

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

April 13, 1978

EVENING SESSION

Committee of Finance — Department of Municipal Affairs — Vote 24

MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Chairman, I want to say I appreciate the generosity of the House in adjourning a few minutes before 5 o'clock. The minister made some reference before the supper hour about my expertise with regard to grids and I felt I needed the time to get out and drive a few, so that my remarks would be a little more creditable.

I think it's fair to say that, Mr. Chairman, the minister has misinterpreted the motion that has been put by my colleague, the member for Assiniboia Gravelbourg. If he takes a look at the motion, the motion indicates that the super-grid system ought not to be conditional upon being a member of a maintenance system. It doesn't say that the maintenance system concept is wrong and it certainly doesn't suggest that the super-grid system is wrong, rather that a municipality ought to have the opportunity to move in the super-grid system without having to be a part of a maintenance area. Now, I think that's reasonably understandable. I think the minister may be aware, for example, that at the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association meeting this spring, rural municipalities, I'm sorry, Resolution 53 had a number of aspects in the preamble, the first of which indicated that the super-grid road system is acknowledged as being worthwhile. The second indicated the concept of maintenance area authority is worthwhile, but which also indicates that there is a concern about the maintenance area authority taking over authority from local government. And it goes on then to say:

Therefore, be it resolved that the provincial government be asked to dispense with the present maintenance area formation requirement as a prerequisite to financial assistance for super-grid roads.

The minister knows, as well as I do, that I'm not an expert when it comes to the concept of super-grids. But I do feel as though I have some expertise from the point of view of listening to what local government is saying. I was involved in local government myself, for a period of time and it seems reasonably clear to me that local government here is saying at its annual convention that they agree with the concept of the maintenance area, they agree with the concept of the super grid, they do not agree that one ought to be conditional upon the other because they feel that that is an erosion of local authority.

The minister has indicated in the past that he's a great believer of local authority. And in his remarks this afternoon with regard to the increase in the mill rate in Regina, he indicated there, that's really not my business. That's up to the city. They get the grant, they make the decisions about the money they're going to spend. It seems to me that the same principle applies here, and I think it's appropriate. It's appropriate for the minister and the members opposite to agree and to support the motion. Now, if the minister has some ulterior motive in insisting in the program that the maintenance area must be prerequisite to the super-grid, then I have to wonder whether the minister has an ulterior motive, whether this is a back door approach, if you like, to the concept of regional government. Is this the first step? We've heard a lot about regional government. We know that it's a kind of concept. It is not something that's widely accepted. Regional government may have some advantages but the people at the local

levels are saying that they're pretty concerned about that concept and they're not in any way ready at this point in time to begin to move in that direction.

Now, in summation, Mr. Chairman, there are really, I think, two points; (a) the resolution that is before the House, or the motion that is before the House, makes sense. It is founded upon the principle that both a maintenance area and the super-grid system are worthwhile. It's founded on the concept that rural municipalities are saying that they do not want one to be conditional upon the other. I think that all members should be able to understand and should be able to accept. And I want to conclude by asking the minister whether, in fact, he's really moving in an area which is a back door approach to regional government.

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Well, Mr. Speaker, I responded to the hon. member for Rosetown-Elrose on that, that we have no plans for forcing on rural municipalities regionalization. We are encouraging co-operation, we make no bones about it. But before I move into the remarks of the hon. member for Saskatoon and I'm sorry that he didn't give us a detailed description of how to construct super-grid, I want to comment very briefly on the few remarks delivered by the member for Morse. I'm sorry the member for Morse is not able to be in his seat, I understand he is off to a meeting, but I can't give up the opportunity to make a few comments because he was talking, Mr. Chairman, about equipment for maintenance of the super-grid system and I don't think he has a full grip on the usefulness of the maintenance equipment that has been proposed by the engineers in Rural Affairs. I think it's important to know that one of the bases of the maintenance areas is to put into an area sort of a stretch of road involving let's say, 100 miles, give or take. It's important, I think, to have within a maintenance area the communities that are involved along the route, are involved within the municipalities. It's important to understand too, Mr. Chairman, that the equipment that's proposed for maintenance of this oil system is equipment that can be used to put on the original oiling, so that the hon. member suggests, it will only be used for a very few months within the year, I don't think is a fact because you have the construction aspect and you have got the maintenance aspect going on, on that road itself and of course as I have suggested and we are encouraging the towns and villages to be involved in the areas as well. As I recall, one of the first maintenance areas that was formed, was formed in the constituency of the member for Maple Creek, I think Gull Lake is in the member's riding. It was the first one to be formed. I was amazed too, Mr. Speaker, to listen to the hon. member's suggestion that equipment of highways maintain the super-grid system and I had to ask myself what's he talking about? Is he saying the rural municipalities should have Highways maintain all their roads? That's certainly a change because rural municipalities have been maintaining their roads since they were rural municipalities and doing a very good job of it, thank you. Is he saying that the municipalities, as one hon. member suggested, are not capable of maintaining their roads or maintaining this system, or more alarming in my mind is he suggesting that the 5,000 miles give or take of the primary super-grid system should be a highway system? And I think if that's what he was suggesting, we stand opposite on all counts for we think municipalities should maintain their roads because they are very capable of doing it and we think that the super-grid system or the oil grid system should be a municipal system and as long as we are government, that will be the case. Highways have lots of roads and there will be some expansion of the highway system into northern Saskatchewan with resource development, they've got lots to do. Lots to do and municipalities can look after this system.

One of the interesting aspects and I'm sure the hon. member will be pleased that he is not in the House to take this vote. One of the interesting aspects is that one of the early

maintenance areas to be formed was in his very riding and they are very active in the construction of super-grids, very active in the construction of super-grid. As a matter of fact, he along with his maintenance area but is requesting that rural affairs approve additional mileage to their system. Now, that's why he agrees, he says, pretty good system, is this super-grid, but you know and then when the vote comes he has to go to a meeting, big meeting, but he is not here. It's a legitimate request, it's a legitimate request and I think we have to consider their request very carefully but I want to say to the hon. members opposite and the expert for Saskatoon on super-grid and local government that I am going to take credit for that addition and not give it to the member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — To be serious though, I am trying to point out the sort of conflicts that are going on within the members opposite and the conflicts that are going on within SARM with respect to this program and therefore the need for a thorough discussion and a thorough examination of that program. Now I look at the hon. member's resolution;

That the government of Saskatchewan dispense with the present maintenance area formation requirement as a prerequisite to financing assistance for super-grid roads.

Now, if the hon. member knows the policy and it doesn't look as if he does, a rural municipality can apply for financial assistance to build super-grid without being in a maintenance area and, in fact, get assistance. The condition on that assistance is that it shall be 50 per cent formula rather than 60 per cent, the remaining 10 per cent being provided once the maintenance area is formed. The concern and the request and the policy relates to the municipalities which have made an effort to form a maintenance area and are in a position where the other municipalities aren't interested at the present time but the former want to proceed and we are assisting them in proceeding.

The other condition on municipalities, individual municipalities is that we will only provide assistance for the reconstruction and not the oiling. So in a sense, Mr. Chairman, we have met the resolution of the hon. member and we have also met the resolution put forward by SARM at their convention. Now, if the hon. member is suggesting that we need to dispense with the maintenance area formation, then we say no. And if he says that we dispense with the present maintenance area formation requirement as a prerequisite to prove financial assistance, we say no. But if he says that it is a prerequisite to financial assistance for super-grid, that is in fact the case now, then we can support his motion.

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I am not going to question the sincerity of the mover and the seconder of this motion. However, I have spent some time in talking with RMs and people who were at the convention about this particular resolution and I'm afraid I heard from them somewhat different than I heard from the mover and the seconder as such.

I would like to suggest to both sides of this House that by dealing with this motion at this particular time, we may be doing something which is much, what one would have to call, premature in that it seems to me that within the next few months there will be regional meetings of the RMs being called to look at this very question and to examine it again. It is my opinion, Mr. Chairman, that I don't know whether it is up to this

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Legislature to decide policy for the SARM or not. It seems to me that by the time the month of June rolls around, after the RM regional conferences have been held, and this whole question in regard to the super-grid and maintenance I think it is up to the RMs at their regional conferences to make that decision and not this Legislature.

I would like to caution the members as well, that while you may have one RM making a great disturbance about a particular road program, I think we have to admit that in building and going into a super-grid system, you are in fact involving a number of local municipal councils in that. The necessity of establishing a maintenance area is just about as essential as establishing a highway crew given so many miles of highway under their care.

I could draw the attention of the minister, to one pet peeve which I have always had and that is the road which comes off of highway number 32 and joins the RM of Riverside with the RM of North Landing. There is a grid road across there which runs up to Pennant, (I don't know whether the minister is aware of it or not) but Sask Power with their generating station down there, together with the RM and together with an oil company, they went together and they built a grid road which everybody agreed to with the exception of the one RM, which left a beautiful grid road all for 6,763 miles or something which belongs to another RM. And so you come off a beautiful new highway number 32, proceed west to the station and what do you do? You should be on horseback to cross most of the time on that road.

The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is very simple, that you have to have some conditions on maintenance areas. I am not questioning the resolution as such — only to say that I think it would be premature for this House to move this resolution. I think it would be even premature for the government, even the minister, to come down hard and fast even after this resolution until after the spring regional meetings with the RMs because I think we have to have them.

Another thing that I think we have to wait upon, and I'm quite sure that this is going to happen. I'm quite sure that before a few years pass, while there may be some glory in right away going to oil on the super-grids, I am very sure that you are going to find in many regions of Saskatchewan, that you are not going to see oil on the super-grids, but rather you are going to see gravel on the super-grids. There are certain areas in the province where, I am told in talking to highway engineers, that it cost 10 times the maintenance for a mile of oil that it would for a mile of gravel. So I think the conditions about oiling the roads, if we haven't got the machinery, if we haven't got the soil that will hold this oil coating, that will be very expensive — even too expensive for the Department of Highways, and they will tell you more than that. I give you one example. Go to my constituency to take a look at the oil road which leads from Eston down to the Riverside Park. How long did the oiling last? How long did that particular agreement last — and they have since decided they would be much better to go back to a gravel system.

I think, Mr. Chairman, I cannot support the motion — not because I question the sincerity of the motion — I think it is premature, I think we have to allow our SARM regional people to make some further input to the Department of Municipal Affairs, let them decide further what the prerequisites will be, and let the RM councils inform the minister and the municipal affairs and let them proceed hearing directly from the RMs and not from members of this Legislature.

MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — I would just make a few brief comments, Mr.

Chairman. With all due respect to the member for Rosetown-Elrose, the resolution that is before the House is the resolution that was passed by SARM, March 14, 15, 16 and 17, 1978, which was a result of regional meetings throughout the province last year, where branches of the association passed the resolution and moved it on to the provincial council and that, in fact, is the position that SARM has taken. I beg to differ with the member. I don't think it is a matter of being premature, I think it is a matter of reflecting a particular point of view, recognizing the value of the maintenance area, and recognizing the value of the super-grid system. I think that I heard the minister say, before he took his seat, that as far as he was concerned, the members ought to support the resolution — support the motion — and I certainly urge the member for Rosetown-Elrose to reconsider his position and along with the rest of us, support and recognize the position that is being taken by local government in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I tried to point out a few minutes ago to the hon. members opposite, that what the resolution or the motion asks us to do, we are already doing. We are already doing it, and like so many having an opportunity now to look at the motion and its wording, and like so many so very often at conventions like SARM and SUMA and many others, one discovers after it is over that resolutions are passed which are, in fact, already in effect. So this is already in effect, this policy of the government.

Motion negatived.

ITEM 1 Con'td.

MR. BAILEY: — I want to ask the minister a question with regard to police grants with which there was some controversy and it seems to me in this Legislature that so many of the grants that are applicable or so many of the regulations that are applicable in the southern part of the province for some reason aren't applicable in the northern part of the province. I sometimes get the feeling that we have two provinces here, southern Saskatchewan and northern Saskatchewan and I want to ask the minister why with a different formula there is inclusion of the police costs in the revenue sharing in the southern part of the province but not in the northern part of the province?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, is the hon. member asking the question as it relates to the area that is under the jurisdiction of DNS, north of the DNS line? Well, I'm afraid, Mr. Chairman, we can't answer that question. I think that the hon. minister of Department of Northern Saskatchewan, in a question in the House, earlier in the session, responded by saying that the staff in his department is looking at a formula for funding the communities in the North and I think the question that you raise now would be better directed to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan during DNS Estimates. I can't respond specifically on what is being planned there but there is a funding formula being worked out and it will be available in this particular fiscal year.

MR. BAILEY: — Let me get back to the southern part of the province. This is one of the items, if I remember correctly, that SUMA really didn't want in the package of revenue sharing if I remember correctly, simply because they found some difficulty in their way of thinking at least, to have the police cost come into revenue sharing. The question I want to ask the minister is this, let's take the home town of the president of SUMA if you wish, which I think is Carlyle, where you have a large detachment, probably a dozen members. Compare it to a town of an equal size with a detachment say of three

members. O.K., how did you arrive at a distribution of cost with the police costs included within the revenue sharing with such a great discrepancy that may have to be met by the different communities of equal size?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Basically, in the foundation part of the formula and the hon. member will know because I guess it's been announced that 60 per cent of the \$10 million allocated to the urbans is per capita and the other 40 per cent is foundation equalization and the police component would be part of the foundation part. It is done basically by averaging as it is done in the school formula, by averaging, but there is a wrinkle to the averaging for the communities which have, in fact, higher police costs. I suppose I could describe the wrinkle something like the wrinkle that was applied in the sparsity factor of the Foundation Grant Formula. I think that while there was concern throughout, that was one of the differing points between SUMA and the government and they were differing within SUMA at some of the meetings we held. The decision to roll them in once the communities found out how much money was going to be available to them softened their feelings very, very extensively. The Minister of Finance received a letter from the Mayor of Saskatoon. Saskatoon was very, very strong that the police grants should remain a conditional grant and not be part of revenue sharing but he responded while he still felt police grants being outside as a good principle, he was very very pleased with the amount of money available to him and it was softened extensively and as the hon. member for Saskatoon to your right pointed out, Saskatoon was able to hold the line on the mill rate because of revenue sharing, so there was available to them sufficient funds in the formula to cover their police costs for this year.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, I guess what we are talking about here is we know that the emphasis that was even placed by your department in making a Department of Urban Affairs and Municipal Affairs, which I think I was dealing more with the Municipal Affairs in the rural areas. If you take into consideration your response to my question the sparsity factor then you take an averaging, all I can say to you is that you are going to have some towns unhappy and some towns very happy, as you have some school units happy at times and some unhappy because you have to come to a conclusion. I am not going to quarrel with that point.

I do want to bring up another point in the way of police costs, though. I know that it doesn't directly respond to your department but like so many things in the Legislature you cross from one department to another.

Mr. Minister, at one time we had almost twice as many RCMP detachments in Saskatchewan as we have at the present time. Like so many other things, we have consolidation taking place and the two-man detachments are disappearing. We have a centralization of the police detachments. While there are some areas in rural Saskatchewan, and Mr. Minister, I am sure that you have heard this complaint, that they are literally too far away from a detachment to be properly policed and given proper service. I am not condemning the detachment and I am certainly not condemning those who have to drive 40 miles to investigate something at the end of their detachment. I am wondering, as a point of the Minister of Municipal Affairs if perhaps we should not be taking a look. If the province is going to pay a cost for police servicing for the RCMP, it seems to me that we should have some input as to how far apart the detachments should be. I personally feel that you can have good police work out of a two and three man detachment and yet these are disappearing. I can give you an example within my own constituency. If you go out the road past Lucky Lake towards Outlook and you had an accident take place then the detachment from Kyle would have to be called. They

would have to come 2 miles north and 35 miles on the second area highway just to get to Beechy and they would have to fight their way on up to Lucky Lake and then on up further. They are just simply too far away.

Now, I suggest from the Department of Municipal Affairs and this crosses over to the Attorney General's department as well, that we should be taking a look at this. I don't think it is necessary. It may be convenient for the police force to have larger detachment centres. It could even be a slightly lesser expense for them, I don't know, and I expect they could have an argument there but I am talking about service to the people. I can assure you that if you took a look at the rural areas in Saskatchewan, people are asking this question and I am sure they have brought this to your attention as well. Are we going to permit — and I think here we are in the Department of Municipal Affairs should have some say — are we going to permit further centralization of the detachments in Saskatchewan? I, for one, am greatly concerned about that and I am sure you are too. I would like to have your comment on what I have just said.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't have the figures for the province available to me. I don't know whether we have them in Municipal Affairs or not; we can provide them. I think it may differ from area to area. I can tell the hon. member that 15 and 20 years ago when I used to run around playing hockey in that area, there was a detachment in Watrous and in Lanigan and in Foam Lake and in Punnichy and in Strasbourg. Now that I am running around watching my son play hockey, there's been an addition added to that and a detachment in Wynyard and a detachment in Southey as I have been sorry to find out. So in that, sort of given area, that broad community with which I am very, very familiar, two detachments have been added within the last, let us say, roughly 15 years. And the policings were a bad bunch of guys there. So the policing services have been expanded as I recall, particularly, in the Foam Lake and Punnichy area. The numbers there of police have increased as well. So there are more police in my given area. But we would have to get the figures. And I think probably you could get them very quickly from the Attorney General's Department when his estimates come up. But it may be just a shift on a regional basis.

MR. BAILEY: — I admit I don't think they are even allowing two man detachments any more in the province. I am not sure but I think the smallest detachment we can have is three. There are more officers, there are more RCMP in the province. The point I am making is by taking a look, you will see that there are some areas in Saskatchewan that even though there is a fairly highly concentrated population, they simply are too far away from a detachment to get any reasonably good and quick police service. The point I am making, Mr. Minister, is I think your department has the responsibility to take a look at those areas which are far removed from police services and I mention Lucky Lake and Beechy and I could mention other areas in the province, naturally I am going to mention those areas in my own constituency. But I know that there are some areas where you have a concentration, certainly, as you have mentioned, of more detachments. But I would like sometime to sit and discuss it with you. I mentioned one area, I could mention three other areas where I think the people are being short changed, not because of the fault of the police but rather because of the fault of the placement of the detachments.

MR. G.N. WIPF (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Chairman, a few questions on the police grant structure. Mr. Minister, you have met with a lot of the city representatives and I do know that the city I represent of Prince Albert came out against the police grant formula or structure that you have. I was wondering if your rules and regulations have been set solid; the whole province or the southern part of the province that comes

under your jurisdiction, will each city be assessed the same way on this averaging scheme that you have or will there be any special consideration given to an area or a city that has very high police costs?

MR. MacMURCHY: — As I pointed out to the hon. member for Rosetown the police grant is rolled in, it's rolled in for this year into revenue sharing. So it is an unconditional amount of money. Prince Albert (he was referring to Carlyle) like Carlyle while it was on the averaging received the wrinkle or a special allowance because of its high policing cost. My latest discussions with the city of Prince Albert and revenue sharing — their issue now, because they know what they are getting, is the issue of consensus for the future rather than the problem of the police grants. I've indicated that we will be seeking to have some kind of a census structure in place for revenue sharing because the dollars are getting very, very large to wait for the five year federal census. So we are looking at some kind of a structure to accommodate their concerns and most of the larger urban concerns, particularly.

MR. WIPF: — Can we take from that then the idea that this wrinkle that you talk about or the extra consideration for certain cities in the province will not be only for this year but it will be an ongoing thing after the census is taken?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — No, not yet, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I don't have just in front of me, and I am sure that you do, your officials have it there. I wonder if you could tell me the number of people in the province of Saskatchewan according to the latest possible census and the number of people in Saskatchewan in 1971. I am sure that those statistics are readily available there. I'd also like to know the number of people in Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton, North Battleford, Prince Albert and Swift Current in the same two periods. I wonder, if you just have those there, if you could just read them out to me. If you don't have them, let me know and that will be fine.

MR. MacMURCHY: — We don't have with us here the 1971 figures. All we have here with us are the 1976 figures. We can't give you the comparison figures. We can get them and provide them to you probably tomorrow morning but we don't have them with us here.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Minister, in 1976 then what is the population statistics that you have? If you have the population statistic here do you not have any older than that just for comparison's sake — 2, 3, 4 years, it doesn't matter. I have for example, in 1977 according to the estimate in your monthly statistical review that as of October 1 in the province of Saskatchewan in 1977, the figure was 941 thousand compared with 1976 of 927 thousand. Do you have anything earlier than that at all?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Not here.

MR. COLLVER: — None of those statistics here at all. All right, may I ask if the minister would agree that the number of people in the province of Saskatchewan as of October 1, 1977, or as of now would be in the vicinity or in the range of 940,000?

MR. MacMURCHY: — You are saying give or take. We just don't have the rural ones here because the Municipal Affairs formula, the rural RM did not have a per capita component in it but the urban one — yes, they say about 940,000 give or take.

MR. COLLVER: — Would you agree that the approximate number of people in the year 1971 in the province of Saskatchewan was in the range of 920,000? You don't know that? Well you certainly know that it is less than 940,000 and more than 900,000. Would you say that that was true?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. COLLVER: — You would say that that was true. In the city of Regina in the year 1971 the approximate number of people that we have was in the range of about 110,000 and I understand that in the city of Regina today the estimate is in the range of 145,000 people. Would the minister agree that that is correct?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I just can't respond but the 1971 figure seems to me to be low and I have .. This will be the 1976 census figure; it is 149,593. Saskatoon is 133,750.

AN HON. MEMBER: — And Yorkton?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yorkton is 14,119, Weyburn is 8,892, Swift Current, 14,264, North Battleford . . .

MR. COLLVER: — That's all right, I just thought we could shorten this up a little bit by suggesting that there are delineations in the province of Saskatchewan between cities and the rest of Saskatchewan. Perhaps the minister could tell us, what is the percentage of the population who now live in cities in the province of Saskatchewan?

MR. MacMURCHY: — About 630,000 in all of the urbans, we want the cities. We will have to add them up and provide them for the hon. member.

MR. COLLVER: — Well, perhaps while you are doing that you could think about the basis for the question then and then you will know what I am asking it for. (Inaudible interjection). Well, because I wanted to see if we had the statistics readily available.

In the year 1971, the percentage of the population in the province of Saskatchewan that lived in the cities was less, and considerably less, than the percentage of the population who presently live in cities. Would the minister agree with that statement?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, I would have to look at the figures, Mr. Chairman, I think certainly for Regina and Saskatoon, they have seen a pretty significant increase.

MR. COLLVER: — Yorkton?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yorkton — I don't know the figures. But I think you can look at those two cities. Perhaps Prince Albert has had some growth — I don't think Moose Jaw has grown that much — some. But Regina and Saskatoon . . . (Inaudible interjection) But it is growing — Moose Jaw is growing.

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, what I was getting at, Mr. Minister, would the minister agree with the statement that a larger percentage, and quite a significantly larger percentage, of the population of Saskatchewan now live in the cities of Saskatchewan, than did in 1971.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, we would have to look at the figures. For the hon. member to

say that they are significantly larger, I wouldn't be prepared to say that. To say that there are a larger number, I think that the evidence of the growth in the two major cities is evidence that there is a larger.

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, I think that the minister might agree that there has been at least a growth of 25,000 in the population of Regina in the period of time and approximately the same in the city of Saskatoon at that period of time, which would be 50,000 in the two major cities alone — not counting the significant growth. When the minister talks about no growth, or not knowing the population statistics or variables of the various cities that come under his aegis, I am extremely surprised. The fact is, the cities in Saskatchewan have grown significantly, while the population as a total in Saskatchewan has not significantly grown at all. In the year 1971, and the member for Moosomin just brought me this number, there were 926,000 people in the province of Saskatchewan. Well I thought perhaps the Minister of Municipal Affairs would have this information at his fingertips, for the information of the member who does not know anything about the North, I thought the Minister of Municipal Affairs did know something about the cities, towns and villages of our province, and I was hoping to get it a point here. There were 926,000 people in Saskatchewan in the year 1971, and the minister said today there are approximately 940,000 people — which is a growth in the total province of Saskatchewan in that period of time, of roughly 24,000 people. Yet the two major cities have grown by 50,000 and we know that Yorkton, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Swift Current and other areas, have grown. Those urban centres have grown significantly since that period of time.

My question to the minister is this, in the seven years, during which the NDP has been in office, in the seven years in which they supposedly have made a commitment and a serious commitment, to an improvement in the quality of life and way of life of the rural centres and small towns and villages of our province, why then have the small centres, the rural centres, in the province of Saskatchewan continued in that seven year period of time, to lose significantly their population to the major urban centres of our province?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get into the business of playing with words — and what is a change and what is a significant change. Because we could go on all night. We accept that there has been a growth in Regina and Saskatoon, the two major cities. We accept also, that there has been a significant slow down in the out migration from our rural communities. There is a significant stabilization — and I am sorry that I don't have a messenger boy available to me with the statistics in the office upstairs. The office of the department happens to be downtown and I told the hon. member that we would make these statistics available to him tomorrow, and I think that is the earliest that it in fact can be done. The fact that there has been a change, I think justifies the decision of this government and the decision of this department to divide itself into a rural and an urban division. I think the fact that there has been the growth in, let's say in the four largest cities because I have the member for Moose Jaw here. The fact that there has been a stabilization in the rural side particularly in our towns and our villages justifies the decision that the government made and also justifies the decision that the government has made in terms of financially supporting those particular urban centres as we have done prior to this year and as we have most certainly done this year.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, the minister has used some very interesting words in his statement. Again he has used the words that would be better ascribed to the Minister of Education or the Minister of Health, such words as significant and stabilization.

Perhaps the minister would be prepared to tell us what statistical evidence he is presenting to the Assembly today to indicate that the towns — Mr. Chairman, there is a great deal of raucous noise coming from across the way, I guess they don't want to answer this very simple question. What evidence can the minister present to this Assembly to indicate that the towns since 1971, which is seven years that the NDP has been in office in the province of Saskatchewan to indicate that the towns, villages, rural areas in our province have somehow stabilized. That the continued deterioration of the population in these small centres has not continued to drop and that small towns in and farms and rural areas of our province have not continued to lose population. What statistical evidence has the minister to document that to this Assembly tonight?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I told the hon. member that we do not have with us the statistics that he requested. I told the hon. member that I would make those statistics available to him, given time to get them. There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that I don't have a statistical mind. That doesn't particularly bother me. I don't have a mind that rattles figures around whether they are statistics on population or statistics on something else, but I do know that the policies that have been implemented by this government with urban municipalities whether they be the cities or whether they be the towns are, in fact, very much appreciated. I do know that the policies of this government with respect to villages and towns and cities are geared to Saskatchewan thinking and Saskatchewan feeling and while I can't make the statistical argument and I don't ever intend to get into that, I can make other arguments on the policies of this department and the policies of this government in support of both large cities, big towns, small towns and villages.

MR. COLLVER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, that's a very interesting statement and I want to use some of the other words that the minister has just mentioned in terms of these policies; and all we are suggesting to the minister today and he doesn't have a statistical mind, but he is coming to the people of the province of Saskatchewan into this legislative Chamber requesting \$140,922,480. Now that's statistical that's a number that the minister certainly has firmly planted in his mind. While we would like to know as representatives of the people and I believe that even the members on the other side of the House would like to have the same information — is that the division of that \$140 million that you have allocated to Municipal Affairs, the best possible allocation to improve the situation with reference to the deteriorating quality and standard of life in the small towns and villages of our province. Is there a commitment with that \$140,000,000 being spent? Is there a commitment to the development of small towns, villages and the family farm concept, as has been spelled out by the NDP in '71 and '75? Or is the minister merely using soft words like 'appreciated by the people'; like 'in accordance with Saskatchewan thinking'; like 'significant stabilization'. None of which are meaningful to the people of Saskatchewan. Because if you come to the city or the town of Nipawin, for example, to the town of Nipawin and you go to the people there and you ask them whether there is a meaningful commitment by the government of Saskatchewan to senior citizens' housing and they tell you that they have approached the government of Saskatchewan with 150 legitimate, first class applications for senior citizens' housing and that the government of Saskatchewan says, 'no, you can't have that in Nipawin'. In Melfort, I'm sure there's a lot of senior citizens' housing. There's a senior citizens' high-rise in Melfort, Saskatchewan. In Tisdale, too; both Melfort and Tisdale. But in Nipawin, the people of Nipawin, in other words, should you subject the senior citizens of that area of our province and of other areas of our province to have to go for their accommodation to Prince Albert which is away from their home to Melfort or Tisdale which is away from their home; No, not in Choiceland. The member for Choiceland would do well to listen to his constituents of Choiceland

about the provision of senior citizens' housing there. And about the serious concerns, not only in Choiceland but in . . . listen, but you don't hear. The point is, Mr. Chairman, that what I'm asking the minister to do, which I think is quite a reasonable request from any member of the Legislature when he's being asked to determine whether \$140,000,000 is being wisely spent, is to ask this one fundamental question, one fundamental question. Is the money being spent in accordance with the commitment in words from the NDP that they have committed to the rural, small towns, villages in the rural way of life in Saskatchewan? Or, Mr. Chairman, is the money being spent to exacerbate the problem, to continue to provide service services in the cities, to continue to require that levels, I, II, III, and IV come into the cities rather than be treated in the smaller centres..no hogwash, you can look around the province and see..what about Davidson. The Minister of Education's home seat where there aren't sufficient level IV beds by any stretch of the imagination? The minister laughs and knows it's true. And knows about the citizens' committee and the only reason he has is because he's got a strong candidate against him now.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the people of the province of Saskatchewan, in the smaller centres, have in the last seven years continued to witness a decline in their population. And furthermore..do you ever get the impression, Mr. Chairman, that when someone tries to make a point quietly, that they yell so loud that you have to yell. And then they're very critical about having to yell. It's too bad that the population in rural Saskatchewan has been declining. It's too bad for the members opposite that the population has been declining because your commitment in '71 and repeated again in '75, was we believe in the family farm. We believe in the small towns, we believe in development of the small areas and the villages. That's what we believe in, said the members opposite. Yet this statistic prevails. And all I'm asking the minister to do, please, because I know you will want to do it for the people of Saskatchewan to prove that your policies have been successful and are successful. And you know that the people of Saskatchewan are far, far too intelligent to believe words like 'significant stabilization', 'appreciated Saskatchewan thinking', 'will enjoy their wonderful benefits from the NDP'. What they would like to know is where is your statistical evidence to back up the fact that you say there has been significant stabilization and if you have no data to back that up then the people must believe that there has been no stabilization and as a matter of fact, a continued deterioration. Now, if that is true, then is your policy correct of the development of the kinds of centralized agencies in the cities going to serve you in good stead in terms of producing a revitalization of the smaller communities of our province?

HON. D.L. FARIS (Minister of Education): — Mr. Chairman, I just happen to have some information concerning a few of the small towns in my area and I would like to share that information with the hon. member because quite obviously he is out of touch with the changes that have taken place in this province over the last seven years. I will give him some figures and I'm sure that he will be able to take these down. For example, if you will look at the towns of Davidson, Outlook, Craik and Holdfast, you will find this: in 1970 and '71 the town of Davidson, which he mentioned, received from the former government in unconditional operating grants \$537 — \$537 for the people of Davidson. This year the people of Davidson will receive \$47,159 in unconditional operating grants.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's a lot of money . . .

MR. FARIS: — That would hardly cover his lawyers I know. The town of Craik, a smaller town in 1970-71 received \$287. This year they received \$22,103. The town of

Holdfast, one of the towns that Otto Lang is attempting to wipe out by taking the rail line out, 1970-71, they received nothing, not one cent from the former government, from the government with the local government expert. Not one penny. This year they received \$13,161. The town of Outlook in 1970-71 received a magnificent sum, and this is big by comparison with the others, of \$900 — \$900, about 1,500 people there and they got \$900. This year the citizens of that community will receive \$69,610. Now if the member opposite thinks that is insignificant I am sure that tomorrow the officials from this department can find him the figures that apply to the towns in his community and he is going to look very foolish indeed. I want to tell you too, that since that time - there was no low rental senior citizen accommodation in the town of Outlook prior to this government - there are 24 new units in there. There are 14 units in Davidson, 10 units in Holdfast, 10 units in Craik. That's due to the efforts of a member of the Legislature who got out there and did some work on behalf of his constituents. He didn't spend his time running around the province trying to mislead people. Just look at the information in regard to what your communities have received in the last years. This department will be glad to bring this information to you tomorrow I am quite sure but you are going to be in a very bad position.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I have not heard in my life, in my time in this Assembly a more vicious attack on local government, particularly the local government in our towns and our villages, than I heard from the hon. member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver). I thought I was ashamed of the hon. member on the steps of the Legislature the day before yesterday but I'm more ashamed of his attack on the efforts, the efforts that have been showing strong evidence in our villages and in our towns. I just want to comment on his statistics with respect to his own constituency and the town of Nipawin. Now let me look here.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I thought you would have those rattling around in your head.

MR. MacMURCHY: — No, no. I don't have those rattling around in my head but the hon. member doesn't have them rattling around in his head either.

Nipawin, senior citizen family housing projects complete in — senior citizen and family — the end of 1977, the end of December they were built and completed last year, 28 senior citizen units, 37 families. Under construction at the end of December, 1977, in fact they are under construction right now, and this is the fifth senior citizen project in Nipawin, 42 units. So there is nothing going on; there is nothing going on, the member says, in Nipawin. There is a great deal going on. There may be 150 applications and those applications will be dealt with because I give you, the hon. member, the percentage of program distribution for senior citizen housing in this province. In centres over 10,000 population, 26 per cent of the 1,200 or 1,500 units are built there. In a population of 2,500 to 9,999 it is 18 per cent. Under 2,500, 56 per cent of the senior citizen subsidized housing units are being built. So the emphasis on our senior citizen housing program is, in fact, Mr. Chairman, in the smaller villages and in the towns a strengthening force for those communities. That program is working well. Now, while the work is almost complete in those villages and towns, the emphasis is still necessary in our larger centres and that is evidenced by the increase in the number of units being provided in Regina and in Saskatoon.

Now, Mr. Chairman, when one looks at revenue sharing and its distribution formula one has to be assured that the situation as it exists is accommodated by that formula because 60 per cent of that formula is paid out on a per capita basis. Now, I think the hon. member will agree that any kind of distribution formula for municipal government

whether it be urban or rural can't be totally paid out on a per capita basis; there has to be, in fact, some equalization factor built into the distribution and 40 per cent of that pay-out is in a equalization way or a foundation way to accommodate the differences in ability for a community or a municipality to finance itself on its own. So we have, through this distribution formula, taken care of the existing situation and we have, in programs in addition to revenue sharing, provided a strengthening for our smaller towns and our villages. The figures I gave on the program of public housing — the fact that the Municipal Water Assistance Board provides for grants for villages and towns, the fact that in addition to the public housing program there is a rural and native housing program which has a cap in terms of community population, of 2,500 — one could go on and on in terms of talking about the programs that are in place and are strengthening our smaller villages and our towns. If the hon. member doesn't appreciate it . . . (interjection) . . . I say the villages and the towns appreciate it and they appreciate this program this year. I ask the hon. member to name one that doesn't appreciate the effort of this government with respect to grants and support for municipal government.

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health): — Mr. Chairman, I was not going to get into this debate (inaudible few words) but after listening to the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver), I feel that I must add something on behalf of my constituency and in so doing, I am sure on behalf of rural Saskatchewan as a whole.

If rural Saskatchewan is in some danger, Mr. Chairman, it is only because of the kind of gloom and doom attitude that is portrayed by people like the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver). I object very strenuously to anyone who would get up in this House and insinuate that there has been a deterioration of quality of life in rural communities in this province, as the member opposite did. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that that is just not true. You can go and he can go, if he wishes, and he is welcome, to any community in my constituency and ask the people there whether there have been any, and indeed what major changes have happened in those communities since 1971 and I can assure him he will get a real re-awakening about what indeed has taken place.

Mr. Speaker, the opportunities in rural Saskatchewan and the opportunities in the towns and villages and hamlets has never been like it is right now and most of those changes and improvements have happened in the last seven years. The member talks about population decline. Well, I ask him to go to Colonsay or to Watrous or to Humboldt or to Bruno and to Meacham and he will find that, indeed, the population there has increased since 1971. It has increased. And I would ask him to go to the farming area around those communities ..yes, I can get you the statistical data, and you will get it tomorrow, as the minister has already said. You can go and you can see that there has been a very substantial change in the farming people in those communities in that the sons and the daughters are now farming where the parents used to because they now have some hope and they have had some assistance as well as a pretty good economy in the agriculture sector to make that happen. Before 1971, Mr. Deputy Chairman, there were no senior citizen low rentals in Bruno and Colonsay and Viscount and Watrous but during the last seven years there now are because of those seven years of this government. Senior citizen low rentals in Bruno and Colonsay and Viscount and some about to get started in Watrous and a very substantial addition in the numbers in Humboldt.

Now I remember the days, Mr. Deputy Chairman, when both the Liberals and the Conservatives objected very greatly and very strongly to our establishment of community colleges because they said that that wasn't the way to go. They have this

philosophy that you have to centralize it in one place. You couldn't make it a community thing. Well, that is not the approach we took. And through the community colleges as one example, there are opportunities for adult education in the broadest possible way, like there is no where else in this country. And for the member opposite to say, Mr. Chairman, that the light in rural Saskatchewan is in of very low quality, is wrong. I don't think it is. I am a rural MLA and I am one who has been brought up and has worked in rural Saskatchewan and I can tell the member opposite it is a very good place to live. And it is a better place to live because of the election of an NDP government in 1971.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Chairman, I am amazed. I heard the Minister of Education a moment ago and now I've heard the Minister of Health get up and pat his government on the back for the tremendous job they have done insofar as housing is concerned and not once mention that 75 cents out of every dollar spent in that housing came from the federal government. And that, it seems to me, is the Liberal government. I think that there has been a tremendous amount of cost sharing involved in these programs and they are good but I hate to let the member get up and mislead the House by suggesting that it is because somehow the NDP are just superhuman people. And that there hasn't been some involvement in some degree of work done by other people at other levels of government too. And I don't want to prolong the debate, Mr. Deputy Chairman, but I do think that we ought to recognize that these are a result of joint ventures that involve three levels of government. They have been good in Colonsay and in Elstow, I don't think there is anything in Elstow, but in Saskatoon and Regina and Yorkton and elsewhere that they have been and they have provided a real service and I don't think that it is fair that the provincial government should stand up and take all the credit itself.

MR. COLLVER: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I think that what we are envisioning tonight is rather an interesting concept in politics. The minister, first of all, starts out by saying the people in the small towns and villages in the province of Saskatchewan are appreciative as though they had something to thank the government of Saskatchewan for, for handing them back their own money. The minister says the people of Saskatchewan in the small towns and rural towns and villages of our province should somehow be, in his words, appreciative that the NDP has come on the scene to tax the people of Saskatchewan \$140 million and return to them \$50, \$75 or \$85 million in property improvement grants and urban revenue sharing. The remainder of the expenditure, oh, I am sorry, there are a few other odd thousands in the water assistance act and a few others that are grants back, the remainder approximately \$40 million is administrative cost, administration by the Department of Municipal Affairs over the tax moneys of the people of the province of Saskatchewan and they should be appreciative that the minister and the NDP have done this for them.

Now, Mr. Chairman, all I started out to ask tonight was a very simple question, very simple. Why, Mr. Minister, when your NDP government committed in 1971 and repeated again in 1975 that you were committed to the development of small towns, family farms while retention of, that's a good word too, retention, then why, if, Mr. Chairman, if the NDP were committed for seven years to the retention of rural Saskatchewan and the retention of the small town way of life of our province, why has the population in those rural areas deteriorated and diminished dramatically from 1971 to 1977-1978? That's one question. Now ebb flowing from that question is this . examine the statistical evidence at your pleasure tonight when you go home, Mr. Minister, and that you are going to bring back to this Assembly tomorrow, and determine the percentage of the population in the rural centres and small towns of Saskatchewan that are over the age of 65 today and compare that with the percentage of people in the rural part of Saskatchewan over the age of 65 seven years ago — and

you will find, Mr. Minister, that that statistic or that evidence or that number has increased dramatically. Any government that didn't commit to the smaller towns and centers of Saskatchewan to build senior citizen's houses, would have been irresponsible of the first water, their irresponsibility would have gone beyond that. It would have been heartless, because the smaller centers, villages and rural areas of Saskatchewan, population has been changing and has been becoming more and more aged as time goes on relative to the rest of the population.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the reason for that is apparent. The reason for that is that there are no new opportunities being created in the smaller centers of Saskatchewan. Here we have a government that says it's committed to small towns, villages and of the Saskatchewan rural way of life, yet they are witnessing a deterioration in opportunities in those smaller centers. One MLA on the government side one MLA who says he's quitting, put together an opportunity in the small centers with a heck of a lot of effort and energy and he was given some fair press on it. But, where are the opportunities in these small communities that the government is creating for those who are in the productive years of their lives so that the taxes on them can be spread out and the social obligations that your government has in reality can be met.

When you say that you have 42 units in Nipawin under construction, you are correct, but there are 150 applications waiting and these people are in serious states. They need accommodation and at a later time we are going to go in further and hopefully with the minister's co-operation these very very serious problems in the Nipawin constituency with reference to level IV beds and with reference to level II and III beds. In the entire Nipawin area for the information of members opposite, there are four level IV beds in total, four, and that's in the hospital, but that levies of property tax to keep it going and to keep those level IV beds going and the minister of Health has his eyes wide open now, but he knows that there is a municipal levy for the Nipawin Union Hospital and he knows there are four level —well the Attorney General says thank goodness now. The members opposite —

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Don't yell.

MR. COLLVER: — I won't yell anymore, but my mike keeps going off or something. I haven't been able to figure that one out yet.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, and I hope to discuss with the Minister of Health privately and with the Minister responsible for Sask Housing this very serious problem in the northeast part of Saskatchewan that has been developing with reference to senior citizens and with reference to not only level IV beds and not only senior citizens housing, but also levels I, II and III with waiting lists very, very long, very, very, lengthy and the other serious problem is people having to be referred for level IV care outside their own communities and they're being sent off with only a few months to die. That's what they're being sent away to do.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the fact is and I notice that the member for Assiniboia has comments on that too, I'm sure the same situation exists in his constituency and other constituencies. The point is, Mr. Chairman, that we have a deteriorating situation in small towns in Saskatchewan, not an improvement as was committed by this government in '71 and as was committed by this government again in 1975. So, I ask the minister this question, is he aware that over a third of his budget is taken up in property improvement grants? And does he believe that the property improvement grants might better be utilized to improve the quality of life and the deteriorating

conditions in rural Saskatchewan?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I happen to think that the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan is a good quality of life. I happen to live in rural Saskatchewan. And I would suggest to the hon. member that he think about living in rural Saskatchewan and he'll find out what it's really like. If I want to consider the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan and the quality of life in urban Saskatchewan, I'm going to take the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan right now. I don't know how, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member can stand on his feet and say what he has said in this House tonight. I don't understand it . . . condemning the Department of Municipal Affairs on its there's a per capita debt in Alberta . . . oil rich Alberta. Tory Alberta has three times the per capita debt at the municipal level. I say that what his local economy means out there in Raymore, Saskatchewan when they want support to build a \$200,000 skating rink . . . well, that's your job. You're autonomous, you can finance the \$200,000 skating rink. That's what you can do. But what if they want to improve their water and sewer system? Oh, but you're autonomous, you can finance it yourselves. That's what the policies of the hon. member are.

MR. ROMANOW: — Shame.

MR. MacMURCHY: — And shame is right, Mr. Attorney General. And for him to stand up in this House and speak as he has spoken tonight and consider the policies of his party and governments on each side of us and consider what he says outside of this House, I am ashamed. I'm ashamed that he sits opposite me in this Legislature.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, let me assure you that I'll never sit beside you in this Legislature. And that's for sure. That's for sure. Mr. Chairman, the minister makes some interesting comments and I thought it would be interesting to note that in so far as the province of Manitoba is concerned during the same period of time, because after all, after all, Mr. Chairman,, during the same period of time the province of Manitoba was being cheered by the members opposite even during our tenure in the House. I can recall many times when the members opposite cheered the province of Manitoba and during that time the city of Winnipeg grew and grew to the point where it represents, in terms of population sense, almost entirely the province of Manitoba. From a percentage of the total population, the city of Winnipeg is almost the total population.

In the province of Alberta — and the minister sitting down all the time and talking out of his chair, the Attorney General, right — the Attorney General wants to ask about the province of Alberta. It might interest him to know and it might interest the members in their chairs to know that in fact the towns and villages and rural areas of Alberta have grown in population in the last seven years . . . (interjection inaudible) . . . well . . . well . . . where is the statistical data to object to that says the Minister . . . I am stating in this Assembly that it has. If you can't prove me otherwise — Mr. Chairman, in the period of time in the last seven years the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, just the two of them, have grown to approximately a million people and the province of Alberta has 1,700,000 people, approximately. In that same period of time the province of Saskatchewan has grown to 920,000 people, 940,000, even though in the year 1939 Saskatchewan population exceeded that of the province of Alberta. And they want to talk about oil-rich Alberta.

Mr. Chairman, the province of Saskatchewan, for the information of members opposite, has 45 per cent of the arable land of Canada. They want to talk about oil-rich Alberta. The province of Saskatchewan has most of the proven potash reserves of our country although there are a few developing in New Brunswick. The province of Saskatchewan has 15 per cent of the oil. It has much of the coal. It has a great deal of reserves. It has a great many resources. The province of Saskatchewan, from a resource point of view, is richer than the province of Alberta, richer from a resource point of view. And yet, Mr. Chairman, the very commitment that the NDP government made when they were running for office in 1971 and the very commitment that they made in 1975 has not been delivered. Well, the member for Humboldt (Mr. Tchorzewski) laughs; he laughs at the fact that in the rural part of the province of Saskatchewan the support for the current government has been deteriorating dramatically. In his own constituency, seeking the nomination for our party, is the former campaign chairman for the man sitting right in front of him. Support for his own party is deteriorating . . . (Inaudible interjection) . . . Sure; but why in the rural part of Saskatchewan and in the small towns — and this will show up in the next provincial election and the members know that . . . (interjection) . . . Well, we'll see about that. The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that the population has declined and it has become older in the smaller centres of our province and in the rural part of our province. Therefore, jobs, opportunities, new ventures, new developments have quite simply not happened the way the NDP said they would in 1971 and the way they restated they would in 1975. They quite simply haven't happened.

All we asked the minister to do today was to prove, not use words, not significant change, not strong evidence, not appreciated, significant stabilization — to show us, to prove that what you are doing is the right thing to do. Prove to us that \$140 million . . .

MR. KOSKIE: — Let the people decide that . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Well that is precisely what we will do — to the member for Quill Lakes (Mr. Koskie) — that's precisely what is going to happen and the people will decide. And perhaps the Attorney General, as he fumbles his desk tonight, perhaps he will have some influence, I hope, on the Cabinet and on the Premier and he will sometime in the very near future decide to hold a snap election and let the people decide on all of the policies of the NDP government in Saskatchewan. If they are so certain that the policies are accepted, why don't you call an election and see? Why don't you try it out? Mr. Member for Quill Lakes, out in your area where Progressive Conservatives are pounding doors every night, why don't you try them on for size?

MISS CLIFFORD: — What has this got to do with . . .

MR. COLLVER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, it has a great deal to do with it but for the information of the member for Wilkie, the point is that support for this government has dropped in your constituency. I think you will agree with that. Support for the NDP has dropped.

(inaudible interjection)

MR. COLLVER: — Well, not in your constituency. Mr. Chairman . . .

(inaudible interjection)

MR. COLLVER: — We don't have boys. You have boys — we don't have boys. Thank you

very much.

Mr. Chairman, a simple question to the minister has not been answered tonight. Why does this happen? So I would ask the minister, assuming that he cannot answer a simple question as to why this has occurred and why the jobs and opportunities have not developed in the rural part of Saskatchewan. Would the minister not agree that the vast majority, and he said 60 per cent was on a per capita basis. That the vast majority of the \$140 million for the Department of Municipal Affairs is spent (and when I say the vast majority I mean well over 50 per cent is spent in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon) — over 50 per cent.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member just doesn't listen — doesn't listen when I answer questions. But I want the hon. member to listen to this. As I said earlier, I've never heard such an attack on rural Saskatchewan as I have heard tonight and from someone who came from Alberta and has only lived in places like Edmonton and Calgary and Regina and doesn't know and doesn't understand, doesn't even have any feel for community. If he had he wouldn't have the nerve to make such a speech.

It seems to me as I have been listening here tonight that I have heard these speeches before. I have heard them — declining population, resource development — and that born again Conservative that came from the Liberal Party brought some of his father's speeches with him — the same fallacy. I want to tell the members of this Assembly that the people of Saskatchewan know after the experience with that Thatcher administration that the only party and the only government that makes Saskatchewan work is the CCF and the NDP, and if the hon. member for Nipawin sincerely believes that they will respond to his position of declining population and resource development and down with rural Saskatchewan, he has got another think coming.

MR. A. THIBAUT (Kinistino): — Mr. Chairman, this is becoming very entertaining.

(inaudible interjection)

MR. THIBAUT: — Well you know it is very interesting and I was just going to say that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. Chairman, forgot the word 'stagnation' that we listened to quite a few times. I also heard the remarks of people — old people not having a home to live in. I'm going to tell you that if it hadn't been for a CCF government in this province, his people would have died 15 years before.

I can remember when I was a little boy when the people went from house to house in the evening to look after the sick and waiting for death to alleviate their suffering. And when the Thatcher government (not the Liberal government because I tell you it was good riddance when they got rid of Thatcher over there) — when the Thatcher government got in the hospitals began to close and we were on our way back to the same old thing. Thank goodness we got rid of them then.

Now you just have to fly over Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta on a nice clear night and when you get over Saskatchewan it is just like the Milky Way. It is lit up — and not lit up with booze either. It's lit up with lights from the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the moment you cross the boundary into Manitoba or Alberta, there is a simple blackout. If you ever have the opportunity to fly over — the other day we came from Nipawin (and you know that is an unlucky constituency) over the Quill Lakes we could see the city of Regina, Saskatoon and in between there all these little stars down below, the farm lights that are in existence. If you want to criticize rural Saskatchewan you

just don't know what you are talking about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THIBAUT: — I think one of the biggest problems for his constituency is that he get up and 'yiks' and 'yiks' and doesn't go to the ministers and ask for the things that his constituency needs because I have to make trips up there even to solve some of their problems. You know because they don't know the man, he doesn't come around and he's walking all over the place from Regina to Switzerland and God knows where and not looking after his constituency and we're going to take that constituency in the next election I can guarantee you that. All you have to do is go into those small towns and there is a little recreation centre with the aid of the federal government and the provincial government and you know, give the devil their dues by golly, and these people are forgetting to go to the doctor because they are enjoying themselves in their recreation centre that they didn't have before. And this is rural Saskatchewan. To hear it criticized the way I am listening tonight, you know I like to sit here and be quiet and listen to a lot of this nonsense, but when I see the old Anderson government creeping out of the woodwork it scares the hell out of everybody. I can see the repetition of Joe Clark and the Anderson governments, if the people of this province don't wake up and not allow this country to get burned the way they got burned in the dirty 30s. Once in a life time is enough. I hope it doesn't happen while I'm still around. And you people, you young squirts, you better get to work and see that that kid up there from Nipawin, from God knows where, never forms a government in this province. It is serious, my friends. And I also ask the Liberals to get on there and become the official opposition because that group over there is not worth being here and they are going to clean them out and believe you me I have got a little bit of energy left. I am going to be around this province and if you want to know how to win elections you come to Kinistino and I'll teach you how to win an election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THIBAUT: — O.K. my friends, you better just sharpen up a little bit because you haven't seen anything yet. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — Mr. Chairman, I don't often thump the desk but I'll sure thump the desk for that one. I am very pleased that the member for Kinistino rose to his feet tonight and that he's still alive because of the CCF. It's apparent that the CCF has kept him alive. He said that older people were kept alive by the CCF. It is my understanding that the member for Kinistino is not running again. He says, that's because he's been here a long time. I would suggest it is because Louis Domotor has been nominated to run against him and I really don't think that there would be much left of the member for Kinistino once Louis gets through with him.

Mr. Chairman, the fact is that over the last few years the people of Saskatchewan have come to realize, for the information of the member for Kinistino, that the NDP is not the CCF. Sure, there are a few CCFers around, a few, like the member for Kinistino, the prairie populace, the member for Weyburn, the prairie populace who were concerned deeply about the co-operative movement and about rural Saskatchewan but, Mr. Chairman, the NDP are not the CCF.

Mr. Chairman, it was interesting to note, if we can return to the estimates, it was

interesting to note that the minister refused to answer a very simple question this time. Of the \$140 million that he is requesting of this Legislature, is it not true that over 50 per cent of the \$140 million will be spent in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon while the population of Regina and Saskatoon represent only 30 per cent of the population of Saskatchewan? In other words less than half of the minister's budget is going to be spent in the lesser areas or the lower population areas, I should say, of the population of Saskatchewan, while more than 70 per cent of the people of Saskatchewan live there. Is that true, Mr. Minister?

MR. D.G. BANDA (Redberry): — Mr. Chairman, I wasn't intending on getting into this debate until I heard the member for Nipawin giving his long speech here on rural Saskatchewan that he doesn't know about apparently. It is unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, that the member for Nipawin has been travelling some place around the country and hasn't been out in rural Saskatchewan. He certainly has not been out in my constituency lately, and when he was there he drove at night so that he did not see what was going on over the last few years . . . (Laughter and inaudible interjections) . . . all of you know what the member for Nipawin said at that meeting, if we want to get in to that one, but I want to remind the member that it is too bad that that member did not ask the members of Marsden when he was there, who paved the streets and the main street in Marsden . . .

MR. COLLVER: — The people of Marsden.

MR. BANDA: — Oh, is that right. I wonder where they got the grants to build the skating rink, and where they got the grants for the new local community . . . (Inaudible interjection). I wonder if the member was told about the ten senior citizens units that were put up in Marsden, and I give the federal government credit for sharing part of that. It certainly wasn't the Conservative government that gave it to them — and the senior citizens of Marsden appreciate that. I would invite that member to drive up to Leask and ask the town council of Leask what they did with the community capital fund grant which gave them grants for garbage, packing unit, other renewable plant, lagoon cell, sidewalk construction, oil surfacing, fire protection equipment, just to mention a few of them, Mr. Chairman. The members and senior citizens of Leask are proud to have 18 senior citizens' units under construction right now. The member somehow suggests that rural Saskatchewan is deteriorating. I also want to encourage that member when he goes to his nominating convention on the 19th in Hafford, to ask the people in the hospital if they are happy with getting low rental, low income housing in Hafford, and a level care home in Hafford. Ask them who provides the grants from this government. (Inaudible interjection).

I want to remind the opposition, the Liberal Party, what happened before 1971, when the former Minister of Highways in this Legislature, got up and threatened the then member of the Redberry constituency that he would not do any highway work on No. 40. And in fact, he didn't. I ask those members now to drive down No. 40 Highway from Shellbrook to North Battleford — this government spent \$12.4 million on that highway, to rebuild it, a rural community. That's the benefit to every rural community in that constituency, Mr. Chairman. (Inaudible interjection) Yes, maybe we should go down to Yellow Head for some of you members, and take a look at what is going to happen on the Yellow Head this year, on No. 5. We are going to be putting shoulders from Maymont to North Battleford. Maybe the members don't know that — I am not surprised, because they have not travelled in that area, it doesn't surprise me one bit. Well maybe they should stop in Radisson, the 20 senior citizens units that are occupied there. (Inaudible interruption) That is in my constituency and I am proud to be the

member for that constituency.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BANDA: — I am surprised that the member for Nipawin a little while ago, was criticizing members on this side for making some noises, now something seems to be bothering him over there. (Laughter) I want to invite the member for Nipawin to also go up to Maymont, and ask the senior citizens there if the 10 units that they are living in are appreciated.

These are all rural communities that are suffering, Mr. Chairman. They should also ask the citizens in Maymont where they got the library renovations grant or the sport centre renovations grant — and I could go on and on, Mr. Chairman. I also want to mention another place, a little community of not even 200 population, which in the last five years, has a new gym, two classrooms, a new senior citizens' centre, and low rental housing units under construction, and that is at Rabbit Lake. I invite that member, because the member for the Conservative Party that ran against me last time in the provincial election happens to come from that town. That town has grown in the last four years, four times over — and that is a rural community that that member says has stagnated under this government.

Well, Mr. Chairman, when the member for Nipawin stands up and says that somehow we haven't helped the rural communities and the farmers in the rural area, I will ask that member if \$3.4 million in livestock grants to Redberry constituency doesn't help livestock producers in that constituency.

MR. MacDONALD: — That's after you . . .

MR. BANDA: — Ah yes, at least we get the farmers in business. I ask that member where those 57 loan bank lessees got land from? And where the 60 some odd Farm Start farmers got loans or got money from if it wasn't from this government. Mr. Chairman, that members of the Conservative Party are deliberately trying to mislead the people in Saskatchewan and I think they should be condemned for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman. That is very interesting. We have had the member for Humboldt and the member for Redberry and another member over here talking about the joys of rural Saskatchewan and I concur ..oh, yes, and oh, Mr. Attorney General, I certainly know a heck of a lot more about it than you do. I happen to represent a rural constituency in the northern part of Saskatchewan and I do have some concerns and if the members don't want to hear about our legitimate concerns then they are going to hear them anyway, because we are going to tell them anyway. Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to note, that each of these members comes forward with the suggestion that this town has grown and this town has got a grant and this area has improved and that is just like saying after somebody comes and smashes nine of your fingers, I've got one finger that is good. Nine are broken, one is dandy. The fact is that the totality of rural Saskatchewan, the totality of small towns and small villages in Saskatchewan has declined in the past seven years. That's a fact. Now they haven't refuted it. And the fact is that in the current budget year and this is specific, more than 50 per cent of the \$140 million is being spent in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon where 288,000 out of 940,000 or 30 per cent of the people live. The fact is that the so-called commitment to

rural Saskatchewan by the NDP is as phony baloney as their nationalization of the potash, is as phony baloney as the rationale for every socialist step that they've taken in the last seven years. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, that the NDP government have not commitment to rural Saskatchewan. What they want to do is say, we have appreciative citizens we have made change, there is strong evidence that it is improving. It is working well, in the words of the minister, while he commits to less than 30 per cent of the people more than 50 per cent of the money. Mr. Chairman, that is phony baloney.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, to answer the hon. member's question, the facts are that out of the \$140 million in the Municipal Affairs Budget, not \$30 million is going into Regina and Saskatoon. That's the fact. And for the hon. member who stands on his feet and says that 50 per cent, so many million is going into Regina and Saskatoon is false. It is false.

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head - Wolseley): — After listening to both parties here this evening try and tell each other how good they are and particularly when the minister decided to go back to the Thatcher years and the member for Kinistino go back to Thatcher years, I think it is about time we had better bring you up to date.

First of all, I am going to tell the member for Kinistino and all the other members that, you know, for 20 years of CCF government, from 1944-1964, you didn't build any senior citizen houses. That is a fact. In 1965 the federal government changed the regulations and CMHC borrowing and made it possible for people to borrow for senior citizen housing and at that time there were 2,500 level I, II, III, and IV beds in Saskatchewan, five years later there were 7,000. And that is a fact. Now that is a fact. Of the 2,500 senior citizens housing that were in Saskatchewan, those were all built in the 1920's. Now go to Moose Jaw. You tell me in Regina what new senior citizen accommodation was built from 1944 - 1964. Tell me which one was in Moose Jaw. As a matter of a fact, I think, Pioneer Village was the first one. Go to Saskatoon and tell me how many. Now go and look from 1964-1970. All of a sudden look at Weyburn and Estevan, at Bengough, look at Esterhazy, Yorkton, Melville. You name the town. And every one of them has got senior citizen accommodation built because of the fact that the CMHC changed and it was a provincial Liberal and a federal Liberal government that built it. So let's be factual.

The second thing, you know, Mr. Speaker, they start talking, the only thing that made any sense here tonight was the fact that the member for Nipawin said that unfortunately that rural Saskatchewan today is deteriorating because of the lack of policy on the NDP government. Now let's turn around and look at it. And every citizen in Saskatchewan will tell you this. My own home town of Wilcox, when I left Wilcox it had two lumber yards, it has three garages, it had two hardwares and it had two grocery stores. Do you know what it's got today? One grocery store and one garage, and Mr. Speaker, that is the situation in town, community after community after community in the province of Saskatchewan. What is happening today — one town is growing and three are suffering and you know that as well as I do. Who are you trying to say turn around and say that you are doing this great glorious job for rural Saskatchewan and recognize we have a problem and a serious problem. And the serious problem is the fact that today, Saskatchewan's population is growing, you know how it's growing, we have the highest senior citizen population in the dominion of Canada and the only people that are growing is the number of old people in Saskatchewan. Young people are leaving and you turn around and realize that in seven years of government by the NDP, that this has province has hardly averaged an increase of 2,000 people a year —

MR. ROMANOW: — What was it like —

MR. MacDONALD: — Oh, you look at the seven years of the Liberal government and it certainly went, oh, no but that could be factual. Just a minute, ask the minister to get his officials to tell you what the population was in 1964, what it was in 1967, tell what it was in 1974, no, no, — the Attorney General's getting a little sensitive.

You know, I'm going to tell you a story. Every time you cross the border in Alberta or British Columbia, every time you stop at a service station or a hotel or you go into a cafe to get something to eat, the person that's running it is a young person from Saskatchewan. That's a fact. That happens to be a fact. And why is it — and they say Saskatchewan has got the lowest unemployment rate for years in history, and the reason because all the young people go. They leave here to find jobs. No don't ever kid yourself, we also have the highest Indian population per capita in Canada. And you know something, you don't include the native people in your unemployment rolls. You turn around and give an honest statistical account of unemployment in the province of Saskatchewan and I say it's one of the highest in Canada per capita. That is a fact and I suggest that the minister stand up and deny that. You people turn around here and come walking in here and say, look, we've got a problem in rural Saskatchewan, it's not our fault, but we gave a grant to somebody to build a senior citizens' recreation hall. That would not have started either except for the federal new Horizon Program and you know that and you say, you know, we gave a grant to help build a skating rink. That doesn't solve the problems of rural Saskatchewan. Grants have been given to rural communities in this province ever since the province became incorporated in 1905. But that isn't the solution to the problem, say stay here, say we gave somebody \$50 or \$5,000 to build a rink, another one \$10,000 to turn around and add an addition on to the curling rink. Sure that improves the amenities, it makes it more liveable in rural Saskatchewan because we are changing our attitude to life. That's a fact, but don't stand here and say that the NDP is doing a great job in rural Saskatchewan because we have not collectively, not only NDP but collectively found a solution to holding people in rural Saskatchewan. When you drive from here, go out on No. 6 straight south, go out on No. 1, we had the same problem, but we didn't turn around and try to hide it. Go out there and you turn around and you go to farm after farm after farm that is vacant, farm after farm is vacant.

Now, I'm telling you that it is a problem and that you'd better face it because in 1979, it's going to be one of the major issues in this election campaign and that issue is — what happened to rural Saskatchewan. They are going to take the municipal directory of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and show the population of Podunk or Stump Creek or Hollow Valley or what it is in 1971 and what that rural municipality is in 1978? You know what else you are going to do, you are going to say — what is the mill rate in 1971, what's the mill rate in 1978? And what have you done for that particular rural municipality? And what have you done to alleviate the agricultural problem? We just watched out here the other day, the farmers dumping whole barrels of milk on it. So all I'm telling you, that this is a problem and don't try to ignore it and when you stand up here and try to say, grant, after grant, after grant is the solution to the problem, I'm telling the member for Nipawin, that his is a very valid observation. Rural Saskatchewan is still deteriorating, you've done nothing to stop the decline, the farms are getting bigger, the number of older people are getting bigger, young people are leaving the farms, they are leaving the small towns and are coming to the cities. Now that's a fact of life in Saskatchewan today.

MR. SNYDER: — Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, how this Liberal government, the member opposite who just took his seat, how they encouraged young people to stay in Saskatchewan, how they encouraged them to stay in the rural areas. First of all they did this, they had an urban-rural differential. If you were a young person and you lived in rural Saskatchewan you get less under the Minimum Wage Board order than you did if you lived in the city or went to Alberta or went to Manitoba. So they made a pretty precise job of driving young people out of the rural areas. They paid you less if you lived in Podunk than if you went to Regina or Saskatoon or Prince Albert or Moose Jaw to live. It encourages them further by establishing a differential if you are over or under 18. This is the kind of compassion that these people opposite have for people in rural Saskatchewan and young people that he cries copious crocodile tears for today.

They did another thing, previous to 1971. They imposed upon the construction industry a forced settlement which jammed a 3 per cent agreement in their ear and allowed the wages in Alberta and in Manitoba to go up . . . to rise to a reasonable negotiable level. So instead of that, the member opposite, who was a member of the government at the time the Hon. W. Ross Thatcher was Premier, they imposed a settlement on the construction industry, by virtue of that nefarious Bill 2. They imposed a settlement on them. And they placed them in a position whereby moving from Regina, Saskatchewan to Calgary they could get about \$2.75 an hour if you were a journeyman in the electrical or the carpentry trade. If you were living in Saskatoon you could pick yourself up \$2.75 an hour by moving to Calgary or Edmonton. This is how they encouraged people to stay in Saskatchewan. This is the most nefarious kind of comparison that I have ever heard made in this House. This member who suggests that somehow or another 1971, or thereabouts, was a real time of milk and honey for people in Saskatchewan, keep them in the province of Saskatchewan.

This government has done more to encourage the employment of people in rural Saskatchewan. They have done more under FarmStart and a host of agricultural programs to nourish the rural community than at any time in our history. At any time in our history, Mr. Chairman. This is the worst case of hypocrisy that I have ever seen exhibited in this House and I think the member opposite, who was the only remaining member of the political dinosaurs of the Liberal Party, now attempts to stand in his place and take credit for all the boom years of pre 1971. This is incredible, Mr. Chairman. I think it has been a long time since I have witnessed that kind of an operation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — I think I had better respond, Mr. Minister.

I want to tell the minister he is also the kind of minister - I happened to be a school teacher in those days, you know. And do you know what it was? I got \$2,000 less by teaching in Wilcox than I did by teaching in Regina, in 1964. That was your government. You see, \$2,000 less and there are some other teachers over there that will tell you the same thing. Then you turned around and put in area bargaining and, oh, that was a terrible thing. What did area bargaining do? Why it merely said that a teacher in Milestone was just as good as the teacher in Regina. The teacher in Drinkwater was just as good as the teacher in Moose Jaw, where you happen to come from. And that the small rural units outside the cities had just as much a right to be paid on an equal basis as those people did. That was your government! And that terrible thing that said to all the good teachers, if you want to get paid well you have to go to the cities. So every time the rural part got a good teacher, in order to get paid well, he had to go to Saskatoon,

Regina and Moose Jaw. That was the NDP policy.

You talk about the differentiation between under 18 — there are a lot of people, today, that won't hire students because of your laws that say you have to pay them on three hours and they are worth exactly the same. Exactly the same!

You talk about young people. We put in a policy of helping the young people in the summertime, that somebody could hire that young person to work on a farm, to go out to rural Saskatchewan. But do you know what the Minister of Labour, you did, the man sitting there from Moose Jaw? He said, oh, no, those farmers can't hire those students under that PEP Program. We have to change it and call it STEP or whatever it is, and the only people who can hire them is the NDP Government, but farmers can't hire those people. My goodness, that is terrible.

MR. SNYDER: — . . . my own son went to . . .

MR. MacDONALD: — Oh, listen to the man. How do you know? You weren't around then. You weren't the government.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order, please! I say this to all hon. members. I think you have had a pretty fair kick at the can, if you want to refer to it as that. You have expressed your views in regard to party lines and everything, but I do not find that many of your remarks are relevant to item 1, under Municipal Affairs. I ask you, if there are no further questions, item 1 agreed?

MR. BAILEY: — No, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister a question. I have some questions which I would like to direct to the minister on the research of the urban sprawl and so on and I am wondering at which particular item. I would gladly let item 1 go if he would let me pick it up. I would imagine that would be under item 3.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might direct a more specific question to the Minister in charge of Municipal Affairs. In the case of subdivision of rural property, in particular along highways, could you tell me why it is necessary for the Director of Community Planning to ask, and in some cases get approval and in some cases not, for a 25 foot, or a 50 foot or however number of feet he deems necessary, of a dedication to the government, in the case of that particular parcel of land being subdivided to a new owner in particular, say someone in a small town wants to move out into a rural area three or four miles, or five miles outside and purchase a small parcel of land and get from the town or the city out into rural Saskatchewan.

MR. MacMURCHY: — We are trying, Mr. Chairman, to get a grip on the question that the hon. member has asked. Is the question: When, say a quarter-section of land is subdivided into whatever the by-law of the municipality is, let's say, it can be subdivided into 40-acre lots or it can be subdivided into 5-acre lots, why it is necessary that there has to be, let's say, a green area between that house and the road or the highway; is that the question?

It is a planning regulation which provides for, in every subdivision, for a group of lots, a green area is required and in this case it would be required as part of a distance between, I suppose, the road allowance and the dwelling itself.

MR. BIRKBECK: — The question really isn't answered; he has really just gone over the

question I have asked him to get clarification. In the case of, say 5 1/2 acres was sold by a farmer to an individual from a town. If a 25 foot dedication was requested by the Director of Community Planning, that would amount to approximately half-an-acre. In the case of the land being sold for, say \$1000 an acre, that's \$500 that that new land owner is being asked to give up to the government for no compensation. Now surely, Mr. Minister, you can give me some justification for this.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think the question that the hon. member has asked, I take it, is different from the previous question. It has some relationship perhaps but he is talking about urban land which is to be subdivided, or rural land which is to be subdivided. The regulations of planning require that a portion of that subdivision must be public land, public reserve. I suppose it goes back to The Planning and Development Act which was introduced into this Assembly back about 1973. I might point out to the hon. member that he will know that urban law, all of urban law including the community planning, The Planning and Development Act is under review by a group of SUMA, municipal council, government people at the present time, and that particular act will be under review along with all of the others — some 35 statutes.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, why is it then that there is compensation for farmers when a road expansion program takes place for that property that is required, but there is no compensation where these individuals are locating on subdivisions of property? Why should there be a difference? One has to pay and the other doesn't. That shouldn't be too hard to answer.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I can't follow the argument of compensation. I don't know what the point is with respect to compensation. I suspect that if the land is purchased by a developer or the land is purchased under our Land Assembly Program there will be compensation to the owner of the land and I don't think that is a problem. I think that the justification of public land being designated as part of a subdivision development is legitimate in the sense that in a subdivision development you have the beginnings of a community. Now it may not grow but it may well grow, and having land set aside in the name of the public seems to make sense when one has to consider the possibility of a future school or a future park or some other kind of public commitment to be required, and the land is there for that development.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I think we are getting very close now. Mr. Minister, what I am asking very simply is, why then with this expectation of development you cannot compensate those owners now? Take your 25 feet or whatever you feel is necessary by your director of Community Planning and compensate them for it now, and it is there for your development whenever you feel fit rather than having the dedication made and the land owner not knowing when he is going to be developing on that property, or when he is going to have the government develop on it; he is not going to know whether he can develop on it. Surely he can if he has to dedicate it to the government, he goes out and buys the land and all of a sudden he realizes that before he can get title to that land, he has to give up a strip of it along the highway to the government, in particular cases and that decision rests with the director of Community Planning.

I don't argue that there could be some development take place if it is just outside or in the perimeters of small towns and that you need to have a plan in effect. All I am saying is, compensate its owners for it now. That is very simply the question. Why is there the difference? Why can't you do that? Is there any reason why you can't compensate them for it? If you want to take it then pay them for it and let them realize that and know that it really isn't theirs.

I will have one more question.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, there is no provision at the present time to compensate, and in this case it would be the developer. You are only referring to development by private development. The developer knows in the development of a subdivision by the Community Planning regulations or act, I am not sure which that there is that public reserve aspect built in. Now if the member is suggesting that the government should look at The Community Planning Act in relationship to the compensation, then we can look at it. I suspect that the developer probably looks after himself but I am not sure of that. I will not make that accusation but it may well do. Certainly we can look at it and it will be looked at as part of that review process.

MR. BIRKBECK: — One more question on the same subject. Just as an example, in a rural municipality where 10 acres are sold; if that would be the planning by-law of the local municipality, are those 10 acres recorded in the Land Titles Office in acres or hectares?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Acres.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Since when did that take effect? Since when did your government make that change? Effective when?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Acres? Lots?

MR. BIRKBECK: — Yes.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Blocks? I do not know. We have had no change.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Well, Mr. Chairman, is it so then, that land that has been requested for a planned survey is, in fact, recorded in hectares in the province of Saskatchewan?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I am not sure the hon. member is quite clear in his mind about the questions he is asking. Look, this is not his vote. I am the Minister in charge of Land Titles. If you want to ask me, you ask me during the course of the Attorney General's Estimates and if you know exactly what you are asking, then ask a precise question. I do not know what you are asking.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I am not asking the question of the Attorney General but if he would like me to ask it, I will ask the question very specifically. If I had a quarter section of land and I was to sell it to you and you said you did not believe that I had a quarter section, that you felt maybe it was 159.5 acres, and you asked for a planned survey to be taken of that 160 acres, would it be in acres or in hectares in the Land Titles Office. Is that simple enough and straight enough?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, the member can ask me that question during the course of the Attorney General's Estimates. I do not want to hang on any big issue of this thing. This is a matter of an order in council, which was passed back in 1976 with respect to surveying of titles. The member has been asking this repeatedly, over and over again. He knows the answer, over and over again, and the answer the minister gave is still correct. The titles are recorded in acres, blocks, and lots. The survey may be taken otherwise but the description and the sales thereof are based on that.

Item 1 agreed.

ITEM 2

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Minister, under this particular item we have the grant to the inter-governmental committee on urban and regional research for \$10,000. That is not, I am assuming, the grant for the present land hearing committees which are going on; is it or is that under the Department of Agriculture?

MR. MacMURCHY: — This is money for a committee that is involved in inter-governmental research, inter-governmental meaning 'between provinces and the federal government'.

Item 2 agreed.

ITEM 3

MR. BAILEY: — I have some questions to ask the minister under this particular section. First of all, the most obvious one is by looking at the figures which show about a 60 per cent drop in expenditures in this particular item in the budget and I am wondering if the minister would give an explanation for that very decisive drop; manpower from 45 to 20 for one thing — just an explanation about that particular department.

MR. MacMURCHY: — All of the urban development people and all of the lands people (people who were working in that area) were previously housed, if that is the term, in Community Planning and Technical Services. Now, if the member will turn over the page, he will see that there has been a significant ... These people have been distributed out through urban development, municipal land development and municipal assessment. The drafts people who were at one time in Community Planning and Technical Services moved to Administration. Does that add up? There is some shifting out of Administration down into new management and Finance. So in a sense there has been a kind of reorganization of people through the whole system.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, what the minister is saying is that 25 people have been dropped but if you go down further in the estimates you will see that some of them are picked up in different departments.

O.K., Mr. Minister, I want to on this particular section deal with the — I suppose what has often been termed as Community Planning and Technical — does this relate in any way to your planning of what is known as, particularly around the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, the urban sprawl; that is the satellite cities developing around the cities which is causing some problem? Do you at the present time have any studies being conducted to take a look at this very fact of what is happening around our two major cities?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, last year during the estimates I announced a proposed agreement for an urban study around, I think Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina, involving the federal government.

MR. BAILEY: — Has that been completed?

MR. MacMURCHY: — No, it has not been completed. We had some time getting it under

way because of the negotiations that were going on with respect to finance. That study and the cost of that study comes under Municipal Land. The study is going on; it is estimated it will take two years. It got under way in midsummer so it is going to be a little while. Every effort is being made on the part of those involved in the study to attempt to slow down the sprawl development. Until the study is complete you can't totally stop it but a slowing down.

MR. BAILEY: — Under what item is that?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Under item 6, Land Development. Under item 6, Municipal Land Development.

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Chairman, under this item I want to ask this question because it has been some concern of mine; I don't know whether this is the proper item or not. With the proposed abandonment of railway right-of-ways — and we have a unique situation in Saskatchewan — we get a bit of an argument going as to who owns the land and I don't want to get into that. But what I do want to mention to the minister is a thought which has crossed my mind many times and that is not the total abandonment as far as the government is concerned as some of these right-of-ways. Has your department through research, or even a small investigation, looked at the abandoned right-of-ways for transportation use. (I am not talking about railway use) because of the survey and because of its position within certain areas that there is a strong possibility that we should not act hastily with the disposing of these right-of-ways. The reason I mention that, Mr. Minister, is that most of our roads in our Township system is, you know, on the square — two miles this way, one mile that way and so on. But there are places, I would suggest to the minister, in the province where the community planning branch should take a look at abandoned right-of-ways, because you would not be interfering with an existing farmland. The right-of-way is there, and the cost of making it into a potential road within the area, I think, is well worth looking at. I think RMs might be interested as well, in a few cases. They may have some problems with the width because of a modern road. I guess what I am asking is, does your department or has your department under community planning, taken a look into the future of what possibly could be done, with some of the railway abandoned right-of-ways?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, I think I can answer yes, the department through community planning is looking; and yes, we are trying, we are setting up a structure so that the broad community is looking at it in terms of zoning and development control. We are using the approach that has been used in the Qu'Appelle, which is developing the establishment of special planning areas, and special planning commissions, to look at zoning and development control. I do not think we should get into the argument about ownership because it can go on a long time. Regardless therefore of who owns it they are being studied at the community level, the local level, involving the municipalities — and therefore, is being looked at at the same time, by the community planning branch. One can think of power lines, and telephone lines, and that sort of thing as being put to good use — for putting that land to good use. I notice as I was driving down, I think it was through Kipling, one of those communities in the south east corner where the power lines go down the abandoned right-of-way, that makes a heck of a lot of sense. It sure stops a lot of arguments and concern on behalf of farmers.

MR. BAILEY: — I want to commend the minister for the action he has taken in establishing these special zoning areas, because I firmly believe, with the local people firmly involved with your department, you are less likely to have hasty decisions made. I think we should exercise some care because after all there is property here. And if it is

property that can be used for the benefit of the individual farmer, fine, if it is property that can be used further for transportation because of certain existing factors, I think we should look at that as well. I am more interested, Mr. Minister, in looking at areas which are of low density, that is population density, that is probably at this particular time cheaper to take a look at an abandoned railway right-of-way to serve the needs of a given area than it is for the municipality to go to the expense of trying to build roads to get out there; and it may be possible to do that. I am not taking away from what you said about the zoning and so on. But I do want to say that I think the government is wise in establishing the planning in these zones. I would hope and that is my question: are you about to do that then as quickly as an abandoned right-of-way takes place on both the CN and CP lines? We could have some trouble with the CP.

MR. MacMURCHY: — We are not sure of the number but I think there are seven already set up — of special planning areas. We are proceeding with each . . . we are trying to keep up to the abandonments, yes.

MR. BAILEY: — Could you tell me, Mr. Minister, what is the machinery that is used? Do you have a commitment, so many from the . . . what is the balance of the committee? I am interested in that because obviously I may have to deal with this. You have so many from the RMs, so many from the town council and so many from your own Community Planning Branch. How do you structure the committee?

MR. MacMURCHY: — We would have to look it up in the act. We don't have it in our minds. I don't think we have any information here which would provide it to us. I am not sure whether it is one or two from each RM and each urban government, plus, there were powers for the minister to appoint additional people. It might be necessary in some situations on abandoned rights-of-way, let's say that stretch in the Colonsay subdivision around Last Mountain Lake, which is prime recreational land, where you might want wildlife people or something like that. But that's — I don't think out in the normal stretches — it would be specifically of representation from the councils involved. It may be, depending on the situation, in the public interest to add a local person who is interested in land use from a recreational point of view or from a wildlife point of view. But the dominant structure in terms of numbers is the municipal representation. They are always in control because it is necessary to have the same control mechanism available to them in the special planning area that is available to them through law at the municipal level.

MR. BAILEY: — This is committee, Mr. Minister, and is of interest I'm sure to the people of the province, this is the Special Planning Committee once it is established, what quasi-judicial powers does it have? I'm talking in the way of mainly a conflict between the railway — you know we have three people, maybe for people claiming rights to these rights of way. First of all, as you know, it was the federal government and you could well have the railways claiming right of way. I guess what I'm asking is, with the power that you have by order in council to appoint someone to the committee, does that in itself prevent, say, sale of a right of way by Marathon Realty which is a subsidiary of CPR?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Oh, not at all, it has nothing to do with ownership.

MR. BAILEY: — Nothing to do with ownership. O.K. Let's take a case in point then because we are going to be involved in this over the next 10 years. How do you propose then, through this type of structure and I think you're going about it in the right way as far as the structure is concerned, how do you propose to prevent that, the natural

conflict that is going to develop in the disposition of this land should be railways get the power through the federal government to say that, that's just a small Saskatchewan community, it doesn't mean much and it's sold to so and so and you fellows get off our land, type of thing?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I suppose, in the simplest terms, their powers the same as any municipal council, they will determine the zoning and establish zoning by-laws which goes on at the municipal level. With respect to a conflict, while I don't agree with the federal government's policy or the federal government's policy with respect to the rural abandoned rights of way, is to transfer those to the municipality. The municipality may sell it to farmers or, you know, they make a decision on terms of ownership, may retain ownership. So, they being involved in the major share of the abandoned right of way I don't think there will be very much of a conflict. Now there could conceivably be a conflict with respect to the urban land because there is no announced policy by the federal government and, therefore, that urban land which, of course, is likely very valuable in terms of development given a certain situation, say Regina Beach or whatever, that's not decided and it's still with the railways and there could conceivably be a conflict, particularly if the railway, in its wisdom, wants to develop it for housing, and the planning commission, in its wisdom, zones it recreational or something like that — so there could be conflicts, but the normal conflicts that do go on with zoning at the municipal level.

MR. WIPF: — Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, let us go back to one of the first questions where you had a cutback in 25 staff here, and you said there was a reshuffling of staff throughout that department. In a quick review of your staff here, I still come up with about 13 short of what you had last year. What is the explanation for that? Are they tucked away somewhere where you don't show the number of posts for the particular department?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, it is fairly complicated, Mr. Chairman. I don't know. We will see how the figures add up whether we are right or not. Five were transferred from Urban Affairs Assessment to Rural Affairs — four were transferred from Rural Affairs four being EMO staff to Urban Affairs — there were eleven unfilled positions, and since they were unfilled, I guess they were not absolutely necessary, and therefore they were deleted. That should add up to about right. There was a reduction because of transfers in and out, and because of cuts.

Item 3 agreed.

ITEM 4

MR. BIRKBECK: — What percentage do those figures represent of the federal/provincial agreement?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Under the Qu'Appelle agreement we have \$220,000. \$110,000 of it, by the agreement, comes from the federal government.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, what amount of money out of that allocation is dedicated to flood prevention in the Qu'Appelle Valley?

MR. MacMURCHY: — None of this money relates to flood control did you say? I am told that is all in Environment. \$110,000 is part of the agreement here which relates to planning studies and it is shared by the federal and provincial government.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, where are the five permanent positions located?

MR. MacMURCHY: — They are in Regina, in the department — 1791 Rose Street.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Would you know approximately what percentage of the \$220,000, or for that matter if you want to narrow it down to your share, \$110,000, is actually spent in the city of Regina?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, out of the \$110,000 are salaries. \$110,000 are basically salaries and the personal services attached to the salaries. In addition to that, as the hon. member knows, the special planning areas which have been established, and special planning commission which have been established in the Qu'Appelle, made up of the committees that we talked about with the hon. member for Rosetown, are an expense under this particular subvote and that money would be going to the various RM people and urban people.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Just one more question, Mr. Chairman. Of the \$220,270, under subvote 4, you must be able to give me some numbers of dollars that are spent outside of, say, the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. You must have some figures available, or is it all spent in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, or all Regina? Can you narrow that down at least to an approximation?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, the permanent salaries are \$92,000, roughly, \$92,500. Temporary salaries are \$12,900; honorariums to SPAs are about \$41,000; the remaining of the money involves the services — paper, travel, central vehicle agency, telephone, fees, computer, and so on.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, just one very brief question to the minister, as soon as his attention can be obtained from what he is discussing. The minister did not answer the question that the member for Moosomin asked him.

The allocation for the Budget for 1978-79 of \$220,270 for the Department of Municipal Affairs implementation of Qu'Appelle agreement. Is all of that money being spent in the cities of Regina or Saskatoon, or both?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I am saying that it is spent on salaries, people, people salaries. I don't know where they live, whether they live in Regina or where they live. I don't know where they spend their money. But they are spent on salaries as I indicated to the hon. member and they are spent on the services of the particular needs of the administration.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, when the minister calculated earlier on item 1, that \$30 million of the \$140 million were spent in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, did he include in that \$30 million the expenditure of \$220,270 under item 4?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, when I was providing the figures for the hon. member, I was providing the figures with respect to the grants to the city of Regina - grants including revenue sharing money, grants to the city of Saskatoon, including revenue sharing money, grants to the city of Regina, including Property Improvement Grants grants to the city of Saskatoon including property improvement grants and those kinds of figures you can put your hand upon.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, the reason for the question of course is obvious. In other words, the minister is saying that he was attempting to misinterpret the numbers that are included in the \$140 million, and in fact he does agree, that over 50 per cent of the budget of the Department of Municipal Affairs is spent in the cities of Regina or Saskatoon. If, for example, Mr. Chairman, all of subvote 4, all of subvote 3, subvote 2 and so on, which are allocated to administrative personnel, and for expenditures of administration, and office space and so on, in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, are a part of the \$140 million that are allocated to the Department of Municipal Affairs. In addition to that, a portion of the grants to Sask Housing Corporation under all of the various headings is also allocated to the cities of Regina and Saskatoon; a portion — a substantial portion — over and above what the minister suggests, with reference to property improvement grants, is allocated to the cities of Saskatoon and Regina. Therefore, what I am attempting to say, Mr. Chairman, with reference to Item 4, that, the minister refused to include those administrative costs and employees that are situated in the two major cities, refused to accept the fact that if those moneys are spent in the cities of Saskatoon and Regina, in fact, the total of over 50 per cent of the minister's budget would be spent in the two cities. If he would take the time to add it up, he would find that the so-called allocation to rural Saskatchewan is untrue, that less than 30 per cent of the people live in the cities but more than 50 per cent of the allocation of the department goes to the two cities.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I will respond this way — I will respond this way. We can argue about the 1791 rules and there is not very much argument. We can talk about where the supplies are purchased, but with respect to staff, though I don't think I am going to ask the hon. member to give me a detailed expenditure or list of where he spends the allowance he receives from the government, the allowance he receives from this Assembly.

MR. COLLVER: — Every month.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Oh? Do I indicate — I do not indicate my MLA's indemnity or my cabinet minister's salary.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You spend it in Switzerland.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I spend it — Well that is a question, where I spend it! But I do not spend it travelling to Switzerland or some other place in the United States like San Francisco or such places and to argue that, because the staff are housed in Regina or Saskatoon and therefore it is an expenditure in Regina and Saskatoon, not knowing where those staff live or how they handle and manage their money affairs, which I think is a very, very private thing . . . I am just not going to respond. I am simply not going to respond to that kind of argument. I think it is a rather shameful kind of argument. I provided for the hon. member the figures available to me with respect to funding to the city of Regina through revenue sharing to Saskatoon. I provided for the hon. member the figures for the Property Improvement Grant, both places. The hon. member can get the numbers of staff and their salaries ..

MR. COLLVER: — All in Regina and Saskatoon?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes, maybe all in Regina and Saskatoon. I do not know where that money is being spent. I do not know where those people live. They might live in Lumsden; I commute with some people from Semans and Southey and Earl Grey. For the hon. member to get into the private lives of the staff of the Department of Municipal Affairs, as he is suggesting he is going to do, and I suppose in his way he will attempt to do that with all the departments so he can justify his argument, is fine with me. But, Mr. Chairman, I will not bring myself to operate at the same level as the hon. member opposite.

The Committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:02 p.m.