

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Fifth Session — Eighteenth Legislature**

**March 20, 1978**

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

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):**— Mr. Speaker, through you I would like to introduce to the Assembly 13 Grade Twelve students from the Grenall High School in Balgonie. I might add that Balgonie is a community that has one of the finest winter festivals in the province of Saskatchewan and also is the home of what next year will be the first international bed derby, I believe it is this June. So the community is being well placed on the map of Saskatchewan. They are accompanied by Mr. Gordon. I will meet with them after question period and I hope that they have an interesting afternoon and a safe trip home. Thank you.

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

**MR. E.C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview):**— Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the Assembly 55 Grade Eight students from Lakeview School. They are seated in the east gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Ochitwa and I hope that I have pronounced that correctly. Mr. Strandland and Mr. Cuthbert. I hope they will find their experience here today enjoyable and educational and I hope I will be able to meet with them later in the afternoon.

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

**MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview):**— Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to other members of the House a group of students sitting in the Speaker's Gallery from St. Matthew School in Saskatoon. There are some 40 Grade Eight students in number and they are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Boyko, and their school principal, Mr. Noonan. We hope that your day in Regina will be successful. I look forward to meeting with you a little later this afternoon and would ask all members of the House to join me in welcoming these students.

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

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):**— Mr. Speaker, I know that all members of the House would wish to join with me in welcoming to this Assembly and the province of Saskatchewan His Excellency, Alex N. Abankwa the High Commissioner to Canada from Ghana. He and Mrs. Abankwa are sitting in the Speaker's Gallery and in the second row from the top. Mr. Abankwa has a distinguished career in the diplomacy of his country, having served in Moscow and Addis Ababa and Washington, as well as with the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Accra. He has been the Ghanaian High Commissioner to Canada since August of 1976. He is spending a couple of days in our province, until Wednesday, familiarizing himself with life in this province. I know all members would wish to join with me in tendering the warmest possible welcome.

**March 20, 1978**

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

### **WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**HON. E. WHELAN (Regina North West):**— Mr. Speaker, through you and to all members of the House I would like to introduce 28 Grade Eight students from Coronation Park School, seated in the west gallery. This school is located in the Regina North West constituency. Their teachers Mr. Duckett and Lewis McDougall are with them.

We plan to meet them later for a discussion period and on behalf of all members I would like to say to them, a very warm welcome and hope that your stay here this afternoon will be educational, pleasant and informative.

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

**HON. H.H. ROLFES (Saskatoon Buena Vista):**— Mr. Speaker, my colleague the Attorney General and member for Saskatoon Riversdale, Mr. Romanow, is out of the province today and has asked me to introduce to you and to the Assembly, 28 Grade Seven students from Princess Alexandra School in Saskatoon. These students are seated in the Speaker's Gallery, and are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Lozinski. Mr. Romanow visited Princess Alexandra School in January, and has asked me to welcome them to Regina and wish them an enjoyable and educational stay. It is my pleasure to be able to meet with them a little later to answer any questions for them.

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

**MR. H.H. ROLFES:**— Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I would also like to take this opportunity to extend congratulations to two curling teams from Saskatoon. First of all the team skipped by Bernie Yuzdepski, accompanied by Marnie McNiven and Roy Uchman and Joan Bjerke who took the Canadian mixed curling championship last Friday, and I would like to extend my congratulations to that team.

Secondly, I would also like to extend congratulations to the Norm Gilbertson rink from Saskatoon, who took the Canadian police curling championship. His team was composed of John McDonald third, Denis Read, second, and Robbie Findlater as lead. I hope all members would join with me in extending congratulations to these two teams.

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

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **SGIO BENEFITS**

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition):**— Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all of us enjoyed our meeting today with the delegations that came to our Assembly and one of the things that they drew to our attention I would like to draw to the attention of the minister responsible for SGIO, and perhaps make a suggestion to him that I am sure would get unanimous approval from the House.

They drew to our attention, Mr. Speaker, the fact that under the Automobile Insurance Act (the regulations for that act), that if a housewife is injured in the province of Saskatchewan, they receive lower benefits under disability insurance than do other

individuals who may happen to be masculine or employed. Mr. Speaker, there is in fact, pretty clear evidence there of some discrimination. My question is, since the minister announced last year, that if no-fault insurance were introduced, that this particular area of discrimination would be done away with. Since the no-fault insurance seems to have floundered on some rocks along the way, and is going to be delayed . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:**— Does the member have a question?

**MR. COLLVER:**— Yes. Would the minister consider amending the regulations today to the enforcement of this act in order to ensure that this discrimination ceases.

**HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs):**— In answer to the hon. member I am sure he has read the report by the committee on no-fault insurance, which in its recommendations carefully looks after this problem; it takes into consideration the situation as it exists at the present time. No-fault insurance is part of an overall program that is involved with sickness and accident insurance. I am sure that he knows that the study and the pricing out of the study is continuously taking place. This is an effort on our behalf not to introduce a duplication of cost.

We certainly are taking into consideration — there is no publicly owned insurance company that I know of by either group opposite that has any clause of any kind of this nature in its make up. Perhaps they should take into consideration its introduction so that all of Canada can enjoy the kind of changes that we plan to make very soon in this respect.

**MR. COLLVER:**— A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister has today indicated that he is not prepared to take interim measures pending adoption, if it does happen in terms of no-fault insurance and not giving the groups and not giving the people who call at their office some kind of evidence today that we are serious about any kind of discrimination in our province.

Would the minister consider then the following suggestion? That either an interim regulation be introduced now pending the adoption of the .... if necessary or would the minister consider that situation with reference to a replacement cost kind of provision in the regulations? Thus for example, if a housewife is injured in an automobile accident, the insurance would cover the cost of replacing the housewife with a housekeeper or whatever; and the cost of that should be covered by their insurance. That is, in fact, covered by private insurance carriers in other parts of Canada. My question to the minister is, if he won't at least consider ending the discrimination that is now existent in the regulations will he consider amending the regulations now as a sign of our sincerity to an act that will allow for replacement cost in those instances?

**MR. WHELAN:**— Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has placed in my mouth some words that I did not say. What I did say was that the report of the committee on no-fault clearly covers the point that you are raising.

I also said the report on the Workers' Compensation Committee takes into consideration a new program that would cover everyone, sickness and accident. These two study groups that are putting together so that there will be no duplication might report at any time and if that happens the recommendations that they are putting forward is a recommendation that we would give first consideration but that pricing out, in order to avoid duplication of cost something which he has advocated to this

House over and over again might be undertaken very shortly. I cannot predict when the committees will report but the study is part of a program and as I said, I know of no such government insurance program that is that wide or has that kind of an objective any place else in Canada.

### GASOLINE TAX ALBERTA

**MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview):**— In absence of the Minister in charge of Revenue, the Alberta Budget came down last week and indicated that gasoline tax in Alberta is going to be done away with. That creates a specific problem for the city of Lloydminster, not too dissimilar from the problem they've had with regard to education and health tax collection. I wonder if the Premier would indicate what action his government is planning to take with regard to the problem that service station operators are going to encounter on the Saskatchewan side of the border and within the city limits.

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):**— Mr. Speaker, the difference in tax, there has been for some time a difference in tax, a rather significant difference in tax between the Alberta side and the Saskatchewan side. I concede that the removal of the Alberta's 10 cents per gallon tax increases the differential by an additional 10 cents which is a substantial amount. So far as I am aware, there are no proposals to change the situation as between the Alberta side and the Saskatchewan side and the tax charged in the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster. We have lived somehow with the differential in the past; I do not know whether any steps will be taken to change the situation for the future.

**MR. PENNER:**— Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Premier that the difference now is substantial. I wonder, is it the Premier's intention that the service station operators there ought to do the same as merchants and that is not collect the gasoline tax, or is it the Premier's suggestion that the operators on the Saskatchewan side of the border ought to go out of business. Obviously, people are not going to purchase gas there when they can go into the Alberta side and buy it for 15 or 20 cents less per gallon than they can in Saskatchewan.

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— Mr. Speaker, the member asks me to put forward a suggestion. I have no suggestion to put forward to him nor is it my function to put forward suggestions.

**MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek):**— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister in charge of Revenue. Mr. Premier, my colleague for Saskatoon Eastview has raised the question of the gasoline tax in Alberta. I would like to ask the Premier, in view of the fact that I am sure he is aware that right now the present price in Regina is about 93.9 at a self-serve of a major brand and that in Calgary, after the removal of this tax on April 1, it will be 70 cent gasoline, which is a 23 cent differential. May I then ask the Premier if his government is considering some action in reducing the provincial tax, the present provincial tax in Saskatchewan because I am sure the Premier will agree that there is a tremendous differential from just one province to another.

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— Mr. Speaker, there are a large number of tremendous differentials from province to province. May I instance the medicare premium in Alberta which runs to \$184 per year which is nil in this province, which is a tremendous differential; the sales tax of 7 per cent in Ontario which is 5 per cent here is a significant differential.

I think, therefore, it is not possible for each province to structure its taxes to be the same as the neighboring province. We can see the difficulty where it is a sales tax and where it is on merchandise which is freely obtainable on one side of the border and on the other. I can see that problem with respect to the price in Calgary and the price in Regina. I think that's not a significant problem, since I don't think many people will go to Calgary to buy gasoline.

The problem in Lloydminster is a much clearer and present problem. I have nothing to offer, hon. members, as to a solution to that problem. I regard the point made by the member for Eastview, therefore, as more relevant than the point made by the member for Thunder Creek.

**MR. THATCHER:**— Mr. Premier, if I may then ask you, since the 23 cent differential does not concern you, would the Premier tell us whether the differential in diesel tax, which will now be some 26 cents, the highest in Canada, between Alberta and Saskatchewan diesel, the hardships it's going to bring to the trucking industry? Will the Premier tell us what plans he has for the tourist industry of which this must have some very strong repercussions, not only on retail gasoline stations but motels? Surely, the Premier must have some program his government is considering, in light of the actions of the Progressive Conservative government of Alberta.

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— I refrain from referring to Progressive Conservative governments in other parts of Canada, 11 per cent sales tax and the like, but dealing specifically with the question he asks, I do not think that the diesel tax problem is one of great difficulty, since the transport operators pay a tax really based upon the miles travelled in Saskatchewan rather than on the particular place where they buy the diesel. That seems to be the arrangement worked out.

With respect to the tourist industry, we concede the point that a 17 to 19 cent differential is greater than the 9 cent differential it was before. It is a matter of degree. I'm sure that British Columbia and Alberta have the same problem on the border. We provinces simply do not have the wealth of Alberta and we'll have to do our best to accommodate to them. We have chosen to give benefits to people who might otherwise pay high medicare premiums as they do in Alberta and much higher in Ontario. It is a matter of priorities. We believe that when pressed for funds, as every government is, we should see if we can protect those who most need protection, namely, the people who might pay medicare premiums rather than people who pay gasoline tax who, for the most part, are better able to afford it than people who pay the medicare premiums.

## TWO PRICE SYSTEM FOR GASOLINE

**MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley):**— Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to direct a question to the Premier about the same matter. I would like to ask him if the government of Saskatchewan has considered a two-price system. It would be, not only for automobile users and farmers, particularly since they have withdrawn the rebate for farm fuel. But I am thinking also of industry, here all of a sudden we find that Saskatchewan has never had an advantage in Canada because of freight rates, geography and so forth but all of a sudden there is the producers of energy in Saskatchewan and Alberta. We are now sitting on natural gas and oil even though we import and export and the relationship is a rather vague one, but has the government of Saskatchewan ever considered an opportunity that now exists to attract industry to the prairie provinces and the prairie region as a result of the fact that we potentially have

cheap energy that is available which will become perhaps the most dominant factor in industry location in Canada and perhaps in the world? Has the Premier considered a two-price system in relation to an incentive to attract industry to the province of Saskatchewan as the province of Alberta is?

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— I am not aware of the program which is in the province of Alberta referred to by the hon. member. It may be that I am and perhaps I don't recognize it from his description of it. A lower price for industry than for residential customers is, I take it, the proposal.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— A lower price for outside the province . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— I missed that. All I can say is that we do clearly have lower energy prices than most provinces both for natural gas and for power and this is proving to be an attraction for industry. We have not considered a system whereby we would have lower prices for, let us say industry than for residential customers, nor have we considered a system whereby we would have lower prices for Saskatchewan people than for out of Saskatchewan people. The latter, simply put that way, would not be within the legislative competence of the province of Saskatchewan although there may be other ways of achieving the same thing. Shortly put then, we will have directed our attention to providing the lowest possible energy costs both in natural gas and power to all of the citizens of Saskatchewan, this includes industrial users, and it is in fact proving to be an attraction for the location of industry.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— Supplementary. Would the Premier then consider the two-price system for farmers and a two-price system for automobile users in Saskatchewan? In other words we are sitting on a natural resource. The province of Alberta has taken definite steps to see that those people by removing the royalties on those natural resources or from petroleum and natural gas by removing the taxes. Would the Premier consider the two-price system by removing or lowering the taxes on automobile users for gasoline, particularly for farmers for purple gas so that we might, in fact, by removal of this tax have a two-price system so that we would get some direct benefit from our resources rather than leaving it to the government of Saskatchewan to determine what benefits those should be?

**MR. BLAKENEY:**— Mr. Speaker, we already have a two-price system with respect to farmers; we do not charge any tax to farmers. There is no petroleum tax on purple gas and, accordingly, it is difficult to lower it below zero.

With respect to operators of automobiles, it is rather difficult to think of the way one would lower the tax for the operators of automobiles but not for operators of other motor vehicles. I think it could not be justified. It would seem to me the proper thing is the current two-price system we now have which is no tax on purple gas used in farm production, a very, very modest tax on gasoline used in industrial production and a road tax on gasoline used in vehicles which use the roads. That strikes me as a sensible and reasonable way to recover the costs of road use and at the same time levy no tax on farmers who use purple gas primarily for off road agricultural production.

#### NEW GAS SUBSIDY

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):**— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of Saskoil. Mr. Minister, the subsidizing of new gas to homes in Alberta by the Alberta

government, a Progressive Conservative government, is 75 per cent on any new natural gas prices. I would like to know now if the government would consider bringing on stream into our pipe lines new or shut-in gas, residue gas that is available to this province at 40 cents per million cubic feet and we are paying around \$1 from Alberta. Are you going to give the taxpayers a break on this gas?

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources):**— Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that we do not have the gas resources of the province of Alberta. Even though we do not, we are able in many instances to competitively price gas to consumers in Saskatchewan with Alberta pricings of gas. In some regions up until recently we have been even cheaper than some communities in the province of Alberta. The member should also be aware that we undertook to establish a natural gas Conservation and Development Board, in an independent manner to investigate the natural gas wells in the province of Saskatchewan and recommend to the province the development of that gas and the pricing of that gas. I would expect, Mr. Speaker, that in the very near future I will be able to convey to the members of this Legislative Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan the recommendations and the conclusion of that independent board . . .

**MR. LARTER:**— Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister knows full well that there is much shut-in gas along the Alberta border on the Saskatchewan side. Does the minister know that when this MacKenzie Valley pipeline comes in and that there is potentially millions and millions of cubic feet of gas will be coming through this pipeline into Alberta and then is he still going to keep on saying that gas in the ground won't spoil, it will keep? If cheaper gas comes down from Alberta are you going to give the people and the producers of this a break?

**MR. MESSER:**— Mr. Speaker, this is interesting to see the member for Estevan undertake to assume that gas is going to be cheaper in the future. Certainly there is no significant community of thought in Saskatchewan, or in Alberta, or in Canada, or for that matter in the world, that energy prices are going to get cheaper. In fact, the whole development of energy, natural gas, oil or otherwise, coal or whatever, is under the assumption that energy costs are going to continue to increase, because it is a nonrenewable resource. As long as Saskatchewan has a percentage of gas shut-in in the province of Saskatchewan, or energy, it will be made available to people in Saskatchewan at a cheaper rate than undertaking to give it away to them now and depend on supplies or delivery of energy that are alienate to the province of Saskatchewan in the future. That makes no sense whatsoever and I don't think anybody would agree, even the Leader of the Conservative Party of Nipawin, would agree with the assumption that his colleague, the member for Estevan, tries to purport to this House.

**MR. COLLVER:**— Since the minister asks for my comments I, perhaps, might be prepared to interject them ..

**MR. SPEAKER:**— Order, Order!

**MR. COLLVER:**— . . . interject my question, then, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary question is, since the MacKenzie Delta includes one of the largest reserves of natural gas in the world and since that natural gas is proposed to be shipped to the province of Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada in the near future, and since the government of the province of Saskatchewan has literally billions of cubic feet of shut-in gas on the Alberta/Saskatchewan border, why will this government not at least give the taxpayers and the ratepayers of Sask Power a break in Saskatchewan by bringing on stream some of that 40 cents per gate cubic feet gas, that is presently shut-in in Saskatchewan

borders?

**MR. MESSER:**— Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that we are now supplementing consumers of gas in the province of Saskatchewan, gas from Saskatchewan, at a much cheaper rate than we can buy that gas in the province of Alberta. That is one reason we are able to have gas prices cheaper than most other regions of Canada and/or North America, because of the policy of this government in regard to the pricing of gas. Furthermore, the Leader of the Conservative Party knows full well that we have no influence or control over the pricing of gas that may emanate from the MacKenzie Delta. That is not within our jurisdiction.

**MR. COLLVER:**— Nonsense!

**MR. MESSER:**— The member says, nonsense, and he knows full well that we cannot influence the price of that gas. We are victims of whatever the federal government and/or the governments of Alberta want to price that gas for, not the province of Saskatchewan. As long as we retain a significant reserve of shut-in gas in the province of Saskatchewan we will be able to supplement the gas that we have to rely on from outside of this province and provide lesser cost for gas than in most other regions of Canada.

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

### REPORT OF ALCOHOLIC COMMISSION

**MISS L.B. CLIFFORD (Wilkie):**— A question to the Minister of Health. Will the minister tell us, first, why a copy of the recent study of the Alcoholic Commission was not given to the Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women, when they requested it concerning the profile for women and secondly, will you table this report so that I may pass it on to the organization?

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health):**— Mr. Speaker, I know not of the study that the member asks about. I have not seen the study. I know that the Alcoholism Commission has been doing some work in that field. When it is prepared to provide me with that report I will consider that report and I am sure that the Alcoholism Commission will be considering the releasing of that study when it is feeling that it is appropriate to do so.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana):**— A question to the Minister of Social Services coming out of this same area, the area regarding the list of recommendations from the Committee of the Status of Women. I ask the minister whether you would be prepared to give your commitment today to give added funding and adequate funding to the Rape Crisis Centres throughout the province and make it possible for Rape Crisis Centres to be established and secondly, would you use your influence within the government to stop the government from assisting the Storaska film being shown throughout the province and instead replace it with the film that deals, I suggest in a better way for women and about women's rights, on the same subject of how to avoid rape and how to deal with being raped?

**HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services):**— Mr. Speaker, the answer to his first question, yes I will take under consideration, as I have indicated to the women this



morning who met with me, the further financing of Rape Crisis Centres. As you are well aware I think last year or the year before was the first time that these centres were funded in any part whatsoever by the provincial government so we certainly will take that into consideration. Secondly, I don't know if the member has seen those films. I have not seen the films. I did indicate to the women again this morning that I would be interested in seeing those films and if I feel that, yes, one would be better than the other, sure, certainly I would use my influence.

### AMENDMENTS TO THE AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT INSURANCE ACT

**MR. S.J. CAMERON (Regina South):**— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance. The minister will know that in each session, since 1975, I have sought from him assurance of amendments to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act to remove those discriminatory provisions that exist there relative to housewives. I have drafted, but I can't introduce them as a private member, revisions to the act to remove the discrimination. If I gave those to you tomorrow would you give us an assurance that you will introduce them on Friday?

**HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister in charge of Saskatchewan Government Insurance):**— I indicated clearly that there are two studies that we are waiting to hear from. I would suggest that the hon. member talk to the governments where the Liberal Party is in power and have government insurance introduced and make sure that they have this clause in the other provinces.

I get a little bit tired of the hon. member coming here and talking about what we should do; their record in the other provinces and at the federal level is atrocious in this area. Even the Status of Women report, I recall vividly when it went through this province and some of the recommendations that they asked for. Now we have the hon. minister, Marc Lalonde, making long-winded speeches but doing nothing. There are many areas where these people would like the federal government to act. I urge him to begin talking about them, as the candidate for Regina West.

**MR. CAMERON:**— By way of supplementary. Would the minister not agree with me that it is blatant discrimination to provide disability benefits to a housewife of only one-half of what it does for others and secondly, limits the period to 12 weeks whereas others qualify for 56 weeks? Is that not blatant discrimination?

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

**MR. WHELAN:**— Wouldn't the hon. member consider that the stated policy that is put forward in the committee that studied no-fault insurance clearly takes care of this problem and certainly if it is going to be introduced it should be introduced in conjunction with no-fault insurance rather than doing a haphazard, bits and pieces sort of legislation that is typical of the federal government, was typical of the previous government. Goodness gracious, I . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:**— Order, order. I'll take the next question.

### WOMEN IN SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT

**MR. H.W. LANE (Saskatoon-Sutherland):**— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier.

In the brief presented today by the Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of

Women, they point to a statistic of only 15 per cent of women in what is classified as senior management positions in government departments. Now this surely is a situation . . . the Premier is shaking his head . . . I don't know whether he is questioning the statistics or not. I would be happy to hear if the statistics are different. This is an issue and my question is this, that this issue surely, if the facts are correct, is a gross injustice that exists in the province of Saskatchewan and this is an issue that surely rises above narrow political partisan views, would the Premier consider establishing an all-party committee to look at this matter and make specific recommendations in the immediate future to the government to deal with this gross injustice and to monitor the progress?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):**— Mr. Speaker, I was shaking my head because as I recall my reading of the brief, the 15 per cent dealt with the number of women on boards and commissions and did not deal with the number of people in senior places in the government and I invite you to look at the brief and see whether that isn't an accurate recollection. I am just wanting to correct you on your facts.

With respect to the issue which you raised, our government, like other governments in Canada, has attempted to promote the status of women in the public service. We have had, from time to time, we have one deputy, a good number of branch heads; we have had here in the Legislative Assembly an assistant-clerk, a legislative librarian, a legislative council, assistant legislative council; from time to time a large number of our staff have been women. I do acknowledge the difficulty of getting senior women to take administrative posts as opposed to professional ones. In order to deal with that problem we have, some years ago, set up a particular body of the public service to see if we can find out why women do not apply for these posts and are not appointed to them. For the most part, it is that applications are not received. There may be many reasons for this. Members will know that this group, which is cited in the Department of Finance and headed by Miss Florence Wilkie, is attempting to isolate the problems. We have a set-up, of course, for persons — women in the public service — not restricted to women, but I think it is taken advantage almost totally by women who wish to get advancement and who take courses over at the University. All of these things are having their effect but I acknowledge out of hand that the progress in appointing women to senior posts in our government, as every other government in Canada, is proceeding slowly.

## MOTION

## SITTINGS

**HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour):**— Mr. Speaker, I should perhaps draw the attention of the members to the fact that it was concluded by motion on March 16 that when this Assembly do adjourn on Thursday, March 23 that it stand adjourned until Tuesday, March 28. The motion itself is not particularly explicit in that it doesn't detail the time which will probably meet with the approval of most members of the Assembly.

Accordingly, by leave of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by Hon. J.R. Messer, Minister of Mineral Resources:

That notwithstanding Rule 3, this Assembly shall, on Thursday, March 23, 1978 meet at 10:00 o'clock a.m. until 1:00 o'clock p.m.

This will give members the opportunity to return to their home constituency earlier on Thursday in the same way as though we were sitting on Friday; that

is to say that Friday hours will apply on Thursday, if this is the wish of members of the House.

Motion agreed to.

**MR. CAMERON:**— Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day, I wonder if I might, with leave of the Assembly, move that we find the Minister in charge of SGIO the male chauvinist of the day.

## SECOND READINGS

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill 12 — **An Act respecting The Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association.**

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health):**— Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to explain the features which have been incorporated in these revisions to The Registered Nurses' Act. This act is administered, as members will know, by the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association and it provides for the registration of nurses and the certification of nursing assistants. The Council of Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association has been planning a revision of this act for almost two years now and it is my pleasure to bring it before the members of this Legislative Assembly.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me say that Saskatchewan nurses have been very important members of our health care team in this province — a team that consists of various people; professionals and board members, our Department of Health and many other people working in various capacities throughout our health care institutions and outside of our institutions. Saskatchewan nurses have played a significant role in making this province's health care reputation known throughout North America as one of innovation and leadership and high quality. They also make major contributions to the Saskatchewan society as active members of communities in which they live — communities large and small.

In introducing this bill, an act respecting the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association, permit me to extend, Mr. Speaker, to the Saskatchewan nurses, our government's appreciation for their dedicated work in serving our citizens.

These revisions were requested by the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association and they are the result of extensive discussions between the Department of Health and the registered nurses' association. I would like the House to know that these revisions are fully endorsed by the association. I would like the House to know also that the Saskatchewan Nursing Assistants' Association, a voluntary group representing certified nursing assistants in the province has stated in writing that it wishes to continue the arrangement whereby the certification and regulation of nursing assistants is handled by the registered nurses' association.

At the time the nursing assistants were considering this matter they knew that a number of alternative arrangements were possible for their certification and regulation and one of the alternatives that they considered was the establishment of a separate association with a separate mandate

contained in a new act of this provincial Legislature.

After many months of extensive consultations with its certified nursing assistants membership, the nursing assistants decided through an open and democratic vote at an annual meeting that they wished to continue being certified and regulated under The Registered Nurses' Act. Both the Department of Health and the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association have made it clear to the nursing assistants that they will respect the majority wishes of the nursing assistants to continue being regulated under The Registered Nurses' Act. Nevertheless, the nursing assistants have been told that this arrangement does not have to continue indefinitely should the nursing assistants decide at some future date to establish their own independent governing body.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to explain some of this bill's specific provisions. The Council of the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association will be increased by the addition of a consumer representative who will have full voting status. The power of the association to make bylaws in the public interest areas will be expanded and bylaws will allow categories of membership and categories of practice to be defined. Power to define standards of conduct and competency for both registered nurses and certified nursing assistants will be more explicit. Professional misconduct will be defined by bylaw and the association will be empowered to require nurses and nursing assistants to participate in continuing education programs. The association will be empowered to discipline registered nurses and nursing assistants on a number of grounds including professional incompetence and an appeal by a nurse who has been disciplined will be allowed to a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench.

At present, Mr. Speaker, The Registered Nurses' Act currently in force does not expressly authorize a registered nurse to be disciplined. There are two types of by-laws contained in this bill — administrative bylaws and public interest bylaws. Both types of by-laws can be made either by the Council of the Registered Nurses' Association or by the general membership of the SRNA at an annual meeting. When by-laws are made by the council of the association they must be subject to ratification by the general membership of the association. With respect to public interest bylaws, these will be filed with the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health will be empowered to veto a by-law if he considers it to be beyond the powers of the association or contrary to the public interest. The public interest bylaws will then be subject to a further review and confirmation by the Legislative Assembly.

Approval of courses for study for nurses and nursing assistants will be vested with the association and examinations qualifying nurses for registration and nursing assistants for certification will be placed under the control of the association.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that this bill will both serve the public interest and strengthen nursing as a profession. I therefore move that this bill be given second reading and be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments and Delegative Powers.

**MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley):**— Mr. Speaker, I have a few words to say about this bill today and then I would beg leave of the Assembly to adjourn the debate.

First of all I want to say it is long overdue that the nursing profession in the province of Saskatchewan received professional status, not only in reputation and the kind and quality of care that they have given to the people of the province of Saskatchewan over the years, but also legally. By the passing of this bill we are really in fundamental principle saying, that here the nurses of the province of Saskatchewan are a professional group of people and they should be given the power to govern and regulate themselves as professionals. Therefore, we notice this act gives to the nurses the power of registration whereby they themselves will register and so that all nurses within the province of Saskatchewan would become a member of their Association.

It gives to the nurses the power to discipline themselves. This is fundamental to any association that is going to obtain professional status that they must therefore have the power and the ability to regulate the matters that concern themselves and to discipline those members who require it.

It gives them the power of supervision of those people who have not necessarily reached the standard or level of competence that they have. I would be very interested if the minister would table the letter from the Certified Nursing Assistants so that the members of the Assembly might have an opportunity to see their approval of the fact that the nurses will be supervising them or those people who are directly under them and I think once again this is an indication of the professional competence of the nursing profession. Also the fact that they have the opportunity to conduct their own educational process or at least become involved in the educational process and examinations of their own profession is also important.

In other words what I am trying to suggest that the registration, the discipline, the supervision, the education, the examination are those qualities that any profession would desire when they have attained and achieved the professional status of the nursing association. Therefore, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that members of this side of the House, at least the Liberal opposition, will not only be supporting the bill but will be supporting it rather enthusiastically.

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:**— I will table that letter.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— The minister has indicated from what I gather that he will table that letter and I would appreciate that undertaking at an early date.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that when I say this bill is long overdue, as you know the NDP government has not had a reputation, in the past, of getting along with the nursing profession. There was a great deal of difficulty when the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association requested certification to represent the nursing profession in the province of Saskatchewan. Over the years they have had a great deal of difficulty. They threatened strikes and all kinds of work stoppages and so forth, a few years ago, in trying to get what they considered their legitimate place — first of all in salary as well as in

stature. Some of you will remember that the difficulty that existed in the salary relationship between the nursing profession and those directly under them, that as time had gone by that by holding the cap on the nursing profession at the top, those underneath them, particularly the nursing assistants, had gradually almost caught up to the nurses and, therefore, the nurses had a very legitimate complaint.

There are one or two other things I want to say, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I have a couple of comments.

1. I wonder why the minister has insisted that a representative of the Consumer Association of the province of Saskatchewan would be on the council?

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:**— Because they asked for it.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— This is rather interesting and, perhaps, when you wind up debate you can indicate that to members of the House. I could understand somebody, for example, for the university, which might be related to education, or examinations. I could understand someone else, but I don't see, really, the nurses becoming involved in affecting the consumer prices or the cost of very many articles in the province of Saskatchewan, even though, of course, they would probably be very, very intimately involved in the negotiations for salary.

The one other thing that I do have a comment on, and I would like the minister to comment on afterwards as well, and I, perhaps, have a suggestion for him. He indicates, for example in Clause 14, subsection (b):

The minister may, within 45 days of receiving copies of the bylaw or amendment, give notice in writing to the association to that effect and shall advise the association that the notice is being given pursuant to the subsection, and, upon the giving of such, notice the bylaw amendment shall have no force or effect.

In other words, the minister has given himself, in effect, the arbitrary power of veto on any by-law or any decision passed by the Nursing Association. I would like to suggest to the minister that before you arbitrarily do that, that you should at least have the responsibility and, perhaps, it could be included in the legislation, of going back to the association and discussing it, rather than just arbitrarily having the power of veto.

Mr. Speaker, other than that I can say with a great deal of frankness, that I am delighted to see this bill put before the House. I think it is long overdue. I think it will improve the quality of care and the professional competence of the nursing profession in Saskatchewan. It is a recognition of their contribution over the years. I am also very pleased to hear that the certified nursing assistants do not have a strong objection because I have heard, from other people, that there perhaps would be a negative response from the nursing assistants, who might not really agree to the supervision of the nursing profession.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn the debate. I would like to discuss the bill in detail with some of the nurses and from the Nursing Association as well. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the Adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding that Bill No. 5 — **An Act to amend The Agricultural Incentives Act, 1973**, be now read a second time.

**MR. J. WIEBE (Morse):**— Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments to follow the comments which I made the other day, when the act was first introduced by the minister in charge. I indicated at that time my reason for asking for adjournment was to have a look at some of the questions which I had asked on the Order Paper regarding some of the Farm Start loans that were made under Farm Start since its existence. Basically, let me still say at the onset that it is my intention to support this particular piece of legislation, not because I am happy with the way that the Farm Start Act is being operated, because I still go back to the position which the Liberal Party has taken in regard to Farm Start. Let me repeat that. At that time, basically, the program is good, but we feel that it could be better handled through our credit unions and our banks than through taxpayers' money and that the only involvement of the government in this regard is to put their backing behind the young farmers by putting the resources of this province behind our young farmers and saying to our banks and our credit unions, yes, we will guarantee the loan, which is required for them to take advantage of the Farm Start Program and, we as a government, our only involvement would be by providing that guarantee and providing assistance in regard to interest and in regard to grants that would be available under the program.

Our reason for saying this, Mr. Speaker, is that . . . I am sorry I didn't hear the comment from my left. They are certainly fantastic agricultural experts, especially the one from Saskatoon and I am sure that his knowledge of Farm Start is about the same as . . . interjection . . . yes, the leader is away and the mice are playing. It is certainly quite evident. You know, Mr. Speaker, I wonder what happened to all that decorum that we were lectured on a few years back, you know, about no catcalling, no newspapers, no noise whatsoever? It seems to have fallen by the wayside, especially when the leader is away.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, before being interrupted by the now catcalling group to my left, that basically it is our intention to support the legislation but our reason for disagreeing with the concept of the introduction of the program, I think might be evident to a small point, in regard to the record or history of the loans and grants which have been made available so far to Farm Start recipients throughout the province. I think, as a Farm Start program goes on, the individuals throughout Saskatchewan operating the loans program will be able to gain some expertise in a decision as to whether or not to grant the loan and this has been the major drawback to the program thus far. The individual loan officers do not have the same experience as loan officers in our credit unions or banks; who are much better at judging the reliability of an application for a loan than some of the rather green individual loan officers now employed by the Department of Agriculture. I must add to that that I believe the problem will eventually solve itself once these people gain a bit more experience.

When looking at the loans that have been made for livestock operations, in regard to

feed lots and cow-calf operations, one can certainly understand the reason for the great number of loans in arrears and the number of operations which have folded up and are no longer in existence. One can understand that because of the 414 loans have been made available to dairy operators in the province of Saskatchewan and close to 15 per cent of those loans are now either in arrears or have folded up operations. I feel this is high, basically because the dairy industry has been a good industry for individual, young farmers to get into. Possibly one has to question why that rate is so high. Part of the answer may be a lack of experience in regard to individuals granting loans and individual loan officers being able to adequately assess the potential of an individual to make his operation a success. I doubt whether this percentage would be that high, had our recommendation been adopted, that being that loans be made through our credit unions and banks with the backing of the government of Saskatchewan behind them.

The same thing applies to hog operations. The hog producer now has got a guaranteed income program in effect under Sask Hog Assured Returns Program (SHARP) so that basically there's no reason for good sound management of any hog operation in the province, not being successful. Prices have been extremely good in the last year and there are indications that this will continue. Yet we see much the same percentage applying to hog operations in the province as we did to dairy operations, where between 13 and 15 per cent of those operations are now either in arrears, or again, have folded operations.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I wish to again say that we'll be supporting this legislation; however we feel that our suggestion of making loans available through banks and credit unions may help solve some of these problems as well as free more money for the provincial government and the Department of Agriculture to make available to other programs such as irrigation and land use control in the province of Saskatchewan.

**MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern):**— Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions I would like to put to the minister and ask him to reply to these in the closing out of this Bill.

The Agriculture Incentives Act is where the money for Farm Start comes from, as the speaker previously indicated, but most of the people that I discover are applying are being turned down for some strange reasons. One, first of all, says that if you make over a certain amount of money and are employed, you first must quit your job before we will accept your application. I believe the figure is \$15,000 average on three years, the preceding three years. There is some discussion within your department I understand to bring that to the \$20,000 figure and if that is correct or not could you let the House know?

Second of all, why is the rule there that says that you must quit your present employment if it is off your own farm, for an example, it's an outside income working part time somewhere else to subsidize your farm that you are trying to get off the ground, why do you say you must quit? The other portion says if 51 per cent of your income is from that outside source well if a young farmer is trying to start his farm the outside income is there to subsidize his farm to get him ahead at the start and therefore he is plowing everything back into the farm. Obviously, his outside wages because you take the gross, not the net, will be higher and therefore he will not qualify for Farm Start loans. I have assisted about 10 farmers trying to apply for these loans and this is the big problem we are discovering. Minimum wage is going up, all other wages go up and yet they can't hold that second job to get them over that first hurdle of the two years until



their cows have calves to sell that are mature and ready for slaughter and so forth.

The second part of my question, if you don't mind, Mr. Minister of Labour, would be: under the present system in the \$10,000 to \$15,000 range you seem to indicate total control of the operation will be left with the agriculturist in the area, for example, somebody from Farm Start, because you have to do everything. There is very little decision making left to the individual who is loaning the money. If you could maybe supply me with some of these answers before you do your closing off of this debate, I could adjourn debate and wait for your answers in reply in writing before you do second reading. Do I have permission to adjourn debate, Mr. Speaker?

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 7 — An Act respecting the Production, Manufacture, Sale, Purchase, Transport and Inspection of Animals and Animal Products.**

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

**Bill No. 9 — An Act to amend The Rural Municipality Act, 1972.**

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — TELEPHONES — VOTE 38**

**HON. N. BYERS (Minister of Telephones):**— Mr. Chairman, could we start with Telephones first?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I call the Department of Telephones. Would you like to introduce your staff?

**MR. BYERS:**— I have the deputy minister of the Department of Telephones, Mr. Gil McCormick.

**MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern):**— Mr. Chairman, we had a slip that said we were starting with Environment. We have all brought our information on Environment, nothing done on Telephones. Telephones isn't even listed in today's Committee of Finance.

**MR. BYERS:**— You were told . . .

**MR. KATZMAN:**— We were not told it was going to be up, we were told Environment.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, I am a relative newcomer to this House but whenever we dealt with a minister's estimates it was presumed that we dealt with the departments for which the minister was responsible and we have a long-standing practice of dealing with Telephones first.

There is a bill before the Legislature to request approval of the Legislature that the moneys normally voted for the Department of Telephones hereafter be paid by the Crown corporation Sask Tel. There are really only two requests here. One is the request for maintenance grants to rural farm subscribers. There are only 200 rural telephone companies left with about a total of 16,000 subscribers. The standard practice has been for the Department of Telephones to pay a grant of \$2.50 to each subscriber. It is

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not proposing to change that. It has been a long, long-standing policy since back in the 1950s. The other is the circuit grants for buried cable and it is proposed to transfer that money to Sask Tel. Therefore, we have merely put some money in the Budget here, \$10,000 which is really cosmetics. If the bill is approved there won't be one dime of this spent but we are asking approval of the House for this small sum. I would, accordingly, urge the members to let us deal with this department at this time.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Mr. Chairman, the whip for the government is going to allow us a few minutes to get our information from upstairs. He said he would give us five minutes to get our information. Our critic has gone back up for it.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I think that's agreed. Perhaps someone else is ready to go on it.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**— The lines of communication are open again.

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):**— Mr. Chairman, the minister mentioned that this is — did you say it is a privilege, Mr. Minister, that you could ask for whatever one you wanted up first?

**MR. BYERS:**— Yes, the assumption is that Telephones usually takes about three or four minutes and we have always dealt with Telephones first rather than to keep the officials waiting around for a long period of time.

**MR. LARTER:**— I have no argument with that except that when you get a sheet of paper handed to you from the government that says Environment is on here, I think it should list Telephones, too. We may be ready for it but at the same time we don't come prepared for it. If we can't follow the listing the government member hands us, how can we decide what is going on in the House?

**HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour):**— I think the member makes a good point and this is the list that was provided I believe early this morning. I was working on the assumption that Environment would be coming up. With some co-operation from members opposite I think we can probably let the people from Telephones go, if that's agreeable. I understand the Conservative caucus has asked for a moment or two in order to have some material delivered up that they have on file. So if you can hesitate for a moment or two I think perhaps we can solve that problem. We will attempt to reach some kind of a consideration that when the minister appears all of those agencies or the departments that he has for his consideration and your consideration will be listed in the future. I think maybe there is a little mix-up today, our first day actually.

## **ITEM 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Is No. 1 agreed?

**MR. J. WIEBE (Morse):**— Mr. Chairman. No we are not agreed to No. 1. I was going to wait for the Conservative critic to start because I understand he had some questions. If not, O.K.

It is my understanding, Mr. Minister, that as you said in your earlier remarks, basically the Department of Telephones exists by name only, and that much of the former operation of the Department of Telephones will now be handled by Sask Tel, as has been indicated in the legislation we now have before us. My question is, how long down the road do you foresee a budgetary estimate being provided for Department of

Telephones? Will this be the last year or will it be necessary in future years — if the present legislation which is before us passes?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, if the legislation now before the House is approved, then I would see this as the last year that a budgetary request would appear in the Estimates. I draw to the attention of all members of the Legislature that under the authority of Section 5 of the Telephones Department Act, the administration of the department is really performed by Sask Tel, and that any direct costs incurred by Sask Tel are merely reimbursed from the consolidated funds of the province. That is the present provision in the Department of Telephones Act. We are proposing legislation at this Session because the number of rural telephone companies is down to about 200, and because they will not be undertaking any large construction program, it is simply appropriate to have the grants for buried cable called circuit grants, and the maintenance grant (amounting to \$2.50 per subscriber for approximately 16,000 subscribers which comes to about \$40,000 a year), be paid hereafter by Sask Tel. Sask Tel paid it anyway and the province, by voting this money, merely reimbursed Sask Tel. As long as there are independent rural telephone companies in existence, they will be governed by The Department of Telephones Act. There are certain provisions within that act that apply to them. This is in no way to be interpreted as the government putting the squeeze on the rural companies to assimilate. We have made it abundantly clear to them that they may remain independent for as long as they like. I don't think it matters one whit to the rural telephone companies whether they get their cheques for the maintenance grant each year of \$2.50 with the name Department of Telephones or that of Sask Tel on it. I don't think it matters a whit to them whether the cheque for their circuit grants come from Sask Tel or the Department of Telephones, because the pored for presentation to the House. This is only a nominal amount in the Budget. It is our intention to pass the legislation that is on the order paper, and pay the money from Sask Tel any way.

**MR. WIEBE:**— Just a couple of more questions, Mr. Chairman. In effect, what has happened then is, because of the fact that a large majority of rural telephone companies in the province of Saskatchewan have opted to go along with the new program established by Sask Tel, namely, the assimilation of our rural telephone companies in the province, you are in effect now conducting a lot of the work through Sask Tel personnel that normally would have been done by Department of Telephone personnel, and the only individual now in regard to Department of Telephones, is the deputy minister who is looking after things. It is my understanding then that for any telephone companies that still remain, a grant will be made by the province of Saskatchewan to Sask Tel, who in turn, will transfer that draft to any remaining rural telephone companies that have not assimilated. Grant Moneys as such, will not be coming from the operations of Sask Tel, but will still come from the provincial treasury. Is that right?

**MR. BYERS:**— No, the assumption is that Sask Tel, from its revenues, will pay directly to the remaining rural telephone companies any grants that they qualify for, namely maintenance grants or circuit grants. There will be no transfer of moneys from the consolidated fund of the province to Sask Tel for payments made by Sask Tel to the rural telephone companies.

**MR. WIEBE:**— In other words then, Mr. Chairman, what your department has done is taken a suggestion given by the Liberal caucus many years ago in which to cut down on the operating costs and the red tape involved with government and transferring some of the dual work over to Sask Tel, where it can, hopefully in the long term, save the taxpayers of this province a bit of money. I understand that it is a policy that was

outlined by our caucus a number of years ago and I am very pleased to see you adopt it at this time.

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, I would agree with the hon. member for Morse that this is certainly an attempt to effect efficiencies in the operation of government and it is a move that should be lauded by all members of this Legislature.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Are there 200 companies basically getting grants from this fund?

**MR. BYERS:**— There are approximately 200 remaining independent subscriber-owned rural telephone companies with approximately 16,000 subscribers.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— When they agree to join in with Sask Tel, there are some guarantees given on the amount of people on line and so forth. Now do your grants that you are giving to them, while they operate on their own, take into account the same type of condition if they are dropping a buried cable?

**MR. BYERS:**— The answer is, Yes. Keep in mind that Sask Tel has been providing free engineering service to the rural telephone companies that have had a very capable program and the engineering has reduced the number of subscribers to a maximum of 4 per line.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— So basically with these grants that you are giving to those that are staying on their own presently, they are coming up to the new standards that Sask Tel is trying to bring all their rural subscribers up to.

**MR. BYERS:**— The rural companies that take advantage of the buried cable program and the grant program associated with it are reducing the number of subscribers per line to the maximum of 4, which is the same standard that Sask Tel uses in the assimilation program.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Well, some of the private areas have asked to be put on direct areas, for example, within an area of the city there is a large circle of areas served out of the major Sask Tel operation. Some of these private companies are told they cannot come on to — say for example near Saskatoon — well Warman, for example, is on Sask Tel and is part of Saskatoon's switchboard, as well as Martensville. Dalmeny, that has applied to go on to be part of Saskatoon's switchboard, has been refused even if they pay the difference. Yet they've said in their grant to give us funds so that we can upgrade it even though it is long distance, but in the Saskatoon switch system.

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, Sask Tel experimented with a program starting in the 1970s called EAS, Extended Area Service. It was a program to establish larger toll-free calling areas to establish the difference. The subscribers in the centres participating in the larger area took a vote and they voted on the question of would they pay a higher monthly charge to have the benefit of a toll-free area. There are seven of these in the province. It was not a program that caught on with great fan fare. In the meantime Sask Tel has adjusted their toll rates so that now you can call up to 18 miles for 11 cents which is cheaper than sending a letter in the mail after April 1. The lower toll rates for shorter distance calling has really reduced the demand for larger toll free areas. Therefore, there has really not been an extension of the extended area service and with the bringing on stream of the assimilation program we are concentrating on upgrading the rural lines reducing the number of subscribers per line and there seems to be less interest in extended area service.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Well, there are applications for extended area service that are still existing. Are you suggesting you won't service them unless they come into Sask Tel or are you suggesting that because of the lower rates that it doesn't make it feasible, even though the area still wants to come into that program?

**MR. BYERS:**— First of all, in the Saskatoon area there are some very real engineering problems that have to be overcome. Sask Tel does plan to put in a new automatic electronic switching station at Saskatoon, I forget the date that that is set for at least four or five years down the road and it is not possible to provide the kind of service you propose unless there is the hardware in the switching station to accommodate the extra lines. The investment needed to put in an automatic electric switching station in Saskatoon is a fair number of millions. Until the hardware is in place, it is simply not possible to honor all of these requests for larger toll free areas.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Yet they were told two years ago that the hardware was in . . . going to be installed shortly and it would be a matter of time, yet the cable is drawn from Saskatoon so it will, when the hardware is in place in the other end . . . Are you suggesting when the hardware is in place that they will be able to go onto that service?

**MR. BYERS:**— I could go into some detail on this for the hon. member. Those are really appropriate questions to ask the Crown Corporations Committee. This is the Department of Telephones we are dealing with; it is not the Crown corporation, Sask Tel. Well, how does it have a bearing on the grants?

**MR. KATZMAN:**— I am told that the grant, when they are running it themselves, they could not afford to do it, but if it goes into Sask Tel, that when they assimilate in, it will be available to them. Now if that is incorrect then I have incorrect information given to me by the council.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well there is no difference. Any rural telephone company that puts its own cable in gets 50 per cent of the approved costs.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— I am referring to the hardware equipment that has to be placed at the other end which as you said may cost millions within Sask Tel to facilitate it.

**MR. BYERS:**— I don't want to outline and draw pictures for the hon. member of the complicated inter-office trunking problems that have to be overcome. I tried to answer by making a general statement that additional hardware is required before these kinds of requests can be accommodated and we are in the process of.... we have it on the drawing board for Saskatoon within a very short years. Until that hardware is put in place it is difficult to accommodate the kind of requests that you mean.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— What you are saying to me is that when the hardware is in place they will probably honor the commitment that was given several years ago.

**MR. BYERS:**— No, I'm not saying that. I'm saying that it is not possible to do what you propose until the hardware is in place and when the hardware is in place then government policy for any changes will be announced.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— One other question. On the placing of this cable, if the community — the area people who put in the cable want to include in it, the TV buried cable portion,

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the other cable that goes in, so that they can receive cable TV in their town, will you pay 50 per cent of the cost of that being included in the wiring?

**MR. BYERS:**— No, there are no plans to put coaxial cable along with the buried cable for two farms. Cost is one factor. I put a price tag on the Liberal program in the last provincial election — a rough price tag on it and they were promising coaxial cable to all the farms in Saskatchewan and the price tag which they had never worked out was in the order of \$3 billion, so we are not putting coaxial cable in.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— What I asked was that if they put coaxial in themselves, these rural telephone companies bringing it out for their benefit, are you suggesting that you will not give them a 50 per cent grant as you have done?

**MR. BYERS:**— We will pay 50 per cent of the cost for buried cable for telephone service.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— For television service as well?

**MR. BYERS:**— For telephone service.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— And you will not for the cable that normally is included, so they will have to do it separately?

**MR. BYERS:**— No, and I don't know of another company in Canada, the 26 of them, that is doing that.

**MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek):**— Mr. Minister, in reference to what my colleague from Rosthern has brought up, does the minister not agree that Sask Tel or Saskatchewan Telecommunications in their capacity of bringing cable to the cities of Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and North Battleford — are you not discriminating against our rural people by not making some attempt to bring the same things to the rural people in Saskatchewan, if it be only the smaller towns? Now could the minister very briefly tell us if Sask Tel has made any examinations or has looked at any advanced technology that may in the very near future, enable rural Saskatchewan to have the same benefits in television that our urban centres have because I am sure that the minister will agree with me — one of the key things that we all want regardless of where you sit in this House is to keep people in rural Saskatchewan in the rural areas. And the one thing we must do is to give them the same quality of life. That is I think, non-political. I think all parties stand for that. Could the minister tell me what Sask Tel's position is in this area?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know what that has to do with the consideration of the Department of Telephone Estimates but at present the technology is simply not available to provide coaxial cable to rural areas at a reasonable price. The people in the business who claim to know something about this predict that fiber optics may be on the market in a few short years at reasonable cost to make the transmission of cable signals to rural and remote areas possible but I believe that fiber optics were only first used commercially early in 1977 for the first time. They were used first in some sort of secret service police work which I don't understand, but fiber optics are now just appearing on the market. Fiber optics appear to be the best prospect of delivering coaxial cable to rural areas. The technology is certainly not advanced and if the hon. member for Thunder Creek can do anything to accelerate that we would sure appreciate any effort he can lend to the cause but it is simply not there and I think it would be somewhat unwise to undertake a \$3 billion program to put in coaxial cable at

\$5,000 or \$7,000 per mile when in six or eight years we may well be able to do it for \$500 or \$600 per mile. I am sure if we made that kind of a blunder the opposition would be the first to scream that we had made a very bad judgment.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I would ask members to confine their comments and questions to the Department of Telephones and not direct them to Sask Tel because we will have the opportunity during Crown Corporations to discuss Sask Tel in detail.

**MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin):**— Well, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask one question of the minister. In his reply to the member for Thunder Creek he said that he couldn't see any hope of cable television coming to rural Saskatchewan in the too near future. I wonder if he might refer back to the remarks made by the former minister responsible for cable television when he said that he thought that cable television service could come to rural Saskatchewan in possibly five, maybe ten at the outside, years. This seems to be a conflict of opinion between yourself and the minister responsible for cable television. I concur that fiber optics are on the market but surely we are looking at a situation now where rural subscribers are in essence paying for cable television service to the urban centres. That seems to be the issue right now and I don't think that our rural subscribers are going to settle for that. You're a government that so many times repeats that you are for rural Saskatchewan, for the maintenance of rural Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan is the vitality of this province. We talked of energy today and we talked about how important it was. There's no energy more important than food energy and that's created and produced in rural Saskatchewan not in the cities, not in the urban centres. If we are going to maintain that rural Saskatchewan, as the member for Thunder Creek has reiterated, then we are going to have to look at having some of these services and not have the regional disparity that is prevalent now. So I don't think that we can be content with the remarks that you're made to this point that we've got to sit back and take a — well, it-may-never-happen-attitude — to have cable television service in rural Saskatchewan. If you want it in the form of a question, I ask you, are you prepared to put together some kind of information that will give our rural people some kind of indication that in the near future that they are going to be able to have this type of service?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Speaker, the technology has simply not been perfected at this point in time to economically use coaxial cable to serve rural and sparsely settled areas. Whether there is some hope on the horizon, fiber optics look at the moment to be the best hope and whether this can be perfected in five years or ten is anyone's guess. I want to say that if the technology is perfected and if the New Democratic Party is in power when it is perfected that we will likely be among the first in Canada to provide it to rural areas. I remind him now that I remember being at a meeting of the telephone industry two years ago when the Premier, Mr. Hatfield of New Brunswick, made a very, very passionate plea to the private industry to do something to get phones into the rural areas of that province. I note, a month or so ago, with some interest, that in that province the CTC has rolled back the rates of rural subscribers in New Brunswick of \$9.05 a month. I don't know of any phone jurisdiction — Alberta government telephones has had a very, very substantial loss in their operations in the last couple of years. I don't know of any initiatives in that province where the telephone system has been under public ownership since before it was under public ownership in Saskatchewan, like 65 or 70 years. I don't know of any initiatives in this regard in Manitoba, or Ontario, nor of any other jurisdiction in Canada and if the hon. members opposite have a blueprint that can be tabled in this Legislature of telephone companies in other jurisdictions putting coaxial cable or cable that will carry cable signals to rural areas, they are short-changing the people of this province if they don't come forth with it.

With respect to investing in coaxial cable in the urbans, it should not be thought that the rural people are being made to pay for this. The tariff schedule that is in place for the conventional cable operators and their subscribers is designed so that Sask Tel intends to recover the capital cost from the subscribers and it should not be interpreted that there is any cost subsidization on the part of the rural subscribers to pay the cost of installing coaxial cable or cable television for urban dwellers, because that is simply not the case and I hope the Tory Party in this province is not going around the rural areas spreading that rumor up and down all the back roads in rural Saskatchewan.

There is considerable experimentation going on with respect to fiberoptics or similar cable. When it is economically developed and can be proven economical, then I am sure that this corporation and this government will act as quickly as it can to see that that's available to the rural areas.

**MR. LANE (Qu'Ap):**— Some questions pursuing the cable.

Will you not admit . . .

**MR. MacDONALD:**— On a point of order. If you don't mind, Mr. Chairman, I wish you would make a ruling because this is the Department of Environment. If you want to get into Sask Tel and cable television we will go for two days. We would like, very much, to get into it. Otherwise, if this is the Department of the Environment let's stay the heck out of it. I would like to ask you to make a ruling.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I believe that, perhaps, it is the only place where you can discuss cable television although I, perhaps, view it that there might be other locations, for example, Sask Tel in Crown Corporations. However, at this time I feel that, perhaps, I can't rule the questioning out of order.

**MR. LANE (Qu'Ap):**— I gave to the Premier some 13 communities and unfortunately I wasn't aware that it was coming up this afternoon, or I could supply the list to you again and I undertake to do it tonight — 13 small communities in rural Manitoba that are being supplied with conventional cable by reason of the actions in the Manitoba telephone system. At that time, in January, there were nine in Alberta. One community that I recall was Boissevain which is a very small community in Manitoba. As I say I tabled 13 in question period.

Now, they have devised a system which is allowing smaller communities to obtain conventional cable, not the Can cable or CPN. Secondly, on your point, I say that you are seriously in error if you are not aware of that. Secondly, on the point whether rural Saskatchewan is, in fact, absorbing or paying the additional cost, you know full well they are.

First of all, Sask Tel is going to have to make a substantive initial outlay to get the converters and the filters. Now that cost supposedly, will be amortized over the period of time by the CPN subscribers but in the meantime the carrying costs are going to be carried by Sask Tel as a Crown corporation, which in fact is paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. So I don't think that it is proper for you to deny the fact that the people of Saskatchewan are carrying the cost of that and, in fact, I suspect that in fact the people will have a much higher burden to carry because I don't think the converters are going to work, from the existing state of the technology. The fact is that they can't last very



long and I think your technical experts are telling you that. So, in fact, the people are paying additional for your foray into this, what I think absolutely unsound and unwise decision to get into two cable systems in the province of Saskatchewan when in fact we are a province that hasn't had cable for years. We have had that right delayed and taken away from us by the actions of the government opposite. Now we are going on the Cadillac approach to try and get two at the same time when we can't get one in, or have one delayed. I say to you that in fact the state is such that we can get, to certain communities, conventional cable. I say that you are in fact taking away the rights of rural Saskatchewan to have conventional cable by your interference with CPN and the interjection of CPN.

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, in my view the question is totally out of order and I will be as brief as I can.

As far as I understand, the system in Manitoba is only a prototype system. It is not working. It is an experiment of the Manitoba Government Telephones and a company developed to build a system of amplifiers to try and carry cable signals at a greater distance than was hitherto possible. We are watching that development very closely. To the best of my knowledge it is a prototype system and it is not proven yet although it may well turn out to be satisfactory. If it is then I think we will glean what we can from that development.

But I do suggest with respect, Mr. Chairman, that that is out of order and I would be glad to answer the question in Crown Corporations Committee. I don't think this is the appropriate place to deal with this. We are dealing with two little subjects here — maintenance grants and circuit grants — and I don't know what that's got to do with prototypes in Manitoba.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— While I can't rule on all questions dealing with Sask Cable as it pertains to the Department of Telephones I agree that the questioning on Sask Cable would be much more fruitful in Crown corporations and I think perhaps the members should confine their questions to that committee.

**MR. MALONE:**— Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I am cutting off the member for Qu'Appelle. Where are we at now? You said earlier that you thought it would be appropriate for us to ask questions on cable. Now I have a number of questions and I am sure that all members have a number of questions but you have opened the door by allowing the questions from the Conservatives — that's fine; if you have opened the door, let's proceed with it. Can we have a ruling one way or another?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Order, order! My position is that I don't feel that I can rule on all questions pertaining to Sask Cable as it applies to the Department of Telephones. My view is that the questions will be better put in Crown corporations and I would hope that the members would put these questions in Crown corporations as that is the more proper place to place the questions. However, I can't rule on all questions that pertain to Sask Cable in this particular vote.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— On the point of order, Mr. Chairman. First of all I want to point out that in Crown corporations we will be denied anything that is not in the year under review, which is the real fundamental issue here and there is only one place that these questions can fundamentally be brought forward. I thought we were getting into the Department of Environment. I had forgotten to realize that Sask Tel had this small subvote and it is traditional in this Assembly that under item 1 there is a wide latitude to

cover any of the items and any of the matters that are related to Sask Tel and I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we be permitted to pursue this matter and clear it up once and for all, because there is no question that we will not be permitted to ask these questions in Crown corporations as the Chairman is well aware.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I said I can't rule on all questions pertaining to Sask Cable under this vote.

**MR. MALONE:**— Are you recognizing me, Mr. Chairman? I have a number of questions. Let's start off with CPN, Mr. Minister, and see the situation there. As we are all aware the government has agreed to guarantee a loan to CPN of some substantial sum over \$2 million. Firstly, where is CPN involved with that loan? Has the government actually given its guarantee? To what bank has CPN, as a result of the guarantee, been advanced funds? How much funds were advanced? Where have they been distributed? How have they been spent?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, the CPN will not be receiving any funds in the moneys here for the Department of Telephones.

**MR. LANE:**— Where will they get them?

**MR. MALONE:**— They are being advanced by the government; CPN is dealing with Sask Tel; it's your item here under the Department of Telephones, which comes under Sask Tel. Are you saying to us that you are refusing to answer any questions about the guarantee to CPN?

**MR. BYERS:**— I would suggest with all respect, Mr. Chairman, that is an appropriate question to direct to the vice-chairman of Sask Tel, the communications, when he comes to the House with his estimates under the Communications Secretariat.

**MR. MALONE:**— Again, Mr. Chairman, where are we at? If the minister is going to say direct it to Sask Tel in Crown corporations, or direct it to Mr. Romanow's department, I am not sure how far we can go. If you are going to allow questions on this matter, please allow the questions and hopefully the minister will answer them. The whole concept of Cable TV is hopelessly intertwined with CPN, government guarantees to CPN, CRTC, filters, etc., etc., Now is the minister prepared to answer questions in this regard? I am not going to waste the time of the House by asking questions if you just get up and say you are not going to answer at this present time.

**MR. BYERS:**— No, I, as Minister of Telephones, the Minister in charge of Sask Tel, am not responsible for the matter of guarantees to the CPN family. That is the responsibility of the Attorney General as the vice-chairman of the Board of Sask Tel and Minister responsible for communications policy. It would be a fair question to direct to him I believe in this House if the Chairman agreed during the consideration of Estimates.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Order, I ruled the last question of the member for Regina Lakeview out of order and I think it can be better dealt with under item 20 of the Attorney General's estimates.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— Mr. Chairman, may I redirect some questions on CPN then? First of all, could the minister indicate when the first installation of CPN took place? How many installations or private houses are now hooked up under the CPN family in the city of Regina, the city of Saskatoon and for the four cities that are involved? Can he tell me

also how, if any, if Sask Tel is being paid? For example, I understand that the first installation was made some time in October and I would like the minister to indicate that. I would like to know if CPN has kept up their monthly payments to Sask Tel on their service charges each individual month? Could the minister start off with giving me that information.

1. When was the first installation?

2. How many are installed?

3. Have they been paying regular monthly fees?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. chairman, I am going to ask you to rule on whether the question is in order. I respectfully suggest that the questions with respect to CPN we will provide them for you in Sask Tel Crown Corporations Committee and we will give you that information there. I wouldn't want to give you the figures unless they were right on the mark. I didn't know we would be dealing with that today and I didn't have my officials bring the appropriate numbers on booking.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— May I ask the minister a question? Will the minister give us an undertaking that in Crown Corporations he will provide specific information as of the 15 of March in relation to CPN, Cable Regina, the whole problem of cable? As you know many ministers in Crown corporations will open the door, will not insist being on the year under review and because this is a pertinent question — otherwise if you don't and you won't give us any of this information, then there is only one other place we can get it and that is right here and we better sit down and have a fight about it. If you can give us that assurance, as far as I am concerned we will be ready to back off.

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, I am willing to give that information if it comes within the rules of the Crown Corporations Committee.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— Mr. Chairman, he is sidetracking. I am going to ask him a specific question.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Order! What is the point of order?

**MR. WHELAN:**— I think we should get a ruling on this and find out whether this discussion is in order or not.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— My ruling simply is that I can't rule out all questions pertaining to Sask Cable. With respect to some of the questions already raised I have ruled them out of order because I think they are better put either under Crown Corporations Committee or under subvote 20 in the Attorney General's Department. Whereby I can't rule out all discussion on Sask Cable I will perhaps have to do it question by question to determine whether or not they are in order.

**MR. MacDONALD:**— Mr. Chairman, I want to say just a few words. There is no question about it, the cable fiasco in the province of Saskatchewan, perhaps, is the worst undertaking and financial mismanagement that Saskatchewan Telecommunications has ever been involved in. That's a fact.

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

**MR. MacDONALD:**— For example, the duplication of services, the cost of this whole thing, should be unveiled to the people of Saskatchewan in an open and frank manner by the Minister in charge of Sask Tel and not attempt to hide the issue until a year from now in Crown Corporations. This is Sask Tel; Sask Tel has the responsibility for Cable Regina or for cable television. That minister should either say he will give us the information in an open frank discussion or tell us why he is trying to hide behind the rules of Crown Corporations that deny us information here because believe me there's a story on Cable Regina or cable television in the province of Saskatchewan that the taxpayers of this province have a right to know and no minister should be able to hide behind the rules of Crown Corporations when we've got this subvote right here on this particular thing.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I point out to the member this is not Sask Tel, this is the Department of Telephones. It's a completely different boat.

**MR. LANE (Qu-Ap):**— I'd like to direct a question. You say you're not going to give us any answers on the grants and that the guarantee given by the government, you said that that came under the Attorney General. I'm going to go to the Leader Post of October 8 under the heading: "Cable Operators Taken by Surprise". It refers to things like CPN has hired 36 salesmen to do a door-to-door pledge in the three centres where it is seeking subscribers. Parfeniuk, head of the CPN, says, "The government has been covering all my operational needs; as long as they allow us to compete I am willing." Now, let's deal with the operational needs aside from the guarantees which you refused to answer.

**MR. BYERS:**— What's the point of order?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Order, order. What's the point of order?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Speaker, I thought I made it abundantly clear to you and to all members of the House that item 20 under the Department of the Attorney General's estimates relate to the Communications Secretariat and the Communications Secretariat is responsible for dealing with the CPN is so far as government policy is concerned. That has nothing whatever to do with the Department of Telephones, this little subvote of \$10,000 that we've been working on for the last hour.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— I agree that the questions currently being put would be better put in Crown Corporations, Sask Tel, a Crown corporation and would be much more fruitful at that time. And that's the good question I would rule out of order.

**MR. LANE (Qu-Ap):**— Speaking to the point of order, the minister had already indicated that he was prepared to answer anything except what he was passing off to the Attorney General because he said that was guarantees and that was under his jurisdiction. I think that the position being taken by the minister today is indicative of the government's mishandling of this whole episode. You've got one minister over there on the Communications Secretariat; you've got another one holding the guarantees and you've got one hiding behind the Crown Corporations' man, who is the minister opposite. Now, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, we have questions on Saskatchewan Telecommunications and we intend to ask the questions. Now you want to start detailing this. Crown Corporation's Committee was involved and I don't think the government opposite can deny it was involved in this cable fiasco and we intend to pursue it. Now I'm going back to ask my question again. The government has been covering all the operational needs according to the head of CPN. Now, how much of those have you

spent on the operational needs to date and the detail and the breakdown of the operational needs in the various categories and the various categories being used?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, — through the Department of Telephones — nil.

**MR. MALONE:**— Mr. Minister, are there any employees in the Department of Telephones in any way involved in providing cable TV service to the people of Saskatchewan? Are any employees of the Department of Telephones involved in the laying of cable or in any way involved with Cable TV in Saskatchewan, from the administrative end right down to the operational end? Are there any employees at all from the Department of Telephones?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, the answer to that question is, No. This is the department that practices zero-based budgeting and this department has no staff. The 24 staff in this department were transferred from the Department of Sask Tel in the last Budget and therefore there are none in the Department of Telephones performing the kind of services you suggest.

**MR. MALONE:**— I am not sure I caught all the answer. Is the Deputy Minister of the Department of Telephones, there is such a person, I believe, is he involved in any way in the planning, the funding, the operational sense of Cable TV in Saskatchewan?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, the Deputy Minister of Telephones in his capacity as deputy minister of Telephones is not involved in the kinds of activities you are suggesting.

**MR. MALONE:**— In what capacity is he involved with Cable TV?

**MR. BYERS:**— In his capacity as general manager of Sask Tel.

**MR. MALONE:**— I think you will concede that the only time we can ask questions then, through you, to the deputy minister, about Cable TV, would be through Crown corporations when Sask Tel comes up.

**MR. BYERS:**— Yes, I regard that as the appropriate time and that is the point I have been trying to make for the last few minutes.

**MR. MALONE:**— That's right; my seatmate makes the comment that we are not interested in what you regard as the appropriate time; what we are interested in is to bring to this Legislature some of the facts about Cable TV. I suggest to you that you have a deputy minister who is involved on a day-to-day basis, no matter what hat he wears, with Cable TV and that this is the only opportunity we will have to put to you and through you to him, questions in this regard on an up-to-date basis. Is that not correct?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— Order, Order. The minister may have other personnel coming in to discuss Sask Tel's activities on page 108, Saskatchewan Telecommunications. All further questions dealing with Sask Tel and Sask Cable should be properly dealt with on page 108 under Saskatchewan Telecommunications. As far as the Chairman is concerned, I can't make the judgments as to what questions directly involve Sask Cable and the Department of Telephones or what questions are involving Sask Cable and Saskatchewan Telecommunications; I can't make that distinction as Chairman. Any questions that pertain directly to Sask Tel could either be asked under Crown corporations or otherwise on page 108 under Sask Telecommunications. I think I am

going to rule out any questions in the future that are specifically involving Sask Tel because you do have another option and that is on page 108 of the Estimates.

**MR. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley):**— Mr. Chairman, we would be delighted if you will make the ruling that questions on Cable Regina — and I would like to hear the minister's defence — will not be answerable under Sask Telecommunications under page 108. If they are, we will be glad to abide but all we want to know is; we want to establish the place in the Estimates and in the review of government policy and fiscal management, where we can discuss Cable Television for the province of Saskatchewan and not have the minister hide from cloak to cloak and jump from pillar to post. If you make that ruling, that is fine; we will abide by it but I would like to have that ruling stated very clearly.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:**— The opposition members will have the opportunity under Vote 53, Saskatchewan Telecommunications, to ask those questions. They will also have the opportunity to ask those questions on page 22, item 20 under the Attorney General's estimates. Further questions relating specifically to Sask Tel, I will probably rule out of order.

There is a relationship between Sask Cable and the Department of Telephones. It is a very fine relationship and as Chairman, I can't make that distinction. There is a relationship but some of these questions have been relating directly to Sask Tel, which I will rule out of order.

**MR. MALONE:**— On a point of order then, Mr. Chairman, is it the minister's intention, after we leave the particular item we are studying now, to move to Saskatchewan Telecommunications? Will that be coming up immediately today after we finish this other item?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, I understand the Chairman's ruling is that the matters relating to Cable Television can be discussed under Vote 53 on page 108. I have only attended thirteen or fourteen sessions of this Legislature and I do not remember questions being asked under that Vote before but if the Chairman so rules that it is appropriate to discuss it under item 53, I would like to defer discussion to another day because you ask some very technical and other questions that we do not have officials with information that we would want to be able to get the proper answers for you.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— You said grants. Let us take the construction of a rural telephone company putting in what they call an emergency system for a volunteer fire department. A rural telephone company, privately owned, puts in what they call an emergency system for the volunteer fire departments where, when the phone rings in the hall, on the third ring it automatically switches to the homes of the volunteer brigade, depending which switches are thrown up saying they are home. Do you give a grant towards the cost of that? Do you assist in the engineering of that system?

**MR. BYERS:**— No, No, No.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Why, Why, why not? (Laughter)

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, perhaps we assist in the engineering. Do we give a grant — the answer is no, except that if it qualified under the grant program which is \$2.50 per vote per year.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— So what you are saying is that, if it qualifies under the grant system you will get it — at \$2.50 per year?

**MR. BYERS:**— It has nothing to do with the rural system. That hardware would be in the community dial office and that would be Sask Tel. It is no part of the rural system.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Even though the rural company owns the lines and services and does all the charging for the people on that service?

**MR. BYERS:**— No, it would be paid for by the town, not by the rural company.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— But it is built on a rural company's equipment and it is hooked up. The lines are owned by a rural telephone company and they pay a service charge to Sask Tel for the switching and so forth. What I am asking is: do they get a grant for when they put in this emergency system for volunteer fire brigades?

**MR. BYERS:**— No.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Why not? It is a construction cost. It is a cost to the system, it is a cost to the line and they are built in.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, I think we are getting into some fairly technical things here. It is a special device which I gather is built into the CDO or into the switching system.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— So what you are saying is, no grant. Even though the rural company owns it, you won't give them a grant for building this in, for the benefit of the people of the local area.

**MR. BYERS:**— No, it will be a service I expect that the town requests.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Well the town requested it of the rural telephone company and there is a cost factor. I believe it is 800 and some dollars and the majority of it is engineering fees. What you are saying to me is that there is no assistance for putting this in.

**MR. BYERS:**— If it were the town that requested the service of the automatic switching contraption (whatever it looks like) cost costs \$800, then that is a service the town presumably paid for and they can pay for it out of the grants that the government gives to the urban in the course of it's normal grant program.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— But there is no grant for this particular thing in any of your programs that I can find. They have to use municipal voluntary funds for the volunteer fire brigade. It is a service, it will save homes, it will save fire, it will save SGIO money, it is a very important thing and if you have anything to do with a volunteer fire brigade, you will know sometimes it is very difficult to find a volunteer fireman some days.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, it is a piece of phone equipment. There is an installation charge for putting it in, like there is for installing any phone, and there is a rental charge on a monthly basis for using it. You are talking about special grants. I regret that we do not comprehend better than we do the principle of unconditional grants. The government does make unconditional grants to local governments and they can use them on things like this, or however they wish. We do not have a special grant from the government to

every municipality for every special piece of telephone equipment they may want to put in for fire fighting equipment. We are funding the local governments through an unconditional grant system, and then they can provide these accessories and benefits if they wish. They then pay the installation cost, pay the monthly rental and if they do not want them, they do not do it.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— What you have been saying is, there is a grant for construction to rural telephone companies under item 1. What I am saying is, this is construction. They have to build a bunch of stuff and circuits, and put it through. What you are saying is, that will not qualify. The only thing that will qualify is the line placement and the placement of the line in the home.

**MR. BYERS:**— Yes. When this government came into power in 1971, the Department of Telephones had grants for cable, poles, crossarms, insulators, guy wires and you name it. One of the first steps we undertook was to phase out all those grants for guy wires, crossarms, posts and insulators, and we increased the percentage of the grant on cable from 33 1/3 per cent to 50 per cent and we started to put some money in the budget so the rural telephone companies could get at burying some cable. In 1971 the amount of grants paid out by the former government for buried cable was \$400,000 in that order, two years ago it \$1.2 million or three times as much. We put our money into the grants for cable where some real action could take place and some real action has taken place because the rural companies have buried over 3,000 miles a year on the average under that level of funding. We think that is the best way to run a grant program so you see some tangible evidence.

**MR. KATZMAN:**— Well, if you want to see some evidence, why not go all the way, why go part way? Why not say we'll give you 50 per cent on the whole works? That's what I'm asking, why won't you give it on the other portion? You want to say how great your government's doing, well you're forgetting half the work!

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, this equipment is installed in the community dial office which has nothing to do with the Rural Telephone Company, not a whit to do with the Rural Telephone Company. It's a contraption or a device that's added to the community dial office so that when the rural telephone companies connect with the community dial office which is Sask Tel owned, it's simply a piece of hardware. It's there, it's put there by Sask Tel if the Rural Company wants it, they pay for it as an additional piece of hardware.

**MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current):**— Mr. Minister, I'm a little concerned about a question relating to this emergency 911 number. I realize that's through the cities and through the present structure as is based through Sask Tel. I am wondering, Mr. Minister, has there been any moves from the Department of Telephones with respect to initiating the use of the 911 emergency number in the rural parts of Saskatchewan, either small communities or farms?

**MR. BYERS:**— What? I didn't hear you.

**MR. HAM:**— . . . The emergency number 911.

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, with all respect suggest that the emergency 911 has nothing to do with this subvote. Again, it's a service of Sask Tel and an appropriate question to ask in Crown Corporations Committee because there has been work underway under 911 in 1977. It's a matter that could be raised there.



**MR. HAM:**— Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, if the use of rural lines and an emergency number on a rural telephone line isn't under the Department of Telephones, I can't understand what your answer is supposed to mean? Has there been any moves to initiate the system under the Department of Telephones for the rural parts of Saskatchewan?

**MR. BYERS:**— If any urban centre obtains 911 as the emergency number, then any rural exchanges connecting to that urban would have the benefit of emergency 911.

**MR. HAM:**— You are saying then, if for example, the city of Regina received an emergency number 911, that the surrounding communities and farms would subsequently receive that same use or they would have use of that number? In that case, then would the subscriber pay, or would the Department of Telephones and Sask Tel absorb the costs?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, it will be the responsibility of any municipality to determine whether or not they want emergency 911 service, whether they want to participate in it. Your first question was, would it be available to rural people if emergency 911 became available in an urban centre? The answer is Yes, it could be.

**MR. HAM:**— Finally, Mr. Minister, then you are saying that it would be incumbent upon the municipalities or the locales, if you like, to initiate this service if and when it comes to the cities. It would not be, you are saying, the responsibility of Sask Tel to promote the use of the number?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, if any municipality, rural or urban, or a group of municipalities, urban and rural work out a system for delivering emergency 911 service, a method of delivering it with all the problems associated with it and come to Sask Tel with a system, then Sask Tel is willing to talk business with them in respect to the provision of the hardware and all that.

**MR. J. WIEBE (Morse):**— Just a few brief comments on 911 the emergency number. Basically the concept, I think is an excellent one, it is presently being used in Calgary and London, Ontario. I think the impetus for us here in the Assembly is to try to urge and encourage the Minister in charge of Sask Tel and the Minister in charge of the Department of Telephones to try to make that emergency number 911 available to all cities in the province of Saskatchewan and thus to all subscribers throughout the province of Saskatchewan. It is my understanding that the Firechiefs Association of Saskatchewan has made a considerable amount of representation to Mr. Byers and to Sask Tel on that particular subject as well as I understand some of the firechiefs throughout the province.

I would certainly like to see this kind of a program implemented within the province of Saskatchewan. While we as opposition members are restricted from implementing a private members bill according or to facilitate that move, I have contemplated the possibilities of introducing a private members' resolution that this Assembly urges Sask Tel and the government of Saskatchewan to begin studies with the hope of implementing that kind of a program in the near future. My question to the minister now is that it is my understanding that you have had a considerable amount of dialogue with the Saskatchewan Firechiefs Association pertaining to this very thing to make 911 available to all cities and in effect all towns in the province of Saskatchewan and I would just wonder if the minister would care to comment as to how that is proceeding at this

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time and when the people of Saskatchewan could possibly expect to receive such a service as one emergency number for the entire province.

**MR. BYERS:**— First of all to make 911 a reality it is necessary to establish certain hardware in the major centres like Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and so on. Sask Tel has installed some of the equipment now to make 911 service available. However, before 911 service can become reality, it will be necessary for each city wanting the service to undertake its studies and determine how it wants the system provided and when the cities have that sorted out and have a proposal to present to Sask Tel for the delivery of 911 service, Sask Tel is willing to talk business with them. There are discussions going on now in a number of cities amongst the agencies that would use 911 service, agencies such as the Police Commissions and the firechiefs and the ambulance services and the hospitals and the like as to how the service could be provided. I can't tell you off the top of my head where the discussions are at in any particular city today, but discussions — a good wide range of decisions and agreements have to be reached within any urban centre by the participating agencies. One of them being to determine which agencies could come under 911, start there. Those discussions are taking place in most centres throughout the province and if any urban or any local government comes to Sask Tel with a proposal for 911 service, at that time we can quote them a rate.

**MR. WIEBE:**— Just a question of clarification, and you're saying, I imagine, that the agencies that would be involved with 911 would be any agency that is involved with any emergency situation which is fire, police and so on.

It is my understanding then that say for example that the city of Saskatoon, the city of Regina or the city of Moose Jaw or any local government in the province of Saskatchewan that can iron out the mechanics of which type of emergencies or which type of groups would fall under that number, that Sask Tel is prepared to provide the hardware. Now is it my understanding that that hardware would be provided free of charge and that the responsibility of manning the phones and the mechanical network from a labor point of view would have to be then undertaken by the local government involved?

**MR. BYERS:**— I am not aware of any telephone company in Canada or United States where a telephone company supplies 911 services their responsibility. 911 must be regarded as another number in the phone book and the service as a telephone connection provided to the municipality that will benefit from the single number for an agreed list of emergency calls.

**MR. WIEBE:**— So the minister is then saying that this service would have to be purchased. And the hardware itself — would that have to be purchased as well by the cities involved or just a rental rate based on the use of that service?

**MR. BYERS:**— It is not necessary for the community benefiting from 911 service to purchase the equipment. Sask Tel would provide that but the community using the service would have to pay the rental rate.

Vote 38 agreed.

## **ENVIRONMENT — VOTE 9**

### **ITEM 1**

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce the two officials with me. To my right is Grant Mitchell, Deputy Minister of the Environment and seated directly behind me is Bill Howard, the administrative officer.

**MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition):**— Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin on this particular item, environment, and ask the minister a series of questions about the Bayda Commission and the Bayda Report. I would like to start off by asking the minister if he has had any indication from Mr. Justice Bayda as to when we can expect the report to be delivered to you and when it will be tabled in the Legislature. Have you had any communication from Justice Bayda in this regard?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, we have had no formal indication from Judge Bayda at this time when the report will be in.

**MR. MALONE:**— You say, no formal indication. I suppose I should ask, do you have any informal indication as to when it will come in?

**MR. BYERS:**— We are anxious to receive the report. On the other hand we wanted to give Judge Bayda and his staff and the other members of the commission and their staff adequate time to do a good job. At this time we simply have had no formal indication when the report will be finalized.

**MR. MALONE:**— I think the minister would agree with me that when the report is not available or not finished as yet, there is a great deal of uncertainty in the uranium industry and your department becomes very much involved because of your responsibilities to protect the environment and the possible hazards through uranium mining. It was brought to the government's attention by myself in the Budget that there was the item of \$40 million allocated for this year for uranium development. Notwithstanding the remarks of the Minister in charge of SNDC, the Budget makes it quite clear that \$40 million was allocated for uranium development in this current fiscal year that we are now talking about. Now my question to you, Mr. Minister, is where does your department, if at all, become involved in the spending of this money and, indeed, if any of this money is going to be given to your department to make sure that the environmental hazards, if there are any, are considered; that the environmental problems are taken into account. Is this money, any of this money, this \$40 million, going to be allocated through your department to have the necessary safeguards of which I speak?

**MR. BYERS:**— When the Bayda Commission was established it was made clear to all companies undertaking exploration work that they were proceeding at their own risk until the decision was finalized on Mr. Bayda's recommendation. If any companies do proceed to develop a mine on the assumption that Mr. Bayda recommends, and the government agrees that uranium mining can continue, then all of those companies that have undertaken exploration will be required by the Department of the Environment to undergo the same review with respect to environmental impact assessments and so on at Cluff Lake.

**MR. MALONE:**— If you could direct your attention to the \$40 million that I mentioned, I was wondering if any of that money comes into your department?

**MR. BYERS:**— The answer is, no, unless the company comes forth with a project

proposal then our Department of Environment would have some expense with respect to the environmental assessments.

**MR. MALONE:**— Isn't it fairly clear then, Mr. Minister, that — and I make this comment, I've made it before and I'll make it again — is that the government does not allocate such sums as \$40 million in the Budget if they are not prepared to spend that money. And I suggest to you that notwithstanding anything that Justice Bayda recommends, they are going ahead with the development of the uranium industry in the province. Now, you may disagree with that, that's fine, but the point I'm trying to make is that here we have a government allocating this enormous amount of money for development, for exploration, for mining and whatever, and there is not that I can see anywhere in your Estimates a significant amount of money being allocated to your department, significant in the sense as compared with the \$40 million development moneys available, that will be there to protect the environment in northern Saskatchewan which I assume you will concede is very fragile indeed. Now my question to you is, how are you possibly going to be able to function as a Department for the Environment, with the funding which you have, in face of the \$40 million being allocated this year for development to go ahead? I suggest to you that you are going to be severely handicapped to fulfil your function of protecting the environment in northern Saskatchewan.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, if a company undertaking exploration should undertake, following the Bayda Report, let me state it that way, to develop a project then the cost of the environmental assessment would be borne by the company. The only cost that would be assumed by the Department of the Environment would be the cost involved in assessing the adequacy of the environmental report and setting up any subsequent reports, inquiry and the like. But the cost of the environmental assessment is the responsibility of the proponent or the developer.

**MR. MALONE:**— I'm having trouble hearing. I'm not sure whether it's me or whether it's the PA system. Let me again suggest to you then the position you may be finding yourself in. It's obvious with Amok that they were allowed to proceed to a certain extent with their development before the government woke up and realized that there had to be some environmental study about that particular development. Now your answers to my questions of today lead me to believe that the government's going to find itself much in the same position as it did with Amok, that is, you're funding development, you're funding exploration. You're then going to reach a stage where the company involved is going to be in the position of developing and going ahead right at that stage. Now, are you suggesting to me that when they reach that stage, it's only then that the Department of Environment gets involved? It's only then that the Department of Environment determines whether there are any environmental hazards or risks involved? Perhaps you could answer the question.

**MR. BYERS:**— First of all, with respect to Amok, if my memory services me correctly, the Environment Department advised Amok in 1973, that an environmental impact assessment would be required before the project went to development and Amok engaged their own consultants to do the environmental impact assessment report, which the Bayda Commission has been reviewing. If any other company is contemplating or is serious about a development proposal they will then inform the Department of the Environment and we will require them to do their environmental assessment of the project before, and that has to be then assessed before development can really proceed.

**MR. MALONE:**— The question I raised through is, is it some way down the road before your department becomes involved? It's conceivable that you're going to be facing the situation again, of companies ready to go on stream with the development, perhaps with no problem at all with the environment or anything else, but they have to stop their particular development project and then go to the department and ask for the studies required. I'm not suggesting for a moment that the studies aren't necessary but let me put this to you. Would it not be a better system if you had somebody from your department directly involved with SMDC (Sask Mining Development Corporation)? I think it's fair to say that just about all of the uranium development projects going ahead now have SMDC involved at one level or another as a partner with the private operator. Surely, would it not be better to have somebody from your department on SMDC, or within the office of SMDC, looking at the uranium development strictly from an environmental point of view, rather than waiting until the development reaches a certain stage before your department becomes involved?

**MR. BYERS:**— I think it must be made abundantly clear that the government treats SMDC, or any of its partners, as it treats any other company. We do know the public developers don't get any favors from the Environment Department. They're treated as any other private developer and therefore they're subject to the same rules. The developers, I think, would be well advised to employ environmental people on their staff who can advise them properly on environmental requirements. Some companies do this, but not all have a good record. I think that the point needs to be made that Crown corporations are certainly not singled out for special treatment by this government with respect to environmental impact assessments.

**MR. MALONE:**— Mr. Chairman, this is begging the question, to say the least. Why not have somebody on SMDC from your department? You've got one government department, SMDC, whose, presumably, whole thrust is development. They're not there looking after the environment, they're not there doing anything except looking after development — at least I hope that's their mandate. Surely, having a government Crown corporation involved in this way, it makes eminent good sense to have a government department represented on that Crown corporation so that if there are difficulties that come along your department will be aware of them immediately and the development can go on on the basis of development as well as environmental protection at the same time. Surely this is not asking too much of any government — to ensure that these balancing factors are taken into account and that your department, your deputy or some official in your department be directly involved with SMDC from day one on any development project it gets involved in.

**MR. BYERS:**— I speculate, Mr. Chairman, that if Environment Saskatchewan provided the environmental input to Crown corporations like SMDC or SPC or Sask Forest Products that the opposition, the Liberal Opposition in particular, would be the first to scream conflict of interest. I think that Crown corporations have a responsibility either to build into their establishment an environmental division, which Sask Power has done, or they can do as SMDC does, as I understand in most cases, enter into a contract with an agency like the Sask Research Council for environmental input. But, we do not regard it as proper that Environment Saskatchewan be the staffing agency for environmental input for other Crown corporations and agencies of the government.

**MR. MALONE:**— I don't want to flog this too long but let me just sum up what you have said. I think that it is abundantly clear that the priority of this government is uranium development. I am not saying that is a bad priority but I am saying when a government is prepared to spend \$40 million to develop this vital industry, as they are apparently

going to do, that it is entirely appropriate for the government to take some little knowledge or some little cognizance of the possible environmental hazards in northern Saskatchewan because of this development. It is not sufficient for you to say, well there is something in SPC and there is something in other Crown corporations that are aware of the environment. Surely, with the uranium industry the environment is a priority consideration because of the possible hazards. Your government should recognize this because you put in the Bayda Commission. All I am asking you to do is act in an reasonable way and a consistent way and move along with SMDC on a joint effort so that while this money is being spent you are also considering the environment of northern Saskatchewan which, as I think you will agree with me, is a very fragile type of environment.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, you can argue as to whether Environment Saskatchewan should provide environmental staff and input to Crown corporations like SMDC and the like. We do not agree that that is a proper role and perhaps the opposition does but we do not. We take the position that the developers should obtain their own services for environmental impact assessments.

On the broader question may I state again, all activities that are now being conducted either by SMDC on its own joint venture or by other companies are being conducted with the understanding that the project could be halted and the company could be asked to restore the area as a result of a government decision following recommendations of the Cluff Lake Board of Inquiry. Each company is proceeding at its own risk. All companies have known what the rules are. All companies including the SMDC have known what the rules are since the Bayda Commission was set up.

**MR. CAMERON:**— I gather, a question of the minister, that his department is actively involved in the Qu'Appelle Valley Implementation Study in setting up the zones and the sort of follow-up work that is now being done out there. It is a fact, is it not, that your department is actively involved in that process?

**MR. BYERS:**— This is the department responsible for the implementation agreement with Canada.

**MR. CAMERON:**— Would you be good enough to outline to us, relatively briefly, what your department is doing and some of the problems that you are encountering because there are some major difficulties arising with the residents in that area.

**MR. BYERS:**— With respect to what we are doing, this is a 10 year agreement. In the coming year, we have proposed to spend a total of \$3.4 million. That sum will be shared approximately 50 per cent, the federal share is approximately 50 per cent. The money is to be found in a number of different departments. If you want the numbers I'll give them to you. The Environment Department - 693 thousand — I won't bother with hundreds — Agriculture - 1.5 million, DNRR - 749 thousand, Municipal - 220 thousand, Culture and Youth - 93 thousand, and SEDCO - 100 thousand. On the broader question, what are some of the problems that we are encountering. One of the ways we are trying to avoid problems is to involve the local governments as much as possible in planning the use of the land and water in the valley.

On August 15, 1977 six Special Planning Area Commissions were set up with representatives from both local governments and interest groups. The purpose of these commissions is to control land use planning in the valley and development in the

valley during an interim period while the final land use plan is being prepared. That means that all developments, whether public or private must be approved by the commissions. I want to emphasize that these commissions are comprised mainly of local government representatives from each rural municipality or village. They're really local governments in action jointly exercising their powers over land use. Now the commissions have been criticized by some landowners and some self-centered land speculators saying that the zoning regulations are too restrictive. I want to make it clear to all members of the House that if the six special Planning Area Commissions wish to amend their regulations or zoning by-laws it is entirely within their power to do so and the commissions are now looking at ways and means to improve their operation. The long term land use plan for the valley is being prepared jointly by staff from Environment and Municipal Affairs, there are funds of about \$255,550 provided for the continuation of this work in 1978-79. Now, whenever you set up a new jurisdiction like Special Planning Area Commissions, they are going to have some problems from birth and some growing pains until they sort out what their responsibilities are. I think the six Special Planning Area Commissions, now that they are launched, are doing a first-rate job of accepting the mandate which the province and the federal government gave to them and which they accepted.

**MR. CAMERON:**— Well, I want to draw some things to your attention. I don't know whether you are aware of them generally or whether you aren't. The first is that there's a group of people that I am familiar with with respect to the Long Lake area, that have lived there for years; they're reasonable people, they're not used to all the sort of difficulties that they're currently having. They've got to the point where they're organizing a Civil Rights Association to protect their rights from some of the actions being taken by some of your people and some of the commissions. Now their complaint is that very often there are high-handed arbitrary decisions being made without advance consultation with them and where there is consultation, it's only consultation of the most embryonic variety. These people, as I say, who are sort of average citizens, who are not used to this sort of thing at all, are actually now banding together to form a Civil Rights Group to oppose what's being done there in such an arbitrary way. That's one thing. Secondly, I wanted to ask you why, with respect to Long Lake for the first time in my memory there, that goes back about ten years, this last summer we had algae, green algae. There was a day that, for example, ten dogs died from drinking water in Long Lake and I wonder if that's a hazard to children as well. Because parents there get very upset when the dogs die from drinking water and more importantly, what is the basic problem and why can't we get at it to see that that doesn't happen?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, the members of the special planning area, are I believe cognizant and aware of the local concerns that are being raised about new zoning bylaws and building requirements of the like, and I think this is a new experience for the members of the Commission and the members of the Commission I am convinced are trying to do their level best to address themselves to meet fairly the concerns of the citizens whom you identify as belonging to the Civil Rights Association.

On the second point, the algae on Long Lake last summer was not the first time that algae have appeared on Long Lake or Last Mountain Lake as we know it and the situation was probably aggravated last summer by the low run off in the spring and the low summer precipitation and we will simply have to go through summers when that situation prevails.

**MR. CAMERON:**— I gather that the low precipitation in the summer and the low run-off in the spring, that problem could have been offset by simply keeping the level in the lake a little higher because you are letting a lot of water out of the lake regularly.

**MR. BYERS:**— There is very little water discharged I am told from Last Mountain Lake last summer once the level reached 1608.

**MR. CAMERON:**— One of the earlier questions that I asked is and I ask it sincerely, what are we doing to see to it that the quality of that water is cleaned up and Long Lake as you know is one of the better ones. We seem to be concentrating on the sort of land use and zoning end of things instead of the real heart of the problem which is cleaning up the quality of the water of the lakes. Now the other lakes as you know downstream, some of them are in terrible condition. Long Lake, I think, has been deteriorating the last little while. What are we doing fundamentally to see to it that that problem is being dealt with and how long is it going to take before we restore to some better level of quality of water in those lakes?

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, I think there are really three major initiatives. The first major expenditure under the Qu'Appelle agreement was to proceed with the tertiary treatment works for the city of Regina and phase one of that is completed. That is a three phase program but that is really the first major initiative that has been taken.

Secondly, there are sizeable sums in this Budget for a start on advanced treatment for Moose Jaw and it is expected to take in the order of two years before those works are completed and the benefits are visible.

Thirdly, there is a program under way that will continue this year in relocating a number of livestock enterprises on the tributaries of the Qu'Appelle, livestock enterprises that are considered to be amongst the contributors to the algae problem that you referred to.

**MR. LANE (Qu'Appelle):**— On the land use policy development program on which you have embarked, you added in an opinion survey and I have a copy and I would like to obtain from you the results of that survey.

The first question was: 'Should individuals be allowed to make speculative profit on buying and selling land?'

Second question: 'Do you think land should be worth more than it can produce?'

Thirdly: 'Do you think land speculation for urban purposes should be eliminated?' 'Do you favor limits or restrictions on the amount of land an individual can own or operate?'

I would like to know the results of each of those questions.

**MR. BYERS:**— Well, Mr. Chairman, the project to look at the development of a land use policy has been under way now for at least two years. The questions which the member quoted are questions that are put to individuals who wish to comment on certain aspects of land use policy. These are questions that people are asked to comment when they attend one of the seminars. The fact that views are being solicited by this means should not be interpreted to mean that any government policy relating to this or other subjects has been finalized. That is simply not the case, it is merely the method used to solicit citizens' views on a number of subjects.

**MR. LANE (Qu'Ap):**— Well, I gave you four questions and I say to you that these questions are highly biased and of a political nature. I think the questions are simplistic.



I think they indicate a political and a philosophical bias which I then warn the people of this province to be very, very careful of a land use policy implemented by the government opposite. What do you mean by, 'should individuals be allowed to make speculative profit?' Why don't you define the terms if you are going to have this as a fair questionnaire? 'The elimination of possible land speculation for urban purposes?' What do you mean by, 'limits or restrictions on the amount of land an individual can own or operate?' That's a pretty broad question, as are 'limits or restriction on farm land ownership for the following.' Then you detail the family farm, the corporate farm, the co-op farm, etc. Then you turn around, as the hon. member has just indicated, you are strongly critical of a group that organizes itself in the Flying Creek Special Planning Area.

I would like to know how this opinion survey is distributed? I would like specifically to know the areas or the individuals involved in the preparation of this particular survey?

**MR. BYERS:**— Mr. Chairman, I think it is shocking that the hon. member for Qu'Appelle suggests that groups like, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Association, the Wildlife Federation, the Environment Advisory Council, the National Farmers' Union, the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Mining Association, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and the Northern Municipal Council would act as a front to put forth questions of a biased political nature for the government of Saskatchewan. We are, Mr. Chairman, with all deference engaged in one of the greatest exercises in participatory democracy that has been undertaken by any government in this province! These questions that the hon. member raised were not written by the government for the members of the Land Use Policy Committee, these questions were written by the members of the Land Use Policy Committee, whose members are: Mr. Forrest Peterson of Wynyard; Mr. Keith Harde of Estevan; Mr. Jim Tooke of Dalmeny; Mr. Lorne Dietrick of Kyle; Mr. Roger Gray of Indian Head; Mr. H.L. Tingley of Lanigan; Mr. Boyd Anderson of Fir Mountain; Mr. Frank Petit of Buffalo Narrows. Because these gentlemen in their organizations which they represent are aware of some of the fundamental questions about land, land tenure, and speculation, that the citizens whom they represent are raising. These are the questions that they feel are proper to be debated in forums around Saskatchewan as the citizens of this province are being asked to write their own laws virtually with respect to a land use policy. We're going to let everybody put their input into it. We don't operate like Liberals and Conservatives do, where they write policies behind closed doors in smoke filled rooms or have them imported, sent in by advertising agencies from other parts of Canada. This is a real exercise in citizen democracy. These are the questions which the Municipal Council feel that answers need to be found to. We are last month and this month holding no less than 30 meetings throughout the province where the ordinary citizen can come and put his contribution and his two bits worth into these very fundamental questions. I want to say to the hon. member that the next meeting is being held today in the Melville Lions' Hall and there will be one held tomorrow in the Rainbow Hall in Canora and there will be one Wednesday in the Kelvington Roman Catholic Church Hall, on and on. I think if he wants to know how they are being distributed: 1. They were written by the members of the Land Use Policy Committee; 2. They are being distributed to 30 meetings throughout the province so that every citizen in this province can come and put his views forth on what he thinks about such matters as land tenure and speculation and whatever subject he wants to know. I think that is a fair question. I think the people who framed these questions really are in touch with the kinds of questions and problems about land use that the ordinary people are raising in their respective communities. I think they are far closer in touch with the citizenry who

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they represent than the hon. member is with his constituency.

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

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