last time there was anything in the book for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg was the \$36,000 that was later pulled out, immediately after the last election.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I am sure the Member knows better than that. That whole stretch of road south of Assiniboia was recently taken in, down to Coronach. Limerick to Killdeer was taken into the highway system.

MR. NELSON: — Not in the last two years.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, do you want us to do it twice, re-cycle the operation? I am sure that I could point out a number of areas that possibly could stand improvement but by and large the highway system has been in reasonably good repair. I think the people of Saskatchewan are getting reasonably good repair. I think the people of Saskatchewan are getting reasonably good service from my department, never good enough, but we do the best we can.

MR. NELSON: — I believe that the roads the Minister was talking about, are municipal roads. There were a few of them you put a little oil on about six years ago but certainly there has been nothing more in maintenance done in the last few years. It needs lots of oil on them right now.

MR. KRAMER: — Well that again is a matter of opinion rather than fact. There was a fair bit of grading and upgrading done in the Limerick area. If he says that's all that's done, I suppose that's all. But to take municipal roads over, is to take them off the backs of the municipality. They no longer have that section of road to take care of. Besides that we put on the oil surface at a cost of thousands and thousands of dollars to the rest of Saskatchewan taxpayers. Yet Wood Mountain says, or their representative, says we've done nothing.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Has the Minister of Highways been involved in an experiment on causeways. I understand that your Department or DNS is doing some survey with an 18 foot — I can stand and wait as long as you want to chatter Mr. McMillan. Either your department or DNS did some experiments with 18 foot culverts for the possibility of making a causeway where some of your ferry services run, because of the dryness. Now has your department been involved in any of those tests?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, there are studies going on continually to research in order to find better ways to cross our rivers. Bridges are becoming continually more and more expensive. We used to be able to build a bridge for less than \$2 million. Estimates now, at least the federal estimates on a bridge north of Lloydminster are now at more than \$6 million. Now it is obvious that there are a number of places in Saskatchewan where it might be possible to build a low level crossing of a causeway type. If that is possible and if we can build for one-third or 25 per cent of the cost, I think we should look at it. I can't hold out any commitment that this is actually going to bear fruit. I hope it will.

MR. PENNER: — I am sure that the Minister would never forgive me if I didn't ask him at least one question about the highway between Regina and Saskatoon. I notice in the yellow book that there are 8.5 miles that are to be hard surfaced between Aylesbury and Chamberlain this year. Do you have any other plans for any further work on completion of this during this year, other than this hard surfacing?

MR. KRAMER: — A number of things are under consideration. Certainly it is desirable to complete four-laning as soon as possible

but we studying the priorities for that and some other projects which we may be able to launch this year. I can't make a definite statement on this at this time.

MR. PENNER: — I have to say, Mr. Chairman, but I won't pursue it, but I am disappointed in the response. I think anybody that has been on that road in the last while and certainly the Minister drives it often, knows it is a priority and at this stage of the game if you are not able to indicate any further work to be done this year, would I not be correct in assuming that there is not much likely to be happening on that during the rest of the year, aside from the hard surfacing between Chamberlain and Aylesbury?

MR. KRAMER: — Not necessarily. I am not saying that, so don't be too surprised if you see more work than what was announced during Budget debate, when I presented the project array. I said, when I tabled that, it was about 90 per cent of the project. There are a number of things that we must be cautious of. We are receiving bids for construction now. Bids are coming in and have been coming in at considerably less than we anticipated a year or so ago. If money is available there will be more work that will be done but we can't be sure, at this point in time, how much more we will be able to do.

I agree with the priority and I am going to tell the Hon. Member that that priority became a great deal more evident after 1972, because that old highway that we are using portions of now successfully was relegated to extinction as a race track for jackrabbits until we reactivated it.

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — I should like to commend the Minister and his Department for the work that they have done. I know that this year they have budgeted \$142.5 million for highways and I know that any request that I ever made to his Department has been looked after relatively quickly. As a matter of fact one request that I made to the Minister as it relates to the junction of No. 39 and 13 at Weyburn, it was altered and I don't think it was a complete job but certainly an improvement over what was there. I further disagree with the Liberal centralist policy of taking more grid roads into the highway system. I think that should only happen at the request of the municipality. I do, however, have two questions.

I don't know the name of the program, it was a program to help towns and villages pave or oil their main streets, dust free streets and I understand that there was some agreement with the Department of Highways to provide cold mix for patching for some period after that. I know that there are several towns and villages down in my corner that have not been able to get the cold mix from the Department of Highways.

My second question is, when is No. 8 Highway going to be taken into the highway system?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I think it was Operation Main Street that you were referring to. It was Operation Open Roads and Operation Main Street under which we built the main street. We did the main street with an inch and a half depth of asphalt for the villages and towns that participated in Operation Main Street. That was done and is still in effect the maintenance

cost is on a 50-50 basis, 50 for the village at their request. If they are having difficulty in getting cold mix or getting the maintenance, we would certainly like to know about it from the village councils or secretaries.

Regarding No. 8 I should like to inform the Member that it is already in the highway system.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Chairman, I don't think that anyone is arguing with the cost sharing. I think the problem with the towns and villages is the availability of the cold mix. There seems to be some problem. I know that lots of towns and villages are prepared to stock-pile a three year supply of it, but they are just not able to get it.

MR. KRAMER: — If you would be good enough to get me the name of the village or the town that is having trouble, we will check into it and do something about it.

MR. WIPF: — I should like to get the Minister off all these rough highways and quit jarring him around.

Your department is in the airport construction business in the North, for water bomber sites. I believe there are four or five, and yesterday you tabled a letter — I am back at the Prince Albert airport now — we are coming in for a landing here — you tabled a letter which said that the city council, which gives council approval to do the engineering work that city council has now specifically approved the location of the air tanker base — an access road is what it said. I am wondering if it is possible that you could table that letter?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I don't know how the city of Prince Albert runs its business, but I assume that when they have a city engineer and he signs a blueprint on their behalf with our department, which has legal indication in the bottom right hand corner — and I am tabling this — which says:

Recommended by Rudell for the city and recommended by Doug McMillan our engineer in charge, he is our director for the Prince Albert district, and then below to finalize it, approved by John S. Swisston, for the city of Prince Albert.

I don't know whether the city of Prince Albert has no confidence in their engineer, but when they give him the authority to sign a document I assume that it is approved and I will table the document, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WIPF: — That is an odd looking letter. It is a little big. You said yesterday that you had a letter which gives council approval to do the engineering work and that the city has now specifically approved the location.

The reason that I ask this is that after you told me this yesterday I kind of thought that maybe they had and I checked out with the mayor and the commissioner and city clerk and a few aldermen and the manager of the Prince Albert airport and that specific approval was coming up Monday. I should like, as

I say, to have that letter that you told us that you had. I should like you to table that. I think that's probably the blueprint there or the drawing that you tabled yesterday, wouldn't it be? It is this letter that you were talking about that I would like to see tabled and over whose signature it is written.

MR. KRAMER: — The Member has misunderstood what I said.

The letter of approval, as I understood it and I only have the telephone to go by (but I have confidence in the people that are working for me), indicated that the city has approved, and that we should go ahead with the design. That was city approval. But when I get a blueprint, signed by the representative of the city of Saskatoon, I assume that has approval and I say that has approval of the city.

MR. WIPF: — Yes, I agree with you, Mr. Minister, that you had approval of engineering work. You had to do your preliminary surveys before you could really draw up your plans. I happened to see one of the first plans that came in and it just happened to miss one of the things kind of necessary for an airport and that happened to be a runway at that time which was later put on and the runway was moved. But the one thing you said yesterday, was that the city has now specifically approved the location of the air tanker base. You said that you had a letter to that effect. That is the letter that I want to see.

MR. KRAMER: — No, I didn't say we had a letter to that effect. I said there was a letter of approval to proceed with the design. We have the approval on the blueprint and we also have the original letter from D. M. Campbell liaison officer, which says among other things, "I am advised that you can proceed with your intended survey on the basis of seven minus one, whatever that means in engineering terms. I think the Member was mistaken and I can understand how he misunderstood what I said. I was talking about a letter of approval to proceed with the design and also the approval of the plan from the city engineer. I may have said them somewhat in the same breath, but that is what I said and I meant, and if the Member misunderstood me I am sorry. I believe that this should satisfy him. The information I gave you was given according to the recorded facts.

MR. WIPF: — Mr. Chairman, it really wasn't so much what you said and you might have said it in the same breath, it is the document that you tabled yesterday that I was reading. I may give you the benefit of the doubt that you read it and it sounded different, but it is this document you tabled, which sort of confuses me. The question that I have been asked before, is, will this tanker site go in without approval of the city fathers? And this slated for Monday, for Monday night. What I am asking about is this letter that gives council approval to do the engineer work. I agree that, you have to have that before you can go in and you have to do your preliminary survey before you do any drawing up of your plans and that the city has now specifically approved the location. You are just about three days ahead of yourself there. They won't approve that until Monday.

In talking with the city people, they told me there may be even more meetings between yourself and the Federal Government

and the city before this definite approval is given. All that I am asking you for is would you table that letter that you said you had yesterday to the people of Saskatchewan?

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I did not say that I had a letter of approval. I said we had an approval of the design, which we have tabled with the city engineer's signature. You can call it a letter or call it anything you wish. That is a document that is far more meaningful to me than a letter. We have also had the letter of approval to proceed with the design. I don't know why the Member has difficulty in understanding that.

MR. WIEBE: — Mr. Chairman, a couple of questions before we leave Item 1.

First, the Minister and I were having a bit of discussion on figures as to what was spent on budgets here and what was spent on budgets there, and I think the point that the Minister and I were both agreeing on, was the point that in 1970-71 the former government spent 12 per cent of its total provincial budgets on highways and that this Budget this year was only spending 8 per cent. I believe what part of the book we were taking our figures out of really didn't matter, but the Minister and I were agreeing on that particular point, that there was that 4 per cent difference in percentage of budget and I think that is basically what counts.

I am rather pleased tonight that we finally found out and heard what the Progressive Conservative Caucus policy is in regard to grid roads. It is rather encouraging and I would suggest to the Members to my left that they better start doing their homework.

First of all he says that they believe in the autonomy of the RMs, that the RMs should request that grid roads be taken into the highway system. Well, Mr. Chairman, that is the way it has always been. There hasn't been one highway or grid road in this province that I know of that the Department of Highways has ever taken over without the initial request first of that particular municipality, in which that grid road was located.

I think, too, that they better start having a little bit closer liaison with their RM councils that they represent because these councillors are saying to them, look we want to have more grid roads into the highway system. Another thing, the Conservative policy is such, no grid roads whatsoever, no help to the municipality whatsoever in terms of grid road assistance. Under a Conservative Government the people of Saskatchewan can rest assured that they are going to have the highest mill rate in the history of any government, because the poor RMs are going to have one heck of a time building any kinds of roads whatsoever under that particular kind of policy. I am very pleased that it has been finally made evident tonight.

I have a question regarding the particular signing policy of the Department of Highways, and when I talk about signing I am talking in regards to signs that one sees on major highways in the province indicating where the next particular town is or directions to the next major highway. Let me just give you an example of the confusion which appears to exist within the Department of Highways regarding that policy. A small town in my constituency by the name of Neville requested that a sign be

located on No. 4 Highway running south of Swift Current, indicating on Highway No. 43 that the first town off of that highway was the town of Neville and they requested that a sign be put on No. 4 Highway indicating that. I made that particular request to the Department of Highways in Swift Current. They very nicely gave me a reply saying that the policy of the Department of Highways is to put a sign on a major highway that indicates the largest or the first largest community that exists along that new road, which in this case, was the town of Vanguard. Vanguard off of No. 4 Highway, On Highway No. 43 was the largest town and I accepted that. So that is their policy, O.K., I went back to the community and said that is the way it is.

Now let's go over to another section of my constituency and look at Highway No. 1. When No. 19 Highway leaves No. 1 Highway there is a large sign indicating the town of Kincaid. Kincaid is something like 52 miles off of No. 1 Highway. Kincaid, I might say, has a population of about 200 people. I had a request shortly after from the town of Hodgeville, which is located in between Kincaid and No. 1 Highway, a population of around 500 people. They requested that that sign along No. 1 Highway could be changed from Kincaid to Hodgeville. I said, well, I will take it up with the Department in Swift Current. I think your chances are extremely good because the highway policy that was explained to me was that the first large major town off of the major highway would be signed on that highway.

But do you know what the answer that I got back was? That is not the Department of Highways policy. We sign the first town closest to another highway. And they told me that that happened to be Highway No. 13. So then I went back to them and said, well look, you said the first highway closest to the town, disregarding the largest population centre, and I noticed that Highway No. 379 goes right through the town of Hodgeville.

So I would like to ask the Minister tonight if he could explain his signing policy to me so that I, in turn, can go back to my constituency and just explain it to the people in Neville, to the people in Vanguard, the people in Hodgeville just exactly what the signing policy is and why the two don't jibe. I'll tell the world it is flexible.

MR. KRAMER: — If what the Hon. Member for Morse is saying is a fact, (and I know at times he has trouble with facts) he has got the egg off his face that he picked up earlier this evening. I would like him to please give me the name of the person in the Swift Current district ' if he got it all from the same person — certainly whatever information he got, if it is as he states, is not the proper interpretation of the policy. I can't, and neither can our staff watch over everyone. I don't know how long you have been in possession of this information, but I am sure if you would have come to us, conveyed it to us, we probably could have corrected it very quickly because the policy is not inflexible. It should be as consistent as possible. You can't maintain 100 per cent consistency. There is sometimes the odd extenuating factor. In this case you seem to have a good argument. We will take it up. If you want to give me the name of the person I would appreciate having it.

MR. WIEBE: — Mr. Chairman, I will give the name of the person I was in contact with, also a letter which I received from that

particular person. It is Mr. Merv Clark, the District Engineer at Swift Current. Along with it is a very explicit map explaining the various differences in that particular policy. I hope we can discuss it, possibly after Estimates are over and we can get a sign for either Neville or Hodgeville. We would be very pleased.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — I am going to be nice now. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister, and I don't think anyone in this House is naive to think that this isn't one of the largest highway chains in Canada. I know we have a problem. I think we have reached a point in our time in this province where we have a lot of highway problems. I think things have built up over the years. I think maybe through wet years and everything we've got a lot of highway problems. The trouble is we have so many dollars to go around the province both on maintenance and on capital works and expenditures on new highways.

I wonder if the Department of Highways has a formula or taken a real good survey of all of these roads that are breaking up. I know you are attempting to patch and keep these roads up until you can get at them. I wonder if you have a priority program based on complete real workings by your engineers as far as to what is happening in their districts. I wonder if you have a priority. If this priority is available tell us what is left, or back here from Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson) has mentioned No 8 coming in the highway system and we all have our pet peeves. The Member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) has mentioned No. 16. I know there are many other highways that have been mentioned. But do you have a program and really spell it out as to what is going to happen to these highways during the next one or two years, other than the maintenance. I am talking about your rebuilding programs on priorities that are really serious and on priorities that you feel or your engineers feel have got to be rebuilt first. This is what I am looking for. We are looking for a program of the reconstruction of our highways in Saskatchewan.

MR. KRAMER: — This question was raised last year. I think the question is a reasonable one. We have a large system of secondary highways, give or take within 200 to 400 vehicles per day. Riding quality is measured consistently right across the province through a system of checking which is reasonably accurate and is used in other places in Canada as well. Riding quality has gone up from less than five, last year to 5.6; it has gone up one point. Seven points is very good; between five and six is reasonable, below five is pretty bad. The Member for Rosetown-Elrose complained about No. 15 last fall; its rating was about 4.35 at the time; there were a number of complaints about it; it is now back up to about 5.35. The Member for Rosetown-Elrose said recently it was impossible to drive on. I want to inform the Member again that 485 vehicles a day are performing the impossible.

Let us take a look at the Member who says we want a program that is going to be announced ahead of time, says that we should announce where we are going to be building roads. Weather patterns in this province are tremendously inconsistent. You could run into a situation where some of our roads would deteriorate in a certain area. I can name you some in the Carrot River area and a few other places where roads went all to pieces, and required immediate attention. In cases like this you would have to deviate from the anticipated program and move into a crash program in one area because of weather. If we were to say okay, we will announce a five year program, there would be a number of people, regardless of the government in power, upset because we had indicated a road be built in 1978 or 1979 and it is 1980 and you haven't done it yet. No Minister of Highways in his right

mind would announce ahead of time, five years ahead, knowing full well that the budgets may not be able to meet the alleged commitment. I suggest again as I did last year, that we simply have to take care of the highway system as need arises. It is a matter determined by necessity. The Member well knows what the situation was a couple of years ago, unheard of precipitation. The Member for Moosomin mentioned floods. One hundred and forty-two inches of precipitation in one year. Unheard of! That is a relatively dry country, but it rained most of the time. So there are a number of things that enter into this argument. I just simply cannot make even tentative commitment without having parts of the whole country upset from time to time. It couldn't be done.

MR. R. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — It was interesting to hear the Member for Morse. I see he is gone, enunciating the Conservative policy on grid roads. Perhaps the Minister — maybe we could make an announcement tonight let out a little secret. I would hope that one of the RMs in my constituency, of course, will be asking for a grid road to be taken into the highway system. Perhaps the Minister could surprise the Member for Morse and myself a little bit to-night and announce that this will be so. I would be very pleased to hear that, and to show them now when it is fresh in their minds as to what the policy might be.

MR. KRAMER: — That would all be very nice. There would be several surprises. The provincial treasurer and the budget bureau would be very surprised too if I did that.

MR. LARTER: — If you were to surprise him by announcing his road I would go over and punch him in the nose.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — The Member for Morse brought up a point about signs. One of the things that bothers me in this province as I drive around is Maple Creek. Highway No. 1 where it enters into Maple Creek, I think, is probably one of the most dangerous corners I have ever come across on No. 1 Highway. Is your department considering putting lights on that corner?

MR. KRAMER: — I don't know when you were last there. There have been a number of safety improvements. I will agree that it is a dangerous intersection — any at-grade crossing of two highways is dangerous. The modifications that we have made recently seem to have met most of the problems. I don't think there have been any recent tragedies there. That is a common hazard right across Canada. The cure is a \$3 million interchange.

MR. WIPF: — On Highway 302, going out east of Prince Albert towards Steep Creek, during the by-election there was some mention made about that highway being completed out to one of the ferries. Can you tell me if you are going to surprise us this year and do that, or do you have any plans — I don't see it in the book — but are there any plans to complete that highway?

MR. KRAMER: — It is in the program; it has been announced stock piling was underway last year. If you look at the program you will see that 302, 14 miles east to 25 miles east will be oil surfaced. We will proceed with that.

MR. McMILLAN: — Mr. Chairman, I have only one point to make by way of a question. Some of the highways in our highway system have deteriorated to the point where I am sure it must leave the Department of Highways in a quandary as to whether or not to rebuild or continue paying exorbitant maintenance costs to try and keep the highways driveable. I think specifically of highways where the maintenance cost has reached the figure of \$5,500 a mile strictly for maintenance costs. And I am sure that isn't the greatest maintenance cost in Saskatchewan. Despite the fact that the Department of Highways is spending \$5500 per mile on stretches of highway like this the highway continues to deteriorate because it has a totally inadequate base under it. I would like to know if the Department of Highways has given any consideration . . . I will tell you about the semi-trailer trucks and what they have done to this highway.

The Department of Highways must have given some consideration to rebuilding the base as being cheaper in the long run than continuing to pour buckets of money into it for maintenance. I will just tell you what the semi-trailer trucks have done to this highway. The Department of Highways recently contracted 96,000 yards of gravel moved over this highway in a five week period. I will tell you something. Those trucks have probably done more to improve the condition of that highway level with the shoulders. At least it is not as hard to drive on it as far as lateral movement goes. It is still badly wash boarded. But the highway has deteriorated to the point where I think it probably makes little economic sense to continue trying to maintain it. It is impossible with the maintenance methods that I am sure are available to the Department of Highways to do an adequate job of maintenance and what do you do in a case like that. Is that one of the highways that is probably slated for rebuilding in the near future? We have gotten into this discussion of priorities and it is a concern in the country. We certainly have highways in my area and in every constituency MLAs have that are deteriorating exceptionally fast. These people would like to know what sort of a program the Department of Highways is setting up. Believe me, we get questions about this on a continual basis.

MR. KRAMER: — I am trying my best to get into the Estimates without too many speeches. But the question that the Member raises is a legitimate one. It is true that maintenance on a first class highway which would cost more than \$300,000 a mile would be approximately \$2,500 a year. But the capital cost of that road plus that would be \$34,000 a year if you took 10 per cent on the capital cost of a \$300,000 a mile road. Follow me through this. That is a high class road. That is the extreme example. The 2406 pavement first stage which costs about \$80,000 to grade and \$106,000 to pave, costs a little better than \$200,000. The capital cost on that is \$21,500 annually. Go down to an even less costly road which is 2406 pavement B; that would suffice for most of Saskatchewan. It would be ideal. That one, \$72,000 for grading; \$65,000 for paving, the maintenance on that would be higher; it would be \$3,000, but the total cost on that one,

capital and maintenance would be \$16,700. There are complaints about our older highways, I am not happy with them either. I said with constant maintenance we can provide a reasonably good ride and a lot better one than the old ones that some of you knew and remember. There are still some around. If you go into some other parts of Canada you will find a lot more of them. Four thousand two hundred is the average maintenance cost on those older roads we are talking about. Keep those costs in mind. Make your own judgment. If we choose to spend a great deal more money on construction cost will go up drastically. The Wild Goose route No. 21 has been continually upgraded. It has been finally recognized as a priority. The people on the east side of the province that talk about No. 8, let them remember that on the west side of the province we only had number four as a north-south route until we got No. 21 which is now connected all the way. It needs more upgrading. We have the bridge at Maidstone which will provide a through route, winter and summer; no problems from North to South.

We have completed four-laning on No. 1 between Moose Jaw and Swift Current, 50 per cent of Saskatchewan's Trans-Canada. Last year we completed 70 miles of construction on No. 35, North and South; Number 33, we completed it to Stoughton; Number 15 Highway, there has been a great amount of improvement on that all the way to Outlook, west of Kindersley; Number 20, Bulyea to Birch Hills all the way up, another north-south route; Number 2, La Ronge south — have you been up there lately? Nearly completed. It was considered to be impossible. It has been done. Operation Open Roads, I mentioned and highway extension added 1,000 miles. In the Meadow Lake northwest area there was \$13 million spent compared to \$2 million five years ago. I go on to No. 19, south of Saskatoon. We've taken the people out of the dust there. When they go down to the recreation areas at the South Saskatchewan Dam, No. 40 highway this year will be completed all the way between North Battleford and Prince Albert. It was a dog-track before, if anyone had the displeasure of riding on it. 155 — Green Lake both ways, another dog-track, completed now and paved all the way north on 155, a lot of work has been done; Beauval area as well. We are making progress. When Members suggest that it is more costly to maintain than it is to build a new road, that is not correct. The capital cost is high. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't be going ahead with reconstruction. I think we should. We are not satisfied with second best, but we must, each one of us, take our turn. There's a lot of country outdoors in Saskatchewan. Let me remind you again, we have the same amount of highways as our two neighbours on each side of us combined and we are doing this with far less money. I congratulate the staff of this department. They have given us a lot of roads for few dollars. They have given good service to Saskatchewan regardless of where you live.

MR. McMILLAN: — I don't have many more comments to make, and I recognize the fact that the Minister is working under some adverse conditions. Firstly, I think the Minister is well aware of the fact that in many instances the highways that have the exceptionally high maintenance cost, have, in some instances, been built as long as 30 years ago. So when he talks about clearing a capital debt on a new highway in 10 years I'm not sure he is being realistic. If he is telling me that the Department of Highways can't build a roadbed that is going to last or stand up more than 10 years, then I think you are mistaken. And I

think there is a consideration to be made there. The real problem, and it's not entirely your fault, I suspect, is the question of priorities with the Provincial Government. We saw in 1971 a government that was struggling with the \$400 million budget due to reasons beyond its control, and managed to assign 12 per cent of that annual budget to the construction and maintenance of highways in Saskatchewan, and yet today, with the kind of resources that we've had available to us in Saskatchewan, instead of at least maintaining that ratio of the provincial budget for construction and maintenance, and believe me a 4 per cent increase in your percentage of the provincial budget today, is fairly significant, instead of even maintaining that 12 percentage points and something that I think most Members of this House recognize that the public feels is a basic necessity and a service they expect the Government to provide, the provincial government has cut back by 4 per cent on that. I say, I feel sorry for you in a way, that you have to deal with the department that, in fact, needs more money than that to operate. You are in a position where you have had time to catch up with you sitting as the Minister of Highways. You had highways that the former administration blacktopped, as a temporary measure to hold them until they could be rebuilt, and you know as well as any other Member of this House that the former administration had extensive programs lined up to rebuild our highways in Saskatchewan. Those seem to have been set aside and it is frustrating to the people in Saskatchewan that have to drive on them.

If you find yourself short of money stand up in front of the public and confess the fact that you aren't being allocated the resources to rebuild our highways at a rate at which the public seems to be demanding them.

I don't have anything more to say to that. I feel sorry for you in your struggle to try and maintain an adequate highway system in Saskatchewan, and I think if you were more successful in your battle with your Cabinet colleagues to re-assign their priorities to provide basic needs in Saskatchewan, that all people in this province would be considerably happier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I think with the list which I have read off, that tremendous progress has been made. To hark back to a budget that was so scant that it mattered little how the pie was divided is fruitless. The Member wasn't present at that time to debate that with him. I think there is one thing I could point out to him, as a Member of a party that is in power in Ottawa. This party steadfastly refuses to accept its responsibility for Trans-Canada traffic, while the same party in Saskatchewan insists that we should be building more highways, which we could with more revenue. The Liberal Government invaded our tax field to the tune of 10 cents a gallon, taking \$35 million out of this province last year and will take it again this year. Now, if you could use some of your eloquence to persuade Otto and company to do what's right for us maybe we could do a little more for the people of Saskatchewan, if they could take the load of Trans-Canada traffic off our backs.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Just one last question, a very simple question.

For years this Government condemned the potash trucks for

damaging our highways. Now that we own the potash industry, are we still going to condemn the trucks for damaging our highways?

MR. ROMANOW: — That was before Bob.

MR. LARTER: — Oh, it's later now!

MR. KRAMER: — I think they will take all loads into consideration.

MR. W. C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the Minister, about one year ago when his Estimates were going through, the Minister indicated that the Department of Highways was planning to purchase a vehicle, or a machine, that could very accurately test the roads as to exactly what kind of weight limits it could stand, whether it be in terms of gross weight or pounds per square inch. You indicated that in the budgetary expenditures for 1976, that this machine, and I apologize for it being a little fuzzy in my mind, would be purchased. Did you purchase it; have you used it; what conclusions have you come to?

MR. KRAMER: — The Member for Thunder Creek has asked that question and I would like to congratulate him on his success with his bulls. If he had as much success here with his bull he would probably be a well-rounded out politician.

However, I want to report to you that the test track has been completed and that we will be compiling data, testing every type of load stress and that the data compilation will be going on shortly so before too long we will be able to give you the information you desire.

Incidentally, I'm glad you showed up, because last year I remember your statement. You said to me, Mr. Minister, if you can stay within that budget I'll be the first one to shake your hand. I want to report to you, Mr. Chairman, that we have stayed within our budget, well within it, and I really don't care whether or not you shake my hand. However, I just want to remind you, Mr. Member for Thunder Creek, that the mission has been accomplished.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, that shaking hand bit, we will get to that a little bit later. It possibly may come about.

Would the Minister tell us exactly when this testing vehicle was purchased and when it was subsequently put into use?

MR. KRAMER: — The test track is a circular track that will take certain loads and those vehicles are available with certain loads on them. I haven't all the blueprints of how this works. Then the electronics will come into play, as I understand it, and data will be compiled indicating the stress that each load puts on each type of load per square inch of tar, or whatever.

MR. THATCHER: — When was it purchased, at what date?

MR. KRAMER: — It was under construction all last year. I think you are thinking of this project as a vehicle. The test track is the main expense. There is also electronic equipment. Vehicles are used for measuring the riding quality. They are just standard vehicles. They are different sized trucks carrying various weights which will be taken over that test track.

MR. THATCHER: — May I then ask the Minister when his colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy) announced his load limits for Saskatchewan did he have access to any data from the Department of Highways? The Minister has indicated that he did not. Would the Minister then tell me that the load limits as they have been proposed, as I understand it, were announced as being a fact at the SARM convention, have since been changed to a proposal. Was there any consultation on the figures that have been proposed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs between his Department and the Department of Highways in releasing these figures?

MR. KRAMER: — I have already answered that question earlier in the day, and I can simply say, certainly there is always consultation. There is plenty of evidence around and I don't want to repeat the arguments. We have evidence of concentrated hauling over some of our lighter oil services. In Rabbit Lake, for instance, three years ago, when they hauled to the terminal in Saskatoon from Rabbit Lake, Saskatchewan, over a highway that had stood up wonderfully one week of heavy hauling to empty an elevator took place and the outbound lanes just went all to pieces. We have that kind of thing. At Yellow Creek and several others, the same thing.

MR. THATCHER: — May I then ask the Minister, when such information would be made available to this Assembly? Do you plan to . . .

MR. KRAMER: — It has already been recorded. I mentioned it in the House on least three different occasions, three different years. I would be glad to send you the information, it's around.

MR. THATCHER: — May we have it right now?

MR. KRAMER: — I thought that the Members were acquainted with what had been said in the House in the last three sessions. I will send you the information; it's there, measured, tested at Yellow Creek and so on and I will give you the information but I haven't got it with me now.

MR. McMILLAN: — If the Department of Highways did not assemble a group of figures relating to damage factor to highways with different weights of vehicles, different tire inches — pounds per inch per tire on both blacktop and other kind of highways, gravel roads, etc., did you not assemble some information to that effect?

MR. KRAMER: — No, we didn't.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman, when it comes to assessing the effective damage, what exactly do your technical people tell you as far as

your criteria for assessment. Is it realistic to talk in terms of gross vehicle weight, or should we not in fact be talking in terms of pounds per square inch of tire?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, that is a discussion that has been kicked around a fair bit and you can take the measurement of pounds per square inch of tire, as one criteria. I wish the Member had been here earlier because I went over that situation. I'm simply saying that a load of cattle going out on a permit load or heavy equipment on a permit load, that one pass over a road does little damage but allow me to quote the Rabbit Lake experience to you. We had constant passes of heavy loads within half hour or hour going over a lightly surfaced road; each pass brought the moisture closer to the surface. Constant hauling is what does the damage. It's not the weight of one load, it's the weight of constant hauling, time after time, that will ruin a road. Anybody who has watched a piece of road like the one that the Member for Souris-Estevan mentioned earlier, suffer a concentrated gravel haul, whether it's a municipal road, or a highway, knows what kind of damage occurs. That's why we pay damages to municipalities during construction. Surely that's not too difficult to understand. One load does not create a problem, but when you have dozens of loads passing over an area in a short period of time, that's when the damage starts to occur. That's where the problem arises.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman. I'm afraid the Minister lost me there, which may not be all that difficult to do, and I'm sure he would agree to that. But in effect is the Minister telling me that a ton of my cattle weighs more, or weighs less than a ton of my wheat?

MR. KRAMER: — No, I'm not telling you that. I'm saying that if you had 10,000 head of cattle and had to haul them out in a week over a certain piece of road that they would do as much damage as thousands of bushels of grain going over it. The incidence of cattle liners is relatively few, but if you think (and I know what you are coming at), that we can take the loads that were formerly carried on rail and transfer them to the present highway system, you've got to have holes in your head.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister misunderstood me. I was not at all talking about rail. What I am talking about is a farmer who wishes to ship grain in the most economical means available to him. The Minister is a very practical individual and he knows the problems of rural Saskatchewan and I know very well that you do. You know very well that the trucks that they are forcing us to buy and put on the road, are equipped with pollution controls; they are inefficient. Pollution controls have no relation to Saskatchewan, but we are forced to buy them. You know very well that the energy costs involved right now are very high, and consequently the higher pay load that you can haul with the use of this energy is of a benefit to the farmer. I am not at all suggesting let's just leave the transportation-out of this, let's just get back to the individual farmer. I think the Minister knows full well that a farmer can haul grain more economically by hiring a commercial semi to haul his grain than he can — even if he owns the trucks; it is paid for; he is paying no interest forget about the depreciation — he can haul that grain

more cheaply by hiring a commercial semi than he can drive it himself on a routine three-ton truck.

If the Minister has the testing mechanisms in place right now, where can a farmer find out the costs so he can decide whether or not he should hire a commercial semi, which in most cases is an eighteen wheeler equipped with pretty big tires, the pounds per square inch are pretty low or whether he must haul a greater distance depending on whether you are dealing with Saskatchewan Wheat Pool or Cargill or UGG I think the Minister would agree that all farmers are going to be forced to haul grain a little bit further than they have been accustomed to; even Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is telling you that.

Does the Minister believe that his government is being completely fair with the farmers in saying forget about hauling this grain down our municipal roads, that your wheat apparently weighs more than any other commodity.

MR. PENNER: — A question to the Minister with regard to the Saskatoon district. I notice that the funding your department is proposing is up about 31 per cent over last year, despite the fact that your permanent staff is down two in that office over last year. I see a fairly substantial increase in your temporary staff, at least I am assuming that that must be part of it, maybe because you need the staff in there to assist with the design for the 42nd Street bridge, or for whatever reason. Would you care to comment about the reasons for that rather substantial increase in that office.

MR. KRAMER: — Could we take up that question when we get to that item please? I thought we should get all the questions out of the way on Item 1 first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — As long as there is no repeat later on.

MR. PENNER: — I can assure the Chairman and all Members of the House that I don't want to waste the time of the House repeating the questions. If I ask them now, I don't intend to ask it again.

MR. KRAMER: — Which item?

MR. PENNER: — It was Item 16. I don't want to cause any commotion.

MR. KRAMER: — All right, fine. Item 16. There are three items under this, personal services, permanent positions and other personal services. The personnel has gone down from 33 to 31. Could you please repeat your specific question?

MR. PENNER: — I note the increase is 31 per cent on Item 16. You are right, the permanent staff is down two. I am assuming there is a substantial increase in temporary staff in addition to the substantial increase in other expenses. I wondered if you could just highlight what the main items there are please.

MR. KRAMER: — No, it is not temporary staff. Metric conversion is

a \$102,000 item alone and you will find that true in a number of others. And the standard salary increases as I said earlier embrace two years, not one. Those two items are the main items.

MR. PENNER: — The substantial increase then really has nothing to do with the fact that you got that big office in my constituency and that you want to sort of fill it up.

MR. KRAMER: — The watch word is efficiency at all times.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order! Just one minute please. I have allowed the Member to refer to Item 16. I think to hasten and expedite things and make it more convenient for the Minister to follow his books, we should stick as close as possible as we go along to each Item, to expedite things for everyone.

You have a question on Item 1?

MR. A. H. McMILLAN (Kindersley): — Yes. I would like to ask the Minister, in view of the fact that the Department of Highways has apparently not developed any statistics themselves on the damage factor to roads, has the Department of Highways been using the damage factors that are being developed by the American Association of State Highway officials?

MR. KRAMER: — There have been studies, and there is some consideration given to them regardless of the geographical and climatical differences.

MR. McMILLAN: — Do you put any faith in those statistics as they apply to Saskatchewan, any degree of faith? I don't suggest you would be confident that they would apply 100 per cent? I would like to know if your department is reasonably confident that those figures are fairly accurate?

MR. KRAMER: — They were given some credence a few years back. We have found that they are not really applicable to Saskatchewan and very little attention is paid to them anymore.

MR. McMILLAN: — In what way are they no longer applicable to Saskatchewan? I would be interested in knowing that. Your department has experts who as long as two or three years ago put some considerable faith in them as far as maybe because there were no figures developed on their own. What has occurred in the last two or three years which has caused the department to suddenly lose faith in them?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, it is pretty obvious that moisture conditions vary a great deal, different soils, certainly a different climate, extreme low temperatures in winter, all of those things are items which do apply. In the United States in most instances the total federal highway system, is 90 per cent funded by the Federal Government. They build far thicker roads; a lot of them are concrete. The comparisons are just not useful to us.

MR. McMILLAN: — Is it the intention of your department, in the tests that they plan to carry out with the experimental track and the equipment they have for monitoring it, etc., to produce the same structure of statistics? Do you plan on producing a figure which could be considered a damage factor on a road for the number of tests that run on it and the amount of weight that goes over it?

MR. KRAMER: — We certainly intend to develop statistics under Saskatchewan conditions. I think that makes sense. That is not to say that we don't have a fair bit of evidence now, from actual experience. The evidence that I have mentioned earlier, I shall not repeat.

MR. McMILLAN: — Does the Minister, in view of the fact that he has no faith in the American statistics, and I don't suggest that that is the proper approach to take, that the only evidence that you have regarding the damage to our highways in Saskatchewan can, in effect, be considered unofficial, that it may in time be proven to be quite accurate. On the other hand, you may find in your unscientific observations of the destruction of our highways in Saskatchewan that there is an entirely different factor involved in the deterioration of our highways. Does the Minister not think that it would be wise for the Saskatchewan Government to wait until professional studies that the Department of Highways is prepared to carry out are done before they start imposing abnormal restrictions on certain carriers of produce in Saskatchewan?

MR. KRAMER: — No, I think we have enough evidence to know what types of roads can take a concentrated haul. If we were to build the \$315,000 per mile first class highway, then there is no doubt that we could haul any kind of a load any time you wish. But we simply cannot afford to build that kind of a highway system. Let's not forget that we — and I don't want to get into that one again — the people of western Canada subsidized two road systems, CPR and CNR systems. We subsidized them heavily and continue to do so. It seems as if we are going to be asked to subsidize again at total Saskatchewan expense yet one more transportation system.

MR. McMILLAN: — I am not referring specifically to the grain trade or anything. I am asking you a question as far as policy in your department goes. If you are so convinced that studies are not necessary on our highway system to determine what effects long hauls, rapid hauls, heavy loads, oversized loads, if you are so convinced that you are already aware of what the results of that kind of trucking will be, the importance of your new equipment and new test site is greatly minimized. I would also suggest that while you may be confident that your decisions and your observations in that matter are exact, I suggest that there probably are many factors involved in highway deterioration which are not evident to the naked eye of the Minister of Highways and particularly in view of the fact that the Department of Highways has changed its construction methods in the past two or three years their level of compaction and the type of compaction that is done. I can't believe that the Minister of Highways would take such a non-professional approach to his job as the Minister responsible for construction and maintenance

of highways as to suggest that without any professional testing he knows what the result of overweight trucking and rapid trucking will be on his highways. As I say, I am surprised, I hope you will reconsider that. I would like to urge your department certainly to, at least, have some reservations about the observations you make about highway deterioration until your testing has been done on your test site.

MR. KRAMER: — I consider that we aren't without evidence. We have enough obvious experience and that . . . if we were going to go the American test route, and this is the American Association State Highway officials, we would be building all over \$315,000 a mile roads. Then those tests you were talking about from the United States would probably be valid. They might not be entirely valid because of climatical differences etc. We can get by in Saskatchewan with \$138,000 a mile roads, for pavement B, a good grade with the proper base. The annual cost of those, as I said, amortized is \$16,000 compared to \$34,000, but even those are going to be costly.

I am not going to debate the truck limit; I think I have said everything that I can on that. If you want to debate that, you can debate it on transportation policy.

MR. THATCHER: — The Minister is aware that last year as this year, he handed out a list of work to be done by the Department of Highways. I am sure the Minister recalls very well the list that he handed out one year ago. I would like to ask the Minister if all that work was completed.

MR. KRAMER: — No, it is not, there is some carry-over . . . you are talking about the Courval east road? That's 363. It will be completed this year; we upgraded it; it was in pretty bad shape. There were a lot of roads that were in bad condition for the last 15 years. There was a seven-year period when things went all to pieces. We have No. 363 upgraded; we'll get the top on it. I am sure it will add to your comfort.

MR. THATCHER: — The Minister mentioned Highway 363. He must have a guilty conscience on that particular subject. Is that the only one that was not done? Is the Minister telling us that out of that list . . . Would the Minister tell us when it was proposed last year, the work that was proposed and why it wasn't done. It seemed to me that last year moisture conditions were pretty good; we had a late fall; we had a little wet period in June. I don't recall too much rain after the 10th of July. Why wasn't the work completed?

MR. KRAMER: — I don't know how often I have to point out the difference between program and carry-over. Every program can't be completed in one year. Sometimes there are unforeseen circumstances. I want to assure the Member that the carry-over will be completed. That's about all I can say.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, with due respect, when we talk about program carry-over, but you presented the list last year. We didn't present the list; we didn't suggest it; you presented the

list. You had pretty good conditions. All right you had some carry-over from the year before. Why didn't you complete the list of what you said you were going to do last year? Did you run out of money by any chance?

MR. KRAMER: — We'll finish it next summer.

MR. THATCHER: — Is the Minister telling me that you completed that entire list that was presented last year?

MR. KRAMER: — No, I am saying that there were a number of carry-overs; there always are carry-overs.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, why didn't you finish it? The carry-overs that were in this time last year, why didn't you finish what you told us you were going to do?

MR. KRAMER: — You know, I think you ought to go back to the bar.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, Mr. Minister we can be facetious if we want to get personal. Frankly I'd rather be over in the bar. They make considerably more sense over there than this place ever did. Tell us once again, you presented the list a year ago, why wasn't it done? You had ideal weather conditions; we didn't present the list, you did. Why wasn't it completed?

MR. KRAMER: — I repeat once more, that we state what we intend to do and that each year there will be some carry-over for this 1977-78 grading program, was 81.94 miles. On the next sheet 101 miles, estimated carry-over; 27 miles on the next one. This is all part of the planned carry-over. Sometimes you don't get all the ploughing done on the farm either.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister tell this House . . . every year he presents a certain number of contracts that are going to be oiled for instance. Last year he presented us with a list of roads that were going to be oiled. Can the Minister tell us if he let a contract. I assume that the bulk of this is done privately. Can the Minister tell us if a tender was let on all of the oiling contracts and paving contracts that he had on list last year.

MR. KRAMER: — As a matter of fact, the heavy duty paving is all done privately. Practically all the oiling is done with our crews and they are programmed to cover as much work as possible, occasionally they don't get through. At times, in certain areas, they do custom work for towns that need oiling work done and it does hold them up. We provide that service to the towns while our crews are working in that vicinity. It is a little difficult to keep schedules because it wouldn't really be fair if we were working in an area, and a town wanted some paving done while they were there. It is a little difficult to predict a program and that is why the former government and ours has continued to maintain the oiling service as part of our maintenance.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister tell this House of the work sheet that he presented a year ago in his budget. How much of it was completed. What percentage?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, if you are talking about grading we did announce 294; we did 299 miles. We announced that we would do 414 miles of paving," we did 390. We are down some on the oiling. We announced we would do 283; we were down to 243. We are up on some and down on others.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister tell us why the bulk of this wasn't completed? You have given us the excuse that you did a little maintenance in towns and villages. I don't think that really takes your crews all that long. Why wasn't this completed, for instance, 363 and you got on the subject of 363. There were 15 miles to be done on that. You didn't even get mile number one done.

This year, I notice, that you are going to do considerably more. You are going to go much further than the 15 miles. It must be 40 some miles that you are going to do now. Why would you think that you are going to do 40 miles this year when you couldn't do 15 miles last year?

MR. KRAMER: — I said that we had given the figures and I don't know what more the Member wants. We will, I hope, get most of it done next year. I hope we will get all of it done and that will make up for what we didn't get done this year. There are some times extenuating circumstances that seem to be difficult for the Member to understand but I have given my answer. I think we have done reasonably well. The carry-over is not unusual. Go back over the last 10 years if you wish, and you will see that there has always been a carry-over. The carryover is not great. I think it is normal and we have no excuses to offer.

MR. THATCHER: — Am I correct then, and listening to the Minister's figures, is the Minister suggesting that of the work sheet that he presented to us last year, are you saying that you did roughly 90 per cent of that work? Do I understand you correctly? I am basing that on the figures which you have just quoted and it is somewhere between 85 to 90 per cent; is that correct?

MR. KRAMER: — More than 90 per cent.

MR. THATCHER: — If the Minister has done that volume of work and the volume of work which he is listing to be completed in the current fiscal year, starting on March 31st, why was the Minister, about three or four months ago telling private contractors, don't plan on anything big in this province happening in terms of highway construction; don't go out of your way to buy any new machines; don't just really plan on that much in Saskatchewan. Do you, in effect, plan to do the work that you have suggested that you are going to do on this work sheet?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I think the road builders, the Saskatchewan

road builders are probably the last ones that want any advice from the Member for Thunder Creek. They have every confidence that we will be providing them with sufficient work. If he insists on taking your information from headlines; feel free to do so. When I told them that there would be no expansion, that we would be steady as you go, that we would be providing the same amount of work and possibly a bit more which we will do, that is something vastly different from the suggestion that there will not be any work and construction will fold up. I simply said to them, honestly, that they shouldn't be expanding their capability or putting a tremendous amount of investment out in the hope that there was going to be a greatly expanded highway program.

I invite you to look over the history of the people who went broke because of the lack of planning through the late '60 where 32 contractors went broke in two years, because they went from glut to famine. We are projecting a steady program so that road builders know and are reasonably satisfied. Our relationship with the road builders of Saskatchewan is second to none and they will tell you that.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I am sorry. I wasn't suggesting that the road builders pay any attention to the Member for Thunder Creek. I was merely asking you if you were quoted accurately and I think I basically did summarize what you put out in the press.

MR. KRAMER: — I didn't put it out in the press. The press printed something that I didn't say.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, are you telling me that the press is disreputable in this province?

MR. KRAMER: — I say that sometimes they don't pay attention.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister care to tell exactly how many private road-building road contractors are left in this province, never mind paving crews. How many road builders are left in this province since you took over as Minister of Highways?

MR. KRAMER: — Approximately the same number there were five years ago, six years ago.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister care to tell me what that number is.

MR. KRAMER: — My staff doesn't have the figure here and I would be glad to supply it to the Member.

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister agree that, perhaps, we have reached the situation in this province where the road builders have said, to blazes with it, there is nothing going on here. The highway system is deteriorating. This government has no interest in preserving, the most important thing in rural Saskatchewan. They have simply packed up and headed elsewhere or they have diversified. The budget for Highways in Saskatchewan has simply

not kept pace percentage wise with the overall global of the province. Under this Minister he appears to lose battles every year and I am sure, there are very hard, tough battles, in the Budget Bureau, as to which department gets the dollars, the Department of Highways has lost out very badly.

Would the Minister agree that even though he has a very top-notch staff there, the number of employees has not particularly increased in the past ten years, maybe 100 or so. In short, the Department of Highways has been short-changed very drastically in the past five years. Would the Minister not agree that our highways continue to deteriorate year by year because of improper maintenance due to improper funds? Would the Minister not agree that not only are you not spending enough dollars in terms of maintenance, you are not spending enough dollars in terms of straight capital construction? And that under your stewardship, the Department of Highways has simply not been doing its job towards providing adequate roads to rural Saskatchewan to keep people on the farms and yet give them a system of roads on which they can go back and forth to their farm. I would be very interested in hearing the Minister's comments in this regard.

MR. KRAMER: — I wouldn't agree with anything the Member said, neither would the roadbuilders. His facts are completely wrong. As I said we have the same number as we had in 1971, contrary to the list of bankruptcies that existed prior to that time. The answer is, No, in all cases.

The Member is simply ill-informed.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Minister, I have a series of questions on the Ring Road in the city of Regina. I preface my remarks by saying that my criticisms of the Ring Road in Regina are not to be attributed to the Government opposite or the department, but to the concept of the Ring Road in the city of Regina.

The Ring Road is really Regina's Spadina Express-way. It has isolated people in Regina. I am looking at the subdivisions of North Uplands, Glencairn, University Park to-date and new subdivisions that come along. It has created isolation in subdivisions that are being cut off from community services that are being cut off from community services that are on the internal side of the Ring Road. It is obvious to the Minister of the time tied up by a staff attending meetings causing dissension among the people of Regina. It has resulted in poor planning in that there is now, back and forth, flow between subdivisions, subdivisions being cut off, and let us say, it has caused a great deal of dissension among the citizens of Regina. And it seems to me that all of these problems of bad planning and dissension are being caused in the interest of speed and in the interest of having a four-lane express-way running right through the city of Regina.

If the argument is that the Ring Road is going to allow the people in one subdivision to get to another place quicker, that is not true, because if we take Glencairn, for example, they don't really have any flow into the Ring Road and then can get off at a particular subdivision. It really doesn't take them anywhere.

A meeting about one week ago on the University Park subdivision shows that the Ring Road or the bypass at that point has really cut them off from the rest of the city and is going to cause a great deal of problems in routing funeral processions right through a residential subdivision. Why, and I think this is a basic question, and I raised it at a Glencairn meeting when the Ring Road was being discussed and the interchange at Victoria and the Ring Road, why do we even need the Ring Road in the city of Regina? I really don't think that it has been justified and, again, I preface very carefully, Mr. Minister, that my remarks about the Ring Road were not against the department or its staff. As a matter of fact, I will say to the Minister that his staff and, in particular, the district engineer of the Department of Highways, has probably done more to attempt to explain to the people of Regina what the department's position is, than any other individual can do and I think he has done it very well. I commend the district engineer of Regina.

My concern is the very concept of the Ring Road. I can't, in my own mind, justify the existence of the Ring Road. It has been harmful. The only justification seems to be a high speed express-way through Regina. If that is the only criteria the only justification for the Ring Road, then I would urge upon the Minister of Highways that he use whatever powers he has including the freezing of funds or the stopping of funds for the Ring Road, to stop further development of the Ring Road. It doesn't have the support of the new subdivisions in Regina and I would submit to the Minister, that if the Minister stopped further construction of the Ring Road and put it back down to a two-lane easy access, quick to get around Regina, rather than a throughway or an express-way, that he would, in fact, be doing the citizens of Regina a real favour. I would recommend that suggestion to him.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I think the Member has indicated that this is not the responsibility of the Department of Highways. The original approval for this study and the Ring Road was done under the former government at the request of the city of Regina. I think the Hon. Gordon Grant signed the first agreement. From 1964 to 1971 most of the quadrant, the northeast quadrant, was completed. We have simply advised, acting on the request of the city of Regina. I am not going to debate the pros and cons of something that is now an accomplished fact. I am sure that anything new does have its drawbacks and hindsight is always twenty-twenty. I suggest to all concerned that city planning may leave something to be desired. However, they have had their traffic study. They have made their recommendations; they have made their decisions. I am not going to try to interfere with the duly elected government of the city of Regina and try at this point in time to contravene their wishes.

MR. LANE: — Can the Minister tell me where your public duty lies? Are you saying that if a local government decides to impose a traffic scheme upon people that you abrogate all responsibility and I strongly suspect that that is not the case, that you abrogate all responsibility to the local governments, if in your knowledge the results of the project . . . well, the bad planning, community dissention, hardship, economic or social on communities and can you tell me if your department sees a project having long-term bad results. Where does your social responsibility lie as the Minister?

MR. KRAMER: — The Member for Qu'Appelle is again setting himself up as an instant expert. I am not suggesting that the Ring Road is the perfect solution with the recent unprecedented city growth. Possibly if we had remained in the doldrums that we were in in 1971, if Regina had remained a no growth city, these problems would not have arisen. However, reputable and capable consultants have been engaged by the city of Regina; they have made recommendations; the city has accepted them and I suggest that the Member take his plea to City Hall. Unless my Government, Premier and Cabinet, direct me to interfere with the democratic decisions of the city I certainly do not intend to take any action in that regard.

MR. LANE: — Except that there is a particular problem in this case, Mr. Minister, and that is that I have been informed by your Department and by the engineering department in the city of Regina that the original concept of the Ring Road was a road that would allow for a higher speed through town with ease of access to try and get people from one part of the town more quickly than driving through more heavy pedestrian traffic thoroughfares. But what it is evolved from this original concept which developed it into a divided highway, throughway, express-way or whatever the word is, because the Department of Highways has encouraged the city, through engineering assistance and financial assistance, to go into a more sophisticated type of approach than was originally planned. I agree with the original concept of the Ring Road but the Ring Road as it is today is an abortion to say the least. It is wrong; it is causing problems and it is doing no good, whatsoever.

MR. KRAMER: — I think the Member is, as usual, the sailor standing on the pier telling the folks out on the water how to row the boat. I want to show you that there is a recommended plan by Lou Grimble and Associates, accepted by the former Liberal Government which he worked for as executive assistant to the former Attorney General Darrel Heald. He must have known a little about the plan then. It was accepted by that government at that time, accepted by the city council at that time, accepted by the former mayor, Mr. Walker, as a good plan and now after the thing is more than half completed, the Member for Qu'Appelle wants to holler. Whoa! Now, you know what happens when you say 'Whoa' in a soft spot. You're going to get stuck worse than you expected.

MR. LANE: — Yes, I want to say, 'Whoa', to that particular project. I think that that is a particular project that is doing more harm than good. I don't think that it is fair for the Minister to say that because decisions were made right along the line that everything is rosy, that it's fine. The fact is that I'm surprised that the Minister of Highways would say that once a decision is made it can never be reconsidered, that we are going hell-bent for leather and that that's all there is to it and without a by your leave. That's what you are saying and I'm a little surprised. The fact is that there is historic precedent in Canada for the Minister of Highways and the Government stopping a bad concept and was used, for example, by the Spadina Expressway in Toronto. The fact is that it was wrong; the fact is that it is local autonomy but the Department of Highways has a major input in the matter. And when I have

brought this before this Assembly and there have been many meetings of the citizens in every community associations surrounding the Ring Road and the bypass as being opposed to it, as it being wrong. The Minister, on the one hand, says it was when there was slow growth. It was proposed for the city when the growth was supposed to be slower; all of a sudden it quickens up. Now we can't re-assess the particular matter. The fact is and I have said it, that if the Minister of Highways was to stop further construction of the Ring Road he would have the support of the majority of the citizens of Regina. They have made it clear. The fact is the city figures it is locked in. I think the Minister would be doing a service to the citizens of Regina to stop further work on the Ring Road. I think it is a very, very harmful project.

Item 1 agreed to.

ITEM 2

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell me why the Department of Highways has acquired a reputation throughout the industry, that is the road building industry, of being so slow in paying its bills?

MR. KRAMER: — We don't have that reputation, Mr. Chairman.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I think you would get some argument on that. Could the Minister tell me if the use of the financial services branch, within your department, is consistent with other areas of government?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, I think we use standard procedures and I just want to inform the Member for Thunder Creek that our progress payments are being sent out on time as well.

MR. THATCHER: — Can the Minister tell me if some of the other government departments, and when I say government departments I am referring to highways, agriculture, social services, government services, whatever the case may be, maintain their own financial services branch?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I suppose it's how good does the rose smell by any other name. It is a name that has been given and has been with the department for a number of years. It is administrative services in some departments but it performs the same function. I don't know what the point is of the Member's question.

MR. THATCHER: — The point of the question is will the Minister not agree that there is only one other major government department that proceeds in similar fashion to the Department of Highways and that is the Department of Government Services. The other departments have turned their bill paying mechanisms over to another department entirely and I would like to know why the Department of Highways continues to duplicate what another existing government function is doing right now for many other

government departments.

MR. KRAMER: — The answer to the original question is 90 per cent of our payments are made within seven days, 98 per cent within 14 days.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister you still haven't answered my question. Why are you duplicating the services that are provided elsewhere? Only the Department of Highways and the Department of Government Services do not use this other mechanism which is in effect.

MR. KRAMER: — We do it because we found this to be effective, efficient and more useful both to the people we serve and certainly more effective to the department. Our administration costs of this department are lower than most of our own departments. They are much lower than the administration costs of sister departments of Alberta, Manitoba, and especially Alberta.

MR. THATCHER: — The Minister will, in other words, concede that there is another government department which is presently operating which pays the balance of the other Government expenditures. You have the amount of \$490,000 here budgeted for this. I assume the Minister is conceding that he is duplicating what is already in existence. I assume that the Minister is in essence conceding that he is wasting \$490,000 in taxpayers' money because that mechanism is already in effect for other major government departments. Why don't you use it?

MR. KRAMER: — It is not duplicating. This is the mechanism that has been found to be effective over the years with various governments and we do our work in house; we know where it's at in other words we've got a handle on it and we know what's going on.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister are you trying to tell us that you are not duplicating when you are spending \$490,000 of taxpayers' money to duplicate something that is already being done in government. Other government departments use this other mechanism; only your department and the Department of Government Services have refused to do so. And by maintaining your own branch you are simply spending \$490,000 that you don't have to spend. We'll get to the Government Services provision when we come to their section of the budget, but as far as you are concerned you are wasting \$490,000 and denying it.

MR. KRAMER: — Simply moving them across under another title would not change anything. I am rather surprised that a businessman, I presume that you are one, would make that kind of a statement. They are housed where they ought to be. I want them in the department; if they were housed in finance the communications would not be as good. I just reject it out of hand.

MR. THATCHER: — Is the Minister trying to tell us that if this other government agency were to handle the payments of his bills that by simply assuming it that 31 people would have to be moved over to this department, 31 people that are costing

\$490,000? Are you seriously trying to say that if your payments were transferred over there that all 31 people have to go over there? Get serious, you know full well that they could handle your payment without a single increase in staff.

MR. KRAMER: — Only 15 per cent of the total workload would go over to Finance.

MR. THATCHER: — The Minister is speaking rather softly, could you get back to your auctioneer's voice and tell us in your normal manner in this House? Would you please respond so we can hear you?

MR. KRAMER: — My response is that this is the way we choose to do it and if we are wrong, then I suppose we are wrong; it's a matter of opinion. It is the way it has always been done; it is the most effective way to do it and if you would like to come and have it explained to you rather than take up the time of this House with inane questions, we would be pleased to take you over there and explain the facts of life to you.

MR. THATCHER: — Very well, Mr. Minister, I would like it explained to me; in fact I would like it explained right now. I am saying that you are wasting \$490,000 and I am saying that it is nonsense for you to suggest that you have done that if the other government agency were to take on the payment of your bills that they would require an increase in staff of 31 people. I am saying that you are wasting \$490,000 of taxpayers' money. You tell me where I am wrong? Don't just stay in your seat; stand up and defend yourself.

Just silence; can I assume then that the Minister is conceding what I have just said to be true. If not, stay where you are; otherwise get up.

MR. KRAMER: — No, I think you are stupid.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, you know it is very easy to throw personal insults like that; you know any two-year old in a school yard can do that. Now we are down to \$490,000 of taxpayers' money; now tell me why you are wasting it. Why don't you transfer this around as virtually every other major government department has done; why don't you do it? There has got to be a reason. Now if you want to throw across your childish prattle go right ahead but supposedly we are here to make some degree of common sense so stand up and answer it.

The Minister by his silence has conceded that he is virtually wasting \$500,000 of taxpayers' dollars by a silly ridiculous duplication. This is the third time now I have challenged him to get up and deny it and tell us where I am wrong. I am pleased to see that the Minister has finally screwed up enough courage to defend himself.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, if you talk about someone being screwed up that has to be the Member for Thunder Creek. I did not want to take the time of this House to take him through this childlike sort of a performance but I suppose it is his right to ask questions regardless of the value.

In this department branch staff training is part of this Item; blue printing is part of this Item. This is necessary to operate this department; our total telephone service is taken care of in this Item; freight, and payrolls are also included. It should be obvious, Mr. Chairman, that the total financial control of the \$142 million budget this year, is all under the control of this branch. The Member is saying to me that this should be transferred over to another department. That would be abdicating responsibility. I don't know where the Member has been before he got here and I didn't think he was serious. Invoices which would be 15 per cent could possibly be transferred to some other department.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, are you in essence telling me that the Department of Agriculture is irresponsible? Are you telling me that the Department of Social Services is irresponsible? Are you telling me that the Department of Northern Affairs is irresponsible? And I can go on and on and on — but they have always done this. They have all eliminated this unnecessary expense and since you have .challenged . . .

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman.

MR. THATCHER: — May I finish, Mr. Minister.

MR. KRAMER: — One never knows whether you are finished or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order:

MR. THATCHER: — Would the Minister kindly get to the nub of the issue and let's cut this personal nonsense out and let's get at it. You are spending half a million dollars here on duplication that most other government departments deem unnecessary. I'm simply asking you a very clipped, concise question: Why are you spending half a million dollars; why have you got 31 civil servants employed here? Simply tell us why and let's get on with the business. But if you want to go round and round in circles, I can do it right with you.

MR. KRAMER: — All right. You mentioned agriculture. Simply a heading; instead of having financial services they include it in administration services. You will note that they have (if you have your blue book with you) administrative services in agriculture as \$1,040,770, and that includes the business management of the Department of Agriculture, which does exactly the same thing for their department as our financial support services do for ours. It is simply a different title doing the same work within that particular department. I think we can give you other instances — Consumer Affairs — administration there is \$212,000. We have chosen to identify financial support services as a separate group; we could just as well have included them in the administration section as agriculture has done. It is no different; it is simply a separation in the

column and a separation in the blue book.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I hate to tell you how government works, but your explanation is total nonsense and if you don't know that then I think you should perhaps step out of your portfolio, because the departments that you have just mentioned do not function in an identical manner. They have not disguised the financial services branch as you suggest under administration. Their bills are paid elsewhere and there are only two departments that pay their bills, that handle their financial services in the manner that is described here and that is your department, Department of Highways, and Government Services. I again say, you are wasting \$500,000 of taxpayers' money through needless duplication and if you think that the explanation that you have just given is accurate, then I think you had better find out what is going on among your colleagues. I again challenge you to refute that.

MR. KRAMER: — I do refute it and I won't repeat some of the other things that I said earlier about the Member for Thunder Creek because I might even come to worse conclusions.

There is only 15 per cent of the paying of bills involved in the total support services, 15 per cent is the paying of bills and invoices. That is the item he is talking about. He is talking about a \$500,000 item. I've listed all the other things that are done by this branch besides the processing of payments and invoices. Your argument is sheer nonsense.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, Mr. Minister, there is an easy way to settle that. If I am right and you are wrong one of us should obviously get out of here, and what I am saying is wrong, then obviously I should get out of the road in Thunder Creek. On the other hand, if you are wrong, perhaps you should get out of the road in North Battleford. And what I am saying is you can talk about percentages of budget all you want, but unfortunately these are down here in dollars and these dollars have to come out of the taxpayers of this province, and again I'll say, and this is about the fifth time I have said it and each time you propose to get down to the personal level (and that's fine, you are notorious for that) and I'm afraid on this particular evening I'm not interested in reciprocating. Again I will say that you are wasting \$500,000 of taxpayers' money on a needless silly duplication. You have refused to refute that and unless you are going to get up on your feet this time, I would suggest that you stay where you are and that we accept it as a fact that this financial services branch is not necessary within the Department of Highways. You are simply throwing half a million dollars of taxpayers' money out of the window. It is a principle that is accepted by every other government department, except yours and the Department of Government Services.

MR. KRAMER: — I would think the Member would get tired of repeating nonsensical statements. I don't know how often one has to repeat that he is wrong. He says that one of us should get out. I think it is obvious to most of us which one it should be. I am prepared to put this argument in front of an independent person, somebody who knows a little about accounting, and . . .

MR. THATCHER: — The Attorney General?

MR. KRAMER: — No, no, not the Attorney General. We'll find somebody that you and I can both agree on, and you know that we are going to find out I'm right. I understand that the Member for Thunder Creek rode horses a lot when he was a kid, but he didn't do it very well. There was an old saying back at the ranch, that if you rode a horse and he threw you, if you were fast you landed on your feet. If you are only half-fast you land on your head; that's why we've got this half-fast Member for Thunder Creek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear:

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I wish I was in a different mood tonight because I think we could have an interesting discussion.

I should like to say to the Minister, again you choose to go round and round in circles. Do you deny that there are only two departments that pay their bills, that feel they have to have the financial services branch, such as, as I have said, the Department of Highways and the Department of Government Services. The balance all use another mechanism. Do you deny that that is in effect? I have nothing more to say on the subject. Either refute that and let's get directly to the point and let's get off this personal nonsense.

MR. KRAMER: — I repeat again that we do this because we have found through experience as former governments have found the system useful.

MR. THATCHER: — Answer the question for a change.

MR. KRAMER: — I have answered it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I would like to draw to the attention of the Member speaking that I think we have a decorum in the House here that we should try to certainly improve and I would have to say that I cannot see it that way tonight. I have asked earlier on in the Estimates that when you address your remarks you address them to the Chair. I have not seen that too often tonight, and I would ask for all Members to try to adhere to these rules and regulations. We were elected and sent to do business in the House so let's proceed and try to do it in an orderly manner and fashion.

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I have told the Member that he is probably correct, that Government Services and Highways have chosen this method of organizing our department years ago proceed no differently than we have ever done. We have found it to be the most efficient and the most effective. The administration costs, the total administration costs of the Department of Highways is second to none economically and I challenge the Member for Thunder Creek to have an independent person come in and adjudicate, whether our method is better or more useful, whether it is a waste, and I challenge him again to find someone that is acceptable to both of us to pass an opinion on this. Obviously I can't get through that overburden of scar tissue that he has developed on his head; I can do little more,

Mr. Chairman.

Item 2 agreed to.

ITEM 3:

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, in the 'other expenses' can you give us a break down of what your estimates are — there is a dramatic increase in the other expenses item in that particular section?

MR. KRAMER: — There has been a change in the worker's compensation benefits based on salary raised from \$10,000 to \$14,000. That item alone is \$71,750. The rest of the increase would be the normal increments and wages.

MR. LANE: — Is there any increase in the number of part-time personnel that the department is considering under this subsection?

MR. KRAMER: — There is one man increase in other personal services.

MR. LANE: — To the best of your knowledge is this increase in the workers' compensation benefits pretty well applicable across other government departments?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, it would be right across.

Item 3 agreed to.

Item 4 agreed to.

ITEM 5:

MR. E. ANDERSON (Shaunavon): — Mr. Chairman, there seems to be an awfully drastic increase in your permanent positions — Personal Services and you are dropping five men and you have an increase of \$92,000 in the two items — Personal Services (Permanent Positions and Other Personal Services) and it seems an awfully big increase. I wish the Minister would explain this.

MR. KRAMER: — There will be four people transferred to Central Service and Mapping Agency and you will find that in Item 20. It's a transfer. You will find that the right hand side (when you get to that) is blank and the amounts there for that new division is the sum of \$350,540 and that, plus the normal increase should total. If you want to ask the question on Item 20 I could explain the Central Surveys and Mapping Agency and what service it will provide.

MR. ANDERSON: — Mr. Chairman, on Item 20 you have increased the budget there, but if you take your two permanent positions and other Personal Services from last year to this year you still have on those two items together a \$92,000 increase. You have \$30,000 under Permanent Positions and \$59,000, almost \$60,000 under Other Personal Services. That's from 1976 to this year.

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, well you have the increases — the 1975 increases which came in prior to federal controls, increases as well for 1976. You have to combine those two.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Is the increase for 1977 forecast in this Estimate?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes.

MR. LARTER: — I said, are the increases in all of your Estimates here, your increases that would normally fall in October of 1977; are they built into the Estimates? The wage increases, are they built into these Estimates?

MR. KRAMER: — The 1976 increments, unfortunately are still being negotiated, and we have to take care of those. We are providing for them in this Item. We can't really give you a firm figure on that. We have a pretty good idea what it will be but I think it would not be wise for us to say it will be six or ten per cent because that would be end-running the negotiators.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, I sympathize with that. If you haven't finished your negotiations for 1976, then what you are saying is you are estimating that approximately the 1976 negotiations are built into 1977. It could vary some, but it is built into the 1977 wage increase. Is this correct?

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — What is your contract year — is it from when to when and when to when?

MR. KRAMER: — The labour services are August to August and permanent staff is October 1 to October 1.

MR. G. N. WIPF (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Chairman, did I understand rightly or wrongly here that Item 20 is actually being taken out of Item 5? It used to be in Item 5?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, there has been a transfer from Item 5.

MR. WIPF: — If it had been left in Item 5 it would have been another \$350,000 addition to that?

MR. KRAMER: — Part of it is being transferred, I would prefer to explain what Central Surveys and Mapping does under Item 20 because it is a new service that is being provided for Saskatchewan. When we get to Item 20 we'll go into it a little further if you wish.

MR. WIPF: — Right now you are saying that it could not have been handled under Item 5, that you had to set up a new branch to handle Item 20?

MR. KRAMER: — We are putting part of our surveys over into the new service and adding to it to provide the new service.

Item 5 agreed to.

Item 6 agreed to.

ITEM 7:

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Could you provide me the salaries of the six people involved in this Estimate, and their increments and what they will be doing to justify these rates?

MR. KRAMER: — That increase is not salaries. We would be glad to provide you with the wages — the average salaries, the total for the six . . .

MR. KATZMAN: — I don't need them now.

MR. KRAMER: — I am saying that the total for the six persons is this Item is \$88,000.

MR. KATZMAN: — I should like, at a later date a breakdown from the contract of 1976 of their last salaries and their increments as planned.

MR. KRAMER: — You can put it as a House question or just put it in writing and we will be glad to give it to you.

MR. WIPF: — These other expenses that went up \$262,000, what do they include?

MR. KRAMER: — This is largely metrication. This is the agreement with Canada that we proceed along with other provinces, from miles to metric. Half of the provincial highway map, this year — \$75,000, will have a print indicating kilometres rather than miles. I can give you all the items if you wish — informational pamphlets \$15,000; kilometres-miles conversion stickers for automobiles at \$35,000; educational and information, radio, newspapers, billboards, television, production costs, household mailing — that will provide the total package.

MR. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Chairman, last year the Department spent in 1975-76 \$60,193 with J. A. C. Struthers, one of the government in-house ad agencies. How much of this budget is projected either for Dunskey Advertising or J. A. C. Struthers and how much production costs have already been committed for the metrication?

MR. KRAMER: — The Department of Highways does not place the advertising. I think we pass our advertising on to Information Services and they place the advertising, so that information could probably be picked up when the Information Services vote comes in. Actually this is only budgeted for this year so we can't really know who is going to do the advertising, Information

Services may know; we don't.

MR. LANE: — We all know who is going to do the advertising. You have already started your campaign on the highway signs and you have publicized that to some extent. On the metrification to date was any advertising done or placed through Dunsky or Struthers? I will assume that the department has at least approved the ad so they are aware of what ads have gone in. Can you tell me what ads have been placed by Dunsky or placed through Struthers?

MR. KRAMER: — None of the items that we are discussing in this budget has been placed. We cannot answer the question because, in fact, we don't know at this point in time. We may assume as you are apparently assuming.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Minister, I wonder what legislative authority we have for the metrification of the Saskatchewan highway system?

MR. KRAMER: — With regard to metrication, the liaison with the Federal Government is not done through my department. I suggest that it is under Government Services and you can ask that question of Government Services when their Estimates are up.

MR. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — No, it is not quite that simple. If the department wishes to change the system of determining highway speeds or measuring distance on the highways, that is within the jurisdiction of the Department of Highways.

Can you point out to us where your legislative authority lies to make the decisions to convert the highway system either the actual mileage or the speeds to the metric system?

MR. KRAMER: — Vehicle Act is administered by the Highway Traffic Board. That is under the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Transportation Agency.

MR. LANE: — Don't you set the speeds on highways?

MR. KRAMER: — We put the signs up with their permission, but the authority of The Vehicle's Act is as I said it was.

MR. LANE: — We are not disagreeing with that at all. But you still haven't answered the question that was asked originally. Where is the statutory authority?

MR. ROMANOW: — The Vehicle's Act.

MR. LANE: — No, it is not in The Vehicle's Act. I think the Attorney General knows full well it is not The Vehicle's Act and we are trying to find out now if it is in The Highways Act. We could very well ask the Attorney General of Saskatchewan,

where is the legislative authority that allows us to proceed with the metrification system of the highway system and several other jurisdictions?

MR. KRAMER: — I bow to the Attorney General.

MR. LANE: — Well, I think there are enough cases before the various courts of the province that you shouldn't bow to the Attorney General of Saskatchewan and would you kindly tell us if you have any authority in The Highways Act for the metrification of the highway system.

MR. KRAMER: — It is not under our jurisdiction. My information is that it is under The Vehicle's Act. We are not the authority that is in charge of The Vehicle's Act; we collaborate with them; we may put opinions forward to them and make Suggestions to them, but I pass it to the other Minister, my colleague in the transportation agency.

MR. LANE: — When did the Highway Traffic Board tell you to convert to the metric system?

MR. KRAMER: — The Government of Canada, was the initiator. Every province has a liaison officer and the liaison officer for metrication is in the Department of Government Services in Saskatchewan.

MR. LANE: — You are telling me, the people of Saskatchewan that you are simply doing what you are told and that is it.

MR. KRAMER: — I just do as I am told according to policy.

MR. ROMANOW: — I should just like to say a word on this if I might. I don't know what else the Minister of Highways can say. He has said what he believes is his legal authority and I think the answer is there. If there is no authority there then, in due course, presumably, we will find out. Who knows, maybe we should engage the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle to help defend on that case.

Progress was reported and the Committee given leave to sit again. The Assembly adjourned at 10:00 o'clock p.m.