

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Eighteenth Legislature

May 23, 1978

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

QUESTIONS

DEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT — CONSTRUCTION STRIKE

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. I am advised, in connection with the construction strike or the disruptions in the construction industry, that the government, through your department, has had no contact with, at least for the last week, the parties to the strike or to the disruption that is going on right now. The Construction Association and the union. I wonder if the minister would confirm if this is indeed the case, if there has been no attempt to get them back to the bargaining table. If it is the case, would the minister explain why your department has not taken any initiatives in this regard?

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think it is fair to say that there has not been a formal contact made with the parties since the end of last week, that is to say, Thursday or Friday of the past week. I think the member should appreciate the fact that since the talks broke off the members have maintained a position which, I think, places them in a position where they are dug in rather solidly with respect to a matter which is essentially a non-monetary matter, a question that, I think, presents itself as the impediment to a solution, a question revolving around the two-tier payment of labourers and the concern that has been exhibited by the labourers with respect to that particular problem.

At this point in time the parties to the collective agreement have given a clear indication that neither of them are in a position to move from that firmly held position. Accordingly, to take the initiative and bring them back to the table so that they may meet across a bargaining table and snarl at each other hardly represents a solution to the problem which we face at this particular time.

The department is monitoring and keeping up-to-date with respect to any possible indication of movement on the part of either party and there will be an effort made to keep in touch on a continuing basis. At this point in time there has been no indication given that either the Labour Relations Council or the construction industry or the trade unions involved are prepared at this time to make any movement.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, if that is the only stumbling block that I am aware of (there may be others of a less significant nature) but if that is the only stumbling block that is preventing a settlement of the issue, would the minister not agree that it is about time for the government to start moving now because it is indicated by the construction people that they are going to escalate the work stoppages rather than continue them on a selective basis. The Construction Association has indicated that they will be locking people out a week from today. If these things come about it will put about 10,000 people directly out of work and will affect another 20,000 people. I suggest to the minister, that if this is the only stumbling

block, should your government not now be taking the initiative to cure the situation rather than letting things get worse?

MR. SNYDER: — I wish the hon. member would say what he has in mind. If he is suggesting a bill and legislative action to force the parties back to work. I wish you would say so. He is always vague in his descriptions of what he refers to as taking the initiative and getting the parties together to solve the problem. Obviously, you will know that there are some firmly held positions on both sides, as I mentioned, only a moment ago. The possibility of this working itself out, I suppose, remains a little obscure at this point in time, however, I think there is little question, but what the people on the Trade Union side of the bargaining table believe that there will be some pressure exerted on the Labour Relation Council by their member contractors.

I think at the same time the Labour Relation Council believes that there is going to be some additional pressure placed upon the labourers by those Trade Unions who already have a contract.

We are keeping close touch with this matter, but I say, once again, to bring the parties together when they are both firmly locked into a position, I think, provides not a solution but an aggravation to the problem.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. What I suggest to the government is to make their position firmly stated to the parties involved. That you are not going to tolerate any further labour disruption.

I ask the minister and I hold up Friday's Leader Post. There are six headlines on the third page of that paper about labour management relations: 'Nurses To Go Out on Strike Next Week', if you will bear with me. Mr. Speaker. 'Strikes Spread as Walkout Planned'; 'Outside Workers Favour Strike'; 'Industrial Mechanics Still Off the Job'; 'SHC Workers Continue Picketing'.

I suggest to the minister that the very minimum that this government could do is make a strong statement to the effect, to both parties, that you will not tolerate any further labour disruption in this province. Now are you willing to do that very, very modest thing?

MR. SNYDER: — I would like the member to indicate to me what his response is to the question if someone says, and if not, then what?

I think the member makes a suggestion that the government should come out with a strongly worded statement to the effect that they will tolerate no more of this nonsense. I think the question begs a reply as to, what then are you prepared to do in the event that some of the difficulties continue, some of them based on the fact that there have been a large number of collective agreements that have come open over the last period of time, over the last few weeks and months. And, accordingly, we are going through a period of time when there are a large number of contracts that are in the process of being consummated or have been consummated or are running into some problems in the process.

Once again, I don't believe that the member offers any solutions other than the hysterical ramblings that he likes to put forward, and inconclusive suggestions about how you go about settling labour management problems. Obviously, if I had the solution in the construction industry my services would be very much in demand in Manitoba at this particular point in time where they have been out on strike for approximately three

weeks. We are monitoring the whole matter closely. We are standing by and offering any assistance that we be to the parties in all of these difficult times that you drew attention to.

BILL 73 - CATTLE INDUSTRY

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — In the absence of the Minister of Agriculture and in the absence of the Premier and since the Attorney General wouldn't know a cow from a cable TV, I'm going to ask a question of the former Minister of Agriculture, the present Minister of Mineral Resources. Mr. Minister, Bill 73 which has been introduced into this Legislature has certainly raised a storm in the cattle industry. I'm sure the minister would agree at this point in time it would appear that the industry has had some success in solving its problems. Would the minister indicate to this Assembly why, in light of the present situation where the industry has perhaps become a trifle more tolerable than it has been, and since the provisions contained in Bill 73 have never been asked for by the cattle industry, why is your government introducing this bill and why are you planning to proceed with it?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry that the member for Thunder Creek wasn't listening to the Minister of Agriculture when he introduced Bill 73 in his second reading speech. He went to some lengths to indicate the government's reasoning behind the introduction of that Bill, the amendment, and also indicated that there were some representatives of the cattle industry in the province of Saskatchewan who had for some time been requesting of the government either a complete withdrawal of the present legislation or some very significant amendments. That had all been conveyed to this Legislative Assembly as it has been conveyed to the cattle industry and the people of Saskatchewan.

MR. THATCHER: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, Mr. Minister, we must have been listening to slightly different speeches. Mr. Minister, Bill 73 will eliminate funding to our national organization, namely, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. Mr. Minister, is it fair to assume that the government is making a direct attack or a direct confrontation with the right of any commodity group to have a national organization that can speak with one voice to the federal government and is the minister or is the government, in effect, saying that they disagree with much of the work that's been done by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association such as the modernization and revision of the grading standards, concessions on taxation basis and the most effective monitoring of any group of Oceanic beef? Now because this organization does happen to share this government's philosophic attitude toward marketing boards, is the government prepared to sacrifice this right simply on a philosophic difference?

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I think that the member for Thunder Creek should be reminded about the reasons behind the original introduction of the voluntary marketing deductions for cattle. At that time I was a member of the opposition. Mr. Speaker, and the government of the day headed by the Member for Thunder Creek's father, introduced that bill and there was not one mention that any of the funds, Mr. Speaker, any of the funds should go to financing the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. Not that we were necessarily against that but the whole basis of the bill was to provide for Saskatchewan activity, primarily in the field of research. We do not believe that we should compel all cattle producers in Saskatchewan to contribute to a fund which ultimately contributes to a national organization of which some do not believe in. I think, Mr. Speaker, that that is one other reason that the present Minister of

Agriculture and a number of cattle producers in the province of Saskatchewan have suggested that certain amendments be made.

STRIKING FOR PETTY REASONS

MR. R.E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Last summer the workers at Coronach went on strike because they wanted more steaks in the salad bar in the cafeteria. Last February, workers disrupted because they wanted chocolate milk. Last week, the workers went on strike because they did not like the surface on 2.5 miles of road they were driving on. Today, we understand the pickets are up again. Would the minister know if this is to extend the long weekend for their buddies, or does he have any idea what they are striking about today?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER: — I am not in the position to indicate to the member what the difficulty is in Coronach at this point in time. I was given to understand that accommodation was made with respect to a piece of road which was, I think, both hazardous and difficult to travel for a period of time. I understand there has been a commitment offered to the effect that that road will be repaired (2.5 miles of it) and I am not aware of the particular circumstances surrounding the Coronach problem as of today.

MR. NELSON: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I think it is time the Minister of Labour became aware of it. Certainly that road they are talking about is one of the best roads in the area. With the possibility of the project being delayed and off target for completion, will the minister not take more firm action to stop this type of illegal strike?

MR. SNYDER: — Once again members opposite are very quick to suggest that somebody should do something. I get a little annoyed with suggestions by the member for Lakeview (Mr. Malone) and others who are indicating that something should be done. They are not quite sure of what it is, nor do they have any suggestions that they would like to place on record. But they are in a position to say that somebody should do something.

As I indicated earlier, I do not know what the difficulty is in Coronach at this particular point in time. My understanding was that the difficulties were swept away. I will have an opportunity to have a look at the thing. I am given to understand that the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation has been made aware of any difficulties taking place as of this Tuesday.

MR. NELSON: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. With the large number of unemployed people in our province, would it not be wise to let those who want to work keep the Poplar River Power Project moving, rather than allow the shop stewards to disrupt the work at their very slightest whims?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER: — Well the member makes some suppositions of which I am sure he is vaguely knowledgeable. I am sure he has not got any particular understanding of the problem in question. I think he should acquaint himself with the facts and I will do likewise because obviously the member does not know anymore about it than I do. At this point in time, I have not received any report of difficulties in Coronach as of today.

DRAINING IN THE TATAGWA MARSH AREA

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of the Environment. The people of southeast Saskatchewan and your department as well as the Agriculture Department have been waiting for the three year report on the Souris River Development. It is our information that the people of the Tatagwa marsh area are still draining, even without waiting for this report to come in. My question to you is, has the Department of Environment given the people of this area permission and their blessing to go ahead with continuous draining while we are waiting for this report?

HON. N. BYERS (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the timing for the report, the federal government asked that the completion date be extended to June 30 and the government of Saskatchewan and the government of Manitoba co-operated with that request from the federal government and agreed to the completion date being June 30.

With respect to the Tatagwa Marsh, there are a number of organized drainage projects in the Souris River Basin. While the Souris River Basin is a referred project, meaning that capital works can be undertaken during the course of the study, this however does not preclude maintenance work on existing organized drainage schemes. I am recalling totally from memory here, but I believe in the case of the Tatagwa Marsh, that that is an organized drainage project and works undertaken are not of a capital nature. They are regarded as maintenance work and are, therefore, not in violation of the terms of the Souris River study which makes the Souris River a referred project and thereby exempting any capital works.

MR. LARTER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister then saying that regardless of this report not coming down until June, if it isn't a capital works project, that you are still supplying moneys if it has been an approved project in the past? Are you still supplying moneys to maintain this drainage that the people in the south end of the funnel are fighting so hard?

MR. BYERS: — The member should be clear that when a federal-provincial study is undertaken, such as the Souris, the project is designated as a referred project and, therefore, no new capital works can be undertaken without the prior approval of the Souris River study board in this case. On the other hand normal maintenance work through organized drainage projects, C and D branches or C and D associations, as you will know them, can be undertaken. It's maintenance work and not regarded as capital works. Such maintenance work is not forbidden and the drainage authority can qualify for funds for maintenance purposes through the Department of Agriculture under the Conservation and Land Improvement Branch and this Legislature has voted funds for that purpose.

MR. LARTER: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister know that the people from the Tatagwa Marsh area have recently advertised in newspapers that anyone objecting to drainage from that area would let them know in writing. Is that advertising in the paper with your blessing? Does this mean they are going to do further drainage? I would think it would.

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, the member has not referred to—he says drainage work. I am not sure if he is clear in his definition as to whether it is new capital works, or whether it is maintenance work to existing works. I am not sure whether the ad he refers

to is an ad that is a requirement of the Conservation Land Improvement Branch of the Department of Agriculture or whether it is a notice of intention that is a requirement under The Water Rights Act. If he could be more specific then we could perhaps answer his question.

MR. SPEAKER: — The member for Saskatoon Eastview.

SASKATOON OFFICE SPACE

MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Government Services. Since you have recently announced to the Legislature that the new office building in Saskatoon will have something in excess of 141,700 square feet of office space, and the amount of rented space the government now has which you will give up from lease when you move into the new building, amounts to 60,700 square feet of space, would the minister not agree that in effect the building in Saskatoon has been overbuilt to the tune of about 80,000 square feet or slightly more than double what you actually need?

HON. E.B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Government Services): — No, Mr. Speaker, the situation in Saskatoon, and I am not familiar with the member's figures; I can't verify them or deny them. Suffice it to say that over a period of some time there is as much lease space being given up in Saskatoon as there is new space being built. That may not happen immediately because it may take us some time to get out of some lease space. There is no significant amount of new space being built in Saskatoon.

MR. PENNER: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. Since the minister himself provided the House with the figures within the last two weeks, would the minister not be prepared to indicate that because you are going to have approximately 80,000 square feet that you are not going to need, that you either are planning to fill it up with new civil servants or you are planning to rent it out, thus creating a significant pressure upon the private sector in terms of empty office space that they will have in the city of Saskatoon?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Speaker, this exchange reminds me of an old saying that figures don't lie but liars do figure. These figures are difficult to work with. We discussed them in Estimates. I recall having denied in Estimates that there would be any significant amount of new additional space created by the two new office buildings. I am unable to argue the figures with the member. I would have to have the figures back here again in order to do that. Suffice it to say there would be no significant amount of new office space in Saskatoon.

MR. PENNER: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — I'll take the Minister of Mineral Resources.

CONSTRUCTION OF HIGHWAY OVERPASS

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, some days ago the member for Estevan asked a question. His question was whether or not it was correct that Manalta Coal had been requested to construct an overpass over No. 39 Highway. If that being the case whether SPC was being treated the same way and whether they would be requested or instructed to build an overpass over Highway No. 47 where they haul coal across? The fact of matter Mr. Speaker, is that no one requested Manalta Coal

to construct an overpass. They in fact made requests of the Department of Highways to construct an underpass. The Department of Highways is obliged to give them that approval as is contained in agreements signed in 1962. First there was no request and second, it is not an overpass, it is an underpass. We have had no request from the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for the coal haul over No. 47 Highway. They have a permit for both overweight and overwidth units to cross the highway there and the highway has, at SPC expense, been fortified to take that load.

MR. LARTER: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate you coming up with the information. I thought you might have told me that answer in quiet though so that you wouldn't have embarrassed me.

MR. NELSON (As-Gr): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could tell us if the overpass has been granted that was requested by the Harte Butte municipality southwest of Coronach to take the traffic over the train-coal haul line?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, Order! Is that on Highway No. 47?

MR. NELSON: — It is certainly an overpass by SPC and I think SPC is the minister's department.

MR. E. A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

In light of the fact that we have been unable to find any agricultural group that would support your legislation Bill 73 and in light of the fact that your office and the Premier's office have been deluged with phone calls of protest of this legislation, over the last few days, would you give some consideration to withdrawing Bill 73 until the fall session so that cattlemen from all across the province could properly give their reasoning behind their protests to you?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I am interested to know that I have been deluged with phone calls. I haven't had a phone call on this matter for some days. I did have a few at the beginning and that is not unusual when you have legislation coming forward.

We are moving forward with the amendments. We are looking at some minor house amendments which we can make to make some corrections, which have been pointed out to us. However, it is our intention to move with the amendments.

MR. BERNTSON: — A supplementary. Mr. Speaker. Would the minister not agree that it is, to say the least, just a little bit sly to slip this legislation in, right at this particular time, when all the cattle farmers are busy putting their crops in - and it was slipped in quite surreptitiously. Would the minister not agree that this is, to say the least, a little shady?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I categorically deny that we slipped in legislation. This legislation was under discussion in our caucus for some time and it, unfortunately, didn't get to the floor of the House until towards the end of the session. There are a lot of other bills that didn't get here until the end of the session. Certainly we didn't slip this in surreptitiously as you indicated.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Well as it has been in your caucus for some time and you have, more or less, sat on it. Would you be prepared to have the agricultural committee sit intersessionally so that the farm groups can make representation to the government before third reading and final reading of this bill?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, no. I don't know what all of the hubbub is about in these amendments. Certainly the amendments are not earth-shaking; they are not some things which haven't been around; the discussion hasn't been around for sometime. I had a long discussion with the Stockgrowers' Association last June at Kenosee Lake and I explained to them some of the problems we had with the bill. At that time I indicated to them that there were likely to be amendments to the act. I'm sorry that they didn't take me seriously at that time; obviously they didn't. But I can advise you I've had discussion on this with quite a number of people and certainly, because it doesn't happen to please one group, there is no reason why we should not move forward with it.

MR. MALONE: - Final supplementary. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, you have indicated today that you are prepared to introduce some house amendments, no doubt in Committee of the Whole. Are you prepared to let us have those house amendments now or prior to this bill being called again so that we can consider them and consider our position further on second reading?

MR. KAEDING: — Yes. Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to provide them with the house amendments as soon as they are ready.

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): - A question, to the Minister of Agriculture. Would the minister be prepared to delay bringing forth the bill until cattle producers have had an opportunity to study the Manitoba program and give your government an opportunity to study the Manitoba program so that the two plans could work to some extent in concert?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker. I have already looked at the Manitoba plan and I am not at all enamoured with it. I don't think that a good many producers in this province would be enamoured with the program that's coming up in Manitoba.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary. I ask the minister whether the Manitoba plan wouldn't give greater producer control than your plans?

MR. KAEDING: — That's possible but we have our legislation which is there now. We are amending the legislation to make it, I think, more adaptable and to have more universal coverage. The present act doesn't give very much of an opportunity for people who don't agree with the Stockgrowers' position. What we are attempting to do in the amendments is to provide a little bit more leeway for other people, for other producers in the province to have some input into this particular piece of legislation.

MR. THATCHER: — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister since only one organization has really pushed for any amendments to the present legislation which is the National Farmers' Union (and the NDP caucus) and since the request for refunds on the present checkoff out of a total revenue coming in of \$141,000 has been less than \$1,000, would the minister justify to this Assembly and again to the cattle industry, what is the basis behind this legislation because the industry obviously does not want it just your own personal, private little organization?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, the member indicates that the industry doesn't want

these changes. I have been at meetings throughout the north part of this province and throughout much of the south part of the province and I have talked to a lot of people about agricultural legislation. This is one item which has come up very often. He indicates that the livestock industry is not in favour of these amendments. I suggest to him that he go to some of the meetings in the northern half of the province which is not represented by stockgrowers. Go to those people and ask them whether they agree with the kinds of legislation and with the way that the present act is being handled and you will find that almost to a man they will say, no. So I think it is appropriate that an amendment be brought forward.

MOTION

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day, by leave, I move, seconded by the Attorney General, Mr. Romanow,

that a special committee consisting of Allen, Feschuk, Lane (Qu'Appelle), Lane (Saskatoon-Sutherland), MacAuley, MacMurchy, Nelson (Yorkton), Penner, Skoberg, Smishek and Wiebe be appointed (1) to review the relationship of the parliamentary and legislative auditors and other jurisdictions to the Public Accounts Committees in those jurisdictions. (2) to make recommendations regarding the appropriate relationship in the province of Saskatchewan between the Provincial Auditor and the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing, (3) to recommend the responsibilities appropriate to the Provincial Auditor in Saskatchewan, including any legislative action which might be necessary to assign that authority.

This committee will have the power to sit during the inter-sessional period and during any legislative session except when the Assembly is sitting and that such committee will have the power to send for persons, papers and records and to hold meetings in order that the provisions in other legislatures can be studied and that such committee be instructed to submit its final report with all convenient speed.

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) by leave:

That Messrs. Penner, Allen, Birkbeck, Katzman, Nelson (As-Gr), Pepper, Romanow, Skoberg and Vickar be constituted a special committee to consider every regulation filed with the clerk of the Legislative Assembly pursuant to the provisions of The Regulations Act, with a view to determining whether the special attention of the Assembly should be drawn to any of the said regulations on any of the following grounds: (a) that it imposes a charge on the public revenues or prescribes a payment to be made to any public authority, not specifically provided for by statute, (b) that it is excluded from challenge in the courts, (c) that it makes unusual or unexpected use of the powers conferred by statutes, (d) that it purports to have retrospective effect

where the parent statute confers no expressed authority so to provide, (e) that it has been insufficiently promulgated, (f) that it is not clear in meaning. And if they so determine to report to that effect.

That the committee have the assistance of legal counsel in reviewing the said regulations, that it be given the power to sit after prorogation of the Assembly, and that it be required, prior to reporting, that the special attention of the Assembly be drawn to any regulation to inform the government department or authority concerned of its intention so to report.

And that the committee is empowered to invite any regulation-making authority to submit a memorandum explaining any regulations which may be under consideration by the committee, or to invite any regulation-making authority to appear before the committee as a witness for the purpose of explaining any such regulation.

And that the committee is empowered to review the by-laws of the professional societies and amendments thereto as referred to the committee, to determine whether or not they, or any of them, are in any way prejudicial to the public interest.

Motion agreed to.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) by leave:

That the by-laws of the professional societies and amendments thereto, tabled as Sessional Paper No. 25, 1978, be referred to the special committee on regulations.

Motion agreed to.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 19 - BLAIR MEMORIAL CLINIC.

MR. E. A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington) moved, seconded by Mr. Lane (Qu'Appelle):

That this Legislature pursuant to Section 25 of the Legislative Assembly Act command and compel the attendance before this Legislature of the chairman of the Saskatchewan Cancer Commission. Dr. D. R. Amies, to assist this Legislature in determining whether a serious health problem exists as a direct result of the many resignations from the Blair Memorial Clinic, and to answer other questions pertinent to the quality of cancer treatment in Saskatchewan.

He said: Mr. Speaker. I deeply regret that a situation would rise in Saskatchewan that would cause a motion such as this to be placed on the order paper. It is a sad fact^ that over the years, the deterioration, lowering of standards and treatment, the lack of proper treatment and follow-up treatment has made this motion the only logical way, in the face of the blind indifference of this government, to treat this most urgent situation.

This obvious lowering of standards, the pain and suffering caused to patients, the unrest and the dissatisfaction on the part of the staff make this situation all the more pressing. It is my hope that in the context of the very human of all situations discuss this without any political overtones, for we believe that no political party can or will make any political gains at the expense of human suffering.

We have a situation here that needs evaluation. Stated simply, an absolutely necessary course of medical treatment is now not functioning at the level reasonably expected of it. resulting in patient dissatisfaction, staff dissatisfaction, termination or resignation of qualified medical specialists in the system. The need now is not to get into political arguments, but to find out the cause or causes that are responsible for this and to find remedies because the lives of the people are at stake.

One has only to check the particular situation to realize that this unrest, deteriorating standards have been around for a few years. There have been 14 forced retirements, early resignations, or firings, since 1976, 14 senior staff at the Blair Memorial Clinic. It has been simmering for some years and now it has surfaced.

The solution will most assuredly be found, if not by this government, then by the next. But the need for solutions is now for government complacency has no place in cancer treatment. Why then this government's indifference? What has this government got to hide? Surely a representative democratic government in the face of all public dissatisfaction should launch an immediate investigation even if a shadow of doubt needs clearing up.

I am surprised that the government, these last few days, in the face of complaints has not taken positive definitive steps to rectify the situation.

When the question of hospital and cleanliness came up in this House, the government brought in Mr. Helmsing for questioning. We were determining then the degree of uncleanness of our hospitals. I think fair to say that it was determined that our hospitals were not as clean as they once were. Now we are faced with doctors going to the public media making statements about the sad state of affairs at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic; patients who are, perhaps, terminally ill, who will need treatment immediately. Why is this government and the minister not acting and acting now?

We, as an Opposition Party, in the face of the absolute indifference are now trying to get the problem rectified that has been a sore these last few years, a cancer in the cancer treatment. We are here discussing a situation that is directly affecting human lives. Both clinic workers and doctors are leaving; specialists are being terminated and demoted without cause or reason; patients are suffering. What we are trying to do is make the system work the way it should, that the cancer patients get the best possible treatment. If something is wrong it should be dealt with and rectified.

A situation has surfaced that needs examination and in the light of everything that has happened in the past few weeks the government must move now. What went wrong? How effective is our Cancer Commission? As I see it the Cancer Commission has three roles of responsibility. the patients the best possible treatment must be made available to them. That is not the case presently in Saskatchewan. The best possible treatment is not made available to them. We are lacking high energy equipment; we are lacking proper space in spite of the suggestions of the Minister of Health that the addition to Blair Memorial Clinic will hold the suggested high energy equipment at some later date. Nobody has been able to show me on the plans where this square

May 23, 1978

footage exists. We certainly have not got the best possible treatment made available to our patients when we have in fact four medical staff, four medical personnel on staff at Blair Memorial Clinic when the recognized complement should be nine.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: - Three.

MR. BERNTSON: — We have three. Thank you.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — You are welcome.

MR. BERNTSON: — 2. To the staff, that the conditions of the clinic bring out the best so the patients get in turn the undivided dedicated service which is needed. The staff at Blair Memorial Clinic (and indeed the staff at Saskatoon) have not had what we call the best of conditions. There have been firings on a minutes notice. There have been hirings over the backs of senior people. Morale is at an all-time low and this just isn't with the medical staff. This is with clerical staff, senior administrative staff and now medical staff.

3. Responsibility to the minister that he be made aware of what is happening. This, Mr. Speaker, I think is where the Commission has really fallen down.

Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the minister being aware of what is happening, it's a little more than puzzling that the minister would not be made aware of a letter, a copy sent to him. 16 days after it was mailed. This letter indicated that there was a crisis situation at the Blair Memorial Clinic (and the minister has a copy of it so there is no need to table it). A crisis situation at the Blair Memorial Clinic. The minister was unaware of it 16 days after the letter was written.

The minister seems to be unaware of the situation in Saskatoon. As soon as I find my notes on the situation in Saskatoon I will explain that one to you.

The minister, on May 1. in answer to a question from the member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant), Mr. Speaker, the Cancer Commission advertised the position (this is as it relates to the position for director of the clinic in Saskatoon). Mr. Speaker, the Cancer Commission advertised the position to try and search out the most capable people it could find. It had interviews with many candidates. It has decided in its wisdom after reviewing. And then the minister quickly gets off the subject because I think he recognizes that he got into a little dicey area. The simple fact is there were several applications from qualified Canadian people whose applications were not even acknowledged, let alone interviewed. Has the Commission indeed kept the minister informed? I think not. I think if the minister can't answer these questions then probably the chairman of the Commission should be called in to answer these questions.

Not only were several of these applications not even acknowledged, but as I understand it. Dr. Chris Franks, the current director of the Saskatoon Clinic, does not have his fellowship in Canada and in fact does not qualify to write his fellowship in Canada.

We have a serious morale problem in Saskatoon. It seems to me that the only people who have confidence in the Cancer Commission are the Premier and the Minister of Health.

There was a letter tabled in the House here some time ago from the Regina and District Medical Society in which they indicated that they did not have confidence in the Cancer

Commission but did express their confidence in the medical staff at Blair Memorial Clinic.

Mr. Speaker, the Commission has failed miserably in all three areas. The patients are certainly not getting the best of treatment, especially in view of the fact that we have a serious shortage of medical staff and a lack of much needed equipment. Staff are leaving, staff are being fired without any reason, except that the Commission thinks they should be terminated. Specialists are on record stating that the system is falling apart as proven in this memo sent to the minister by all the doctors concerned, the letter from the Regina and District Medical Society. Mr. Minister the situation is very evident and what we are facing is a tragedy. Your complacency is a luxury we cannot afford and the province will not tolerate it. What are you trying to cover up? The Cancer Commission has ceased to be an effective operation and must be overhauled if any good is to come of this.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has repeatedly said in this House that at no time has he or the Commission ever denied Blair Memorial Clinic high energy equipment. I think that on at least three occasions and the documents have been passed to the minister to shown where in fact the equipment has been requested and in fact, denied. I don't think that the minister can take this very lightly. In Saskatchewan death by cancer rates second only to cardio vascular disease; death by cancer is the cause of 20 per cent of the deaths in Saskatchewan. The latest statistics available as it relates to effectiveness of treatment in 1976, indicate that five years after diagnosis out of 100 people. 50 would be alive as a result of definitive surgery; 40 of them would be alive as a result of radiology treatment, and 10 would be alive as a result of chemotherapy and natural remission. I think that the minister if he is to be honest with himself and us has to agree that high energy equipment is vitally necessary and intact, it is a very necessary tool in the treatment of cancer.

The Cancer Commission things in light of these and a few other things as I have stated. has ceased to be effective and must be overhauled. I therefore move resolution No. 19, seconded by the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane).

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — We have a situation wherein a well-respected and a long-term member of the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic has, according to his words, reluctantly and with regret made serious public allegations against the operation of the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic. In every case the minister has simply denied the allegations made by Dr. Mallik. Dr. Mallik on the one hand says that the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic has, on at least three occasions, been denied or has attempted to obtain, (and the Budgets have not been granted), high energy equipment. Dr. Mallik is on public record as saying that he was making no comment.

Now if you read any great statement into that. I am a little bit surprised, but that is how the mind of the hon. member for Moose Jaw North works.

My comments are being directed to the minister because I think there were serious allegations made by Dr. Mallik and I don't think it is proper for the minister to simply say, no, not true, I deny. No. that is not true; Dr. Mallik is wrong in every item that he has raised. The only area that you have admitted is that there are serious morale problems. You deny the matter of the high energy equipment.

Dr. Mallik has offered to show you the specifications of the building, to show that the high energy equipment simply will not fit into that structure. You have refused to take

May 23, 1978

up his offer. You deny the existence of letters; you basically state that other than the problem of morale there are no problems. You are, of course, saying that Dr. Mallik is either not telling the truth or that it . . .

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Agreed.

MR. LANE (Qu'Ap): — It is agreed by one member. I am not sure that the Minister of Health would ascribe that to Dr. Mallik. He does say that Dr. Mallik is not telling the truth. If you say that then I suggest to you . . .

MR. MOSTOWAY: — How come he has got a Tory membership a couple of months ago?

MR. LANE: — I think you are showing your ignorance of the operation of the Tory Party as much as the operation of the government of the province of Saskatchewan, to the hon. member for Saskatoon Centre (Mr. Mostoway).

But to the Minister of Health, if Dr. Mallik is telling untruths and if Dr. Mallik is being an alarmist, and if Dr. Mallik is misleading the people of this province, then surely it is incumbent upon you to have Dr. Amies before this Assembly to give his side of the story and also to be subject to questioning by members of this Assembly.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Just like Ranch Ehrlo eh?

MR. LANE: — The member for Saskatoon Centre thinks this is a laughing matter and the hon. member for Moose Jaw North (Mr. Skoberg) thinks it is a laughing matter; I don't think that other members are prepared to subscribe to this being a laughing matter. There are some serious questions being raised. If you admit that there is a morale problem, to the Minister of Health, the morale problem did not develop over night, which indicates that the problem has been below the surface for some considerable period of time. In which case I think you, as the minister responsible, have a duty to investigate the operations of the Cancer Commission most thoroughly. I don't suggest you do that by simply saying, give me a report, asking your officials for a report, but getting in and doing some serious hard nosed questioning of your officials. I think that you should get to the bottom of it yourself. If there is any indication to you that you haven't had all of the problems brought forth. I think you would be falling in your duty if you did not take that approach.

There are some weaknesses, one major weakness, with the attempt to have Dr. Watson review the operation of the clinic. That is this . . . I have every confidence in Dr. Watson. but here is the area that was ignored. I suggest this in seriousness to the minister and, again, to the member for Moose Jaw North, who thinks it is a laughing matter. But I suggest to you that there is one group of people that should have been questioned that Dr. Watson is unable to question, and that is the cancer patients themselves. I think if the hon. member had brought to his attention some of the serious concerns of cancer patients that have been voiced to us since the matter has become public, that you would be well advised to have Dr. Watson at least have the authority and the capability to question cancer patients to get a reading on how they have been treated because there are serious concerns among the cancer patients. Dr. Watson of course, has got to have that within the ambit of his directions from the government to investigate.

There are serious problems and I think that the minister has to admit that. I think that the serious problems can be resolved and the minister knows that. I don't think Dr. Mallik is

lying although I don't know.

HON. E. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health): — You helped him write his letter.

MR. LANE (Qu'Ap): - No, we did not.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — You certainly did.

MR. LANE (Qu'Ap): — No, we did not. You know that's a sign of paranoia when you get that suggestion. That is simply not true. The hon. member is paranoid in his delusions in the health system and I suggest to the hon. member that perhaps the high energy system could be best used on the hon. member and perhaps get some clear thinking into his mind.

I suggest again to the minister before it deteriorates further, that there are serious concerns raised by Dr. Mallik. Dr. Watson is not able to deal completely with the problems and one of the reasons that he can't deal completely with the problems is that he doesn't have the jurisdiction to talk to the cancer patients. I suggest that that would be in order. I think it is incumbent upon the government to very, very quickly give assurance to the cancer patients in Saskatchewan, that they are getting the best treatment at the Blair Memorial Clinic. You can say that they are. I can assure you that that concern is not completely satisfied. I suggest to you as well when you admit that there are morale problems, that in fact those morale problems are not something that have just developed over night but are problems that have existed for the last couple of years. If they have existed for the last couple of years, you've obviously got management problems within the operation of the Cancer Commission. Management problems cause morale problems. Morale problems only come from management problems so I suggest to you that the problems are much more serious than you have let on.

I think that in the best interests of cancer care in the province. Dr. Amies should be brought before this Assembly. We have obviously got two sides to a story. We have got Dr. Mallik's story and we have got the Minister of Health's story. They are diametrically opposed, obviously. I think it would be fair and a procedure should be developed to give Dr. Mallik a hearing. I think that cancer patients should have a hearing. I have suggested earlier, a judicial inquiry. I think you would be well served with a judicial inquiry but you have obviously rejected that.

The Watson report won't hear the cancer clinic patients and I suggest that they should be heard. I think they have a right to be heard. I think that the minister would be well advised . . .

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Let the accused speak.

MR. LANE (Qu'Ap): — Yes. I think that the accused should speak. I think the hon. member would be . . . I'm glad to hear Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member is endorsing this motion because he wants to hear representation from the Cancer Commission before this Assembly. I am glad that the hon. member has awakened from his reverie of small talk and petty comments and is prepared to endorse the Conservative motion to have Dr. Amies here. I think the hon. member deserves some credit for finally waking up and finally making a positive contribution to this Assembly. This is the first time in this Session that the hon. member has done so. Mr. Speaker, it is never too late for the hon. member to repent. I'm glad that he has seen the way. I know that the hon. member, the

Minister of Health, will start to assert some common sense comments from the members opposite and will start to assert his case against Dr. Mallik's.

The mere statement of his case against Dr. Mallik's, I don't think solves the problems. We admit and we know and you admit and you know that there are two diametrically opposed views. I suggest that no matter what happens, the cancer patients have some concerns. I think that the Watson report should have been able to talk to them. I meant that seriously and I'm sure that the minister takes it that way.

Perhaps it is not too late for Dr. Watson to embark (you can do that very easily under your direction) upon interviewing cancer patients to determine their view of the care that they are getting. I think it is vital and I think it is fair to do that. I suggest to you that with the diametrically opposed views that we would all be well served to have Dr. Amies report to this Legislative Assembly.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker. I listened with some interest to the comments of the two members from the Conservative caucus opposite and I am going to have a great deal to say about their comments, not only of today, but their comments of the last several weeks, as well as the comments made by, and allegations made by others who are a part of the extension of the Conservative caucus outside of this Legislature.

One of the things that I heard mentioned here this afternoon was a comment of the member for Souris-Cannington and it almost broke my heart to hear him speak of how he deeply regrets the situation that would cause him to bring such a motion before this Legislature.

Well I can assure you. Mr. Speaker, that if I were the member opposite I would be broken-hearted too. Because let me make it clear and let me say, Mr. Speaker, that the only reason he brings it here is because they have nothing to back up their allegations that they have been making and they have nothing to back up their attacks on the personalities of the individuals who make up the Cancer Commission of Saskatchewan. They have nothing to back up the accusations and their attack and their allegations made with respect to some members of the staff of the Cancer Clinics in this province of Saskatchewan and in order to run and hide as they have had to do on other issues such as the filthy hospital allegation, Mr. Speaker, they now bring in this motion because they know that their position is indefensible.

The member for Souris-Cannington got up and had not one single concrete piece of evidence to offer in support of his motion. He said that there is an obvious lowering of standards and he said he does not want to see this discussion take on political overtones.

Let me deal with the first one first. He said there is an obvious lowering of standards and he has yet to say (as the members of his caucus have yet to say) and show evidence where there has been the lowering of that standard. They have yet to say it and I am really quite surprised because he had a long weekend to prepare his speech on his resolution, that this afternoon, although we sat here anxiously waiting for the evidence, he was unable to, or unwilling to present it in his remarks that he made.

What about the second allegation, or the second comment about he would not like there to be any political overtones? Well, Mr. Speaker, throughout this whole period of time when this issue has been before us, there has been nothing more or nothing less than political overtones as perpetrated by those gentlemen over there around this

issue. Even in his remarks when he began to talk about the emotional things, like his whole approach on the question of all these people dying because there was no care available, and that is just, Mr. Speaker, completely and utterly untrue and he ought to know that and probably does. He said that there would be certain numbers of people who would not have died if they could have had radiology treatments, or chemotherapy treatment or other treatment. Well I want to ask him, is he saying to this House that that treatment is not available in this province, because if he is then that also is not true. Indeed it is available in this province and has been available in this province for many years. What he said and what in fact is the case are two completely different things.

Mr. Speaker, the member says that there are (and the member for Qu'Appelle also) that there are patients who are suffering. Well I want them to show me evidence. I want them to show me those patients who are suffering because there is some kind of an alleged deterioration of the treatment that is provided in the clinics.

MR. LARTER: - You're sick!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — He never did. You're the one who is ill. He did not have the courage because he did not have the evidence to tell us in this House where that was the case. I challenge him to do it.

MR. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — I gave it to you on Friday.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I will deal with that. I will deal with the question that you raised on Friday. Mr. Member for Qu'Appelle, because I think when you listen (if you are still here listening) that you are going to find some very interesting information come out of that. Indeed, you may find it somewhat embarrassing to yourself because of the kind of approach that you took here on Friday, bringing what you called evidence to this Assembly and taking only out of context certain parts of that so-called evidence of that certain document to support a case which you were trying to make a case for which there is no case.

Now the member, Mr. Speaker, for Qu'Appelle, got up and talked about the allegations made by Dr. Mallik. All I can say about that is what the Chairman of the Cancer Commission had to say on May 18 last week when he said that those allegations in that letter are full of misleading and unfounded statements.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I will outline further in my remarks why that is so. I want to say, like I said on Friday, that the allegations and the tactics that we have seen going on here for the past several weeks have been worked out jointly by the Tory caucus and by Dr. Mallik, and the motives behind his actions and the method of his allegation, I say are in very serious question because some people, Mr. Speaker. especially over there, have put their politics before their responsibility for people who are sick with the very serious disease of cancer.

The member for Qu'Appelle wants to know if I, as the minister, would be prepared to give assurance to cancer patients that the care they have been getting and the care that they can get is good. I want to say to the member opposite, yes indeed, I am prepared to make that assurance, as I have been doing in this House for the last several weeks.

Mr. Speaker, during these past several weeks there has been a lot that has been said about the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic in Regina. by the opposition, predominantly the

May 23, 1978

Conservative Opposition. I want to correct many of the misleading and the unfounded statements that have been made by the Conservative members and a number of their friends outside of this Legislature, in an expedition to undermine the services provided by the cancer clinic in some cruel hope that they would reap some political gain from it.

Several weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, there was a discussion in this Legislature about two matters involving the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic. One was that, after serving a probationary period, the director of the clinic, Dr. Walden, was not appointed permanently. Like similar positions in the public service, the incumbent must serve a 12-month probationary period before being considered for a permanent appointment. There is nothing unusual about that it is perfectly all right to repeat and in fact necessary. The Cancer Commission carried out a careful review, of Dr. Walden's performance and concluded he should not be appointed to the position of clinical director on a permanent basis. There is nothing unusual about that either.

I want to make it clear to this House, as I have done on many occasions before, that his clinical abilities were never in question. He is a very reputable oncologist and he is presently working as a physician at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic.

The second matter, Mr. Speaker, was one of the vacant positions at the clinic. There were deliberate exaggerations made by some members opposite about the number of vacancies. Once again the member for Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson) exaggerated even his remarks today, although he had a whole weekend to do his research. The fact is that at the present time three out of nine positions at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic are vacant. Some of them have sometimes said five; sometimes they have said four, but they have never been right in saying that it is three. After June 2, Mr. Mallik will leave, as indicated by his letter of resignation last week.

Let me also make this point, that from May 1977 to November 1977 there was one physician over the establishment of nine full-time positions at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic. The members have refused to make any comment on that. The vacancies at the present time places, I agree and I never have other than agreed, a greater workload on the physicians at the clinic. That is natural. But to assist in this, two part-time staff have been employed at the clinic in the past six weeks.

I want to assure those persons needing care and treatment that care has been and will be provided by the clinic, as it has always been. This assurance has been made by the Chairman of the Cancer Commission. Dr. Amies, a noted doctor himself, who has the professional knowledge to know.

It is the intention of the Saskatchewan Cancer Commission to maintain a high-quality cancer program in this province and the public can be assured that this program will be maintained and continued with the high-quality services that it has become noted for.

During this period of time, Mr. Speaker, the commission has been actively recruiting, and I underline, 'actively recruiting', to fill the vacancies. I also underline that last week four offers were made to doctors who have shown a strong interest and who have been interviewed recently . . . (interjection - inaudible) . . . Now Mr. Speaker, I will deal with that in a little while. Hang around and you might hear something interesting.

Now, Mr. Speaker this is not in any way an indication of a cancer commission that is not doing its job. On the contrary, the commission has been on top of the situation at all times. It has welcomed the Watson Study, which I commissioned as the Minister of

Health, because as I do, the Cancer Commission of this province is most anxious to do everything that it can to resolve any problems that there may be and provide the best cancer care and treatment possible in this province.

This, Mr. Speaker, is hardly an example of an attitude that would require, this is hardly an example of an attitude that would require this Legislature to call before it, the chairman, Dr. Amies, as this resolution requests.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the sole purpose of this resolution is a political one and the mover and his colleagues couldn't care less for the quality of health care or in the care, specifically, of cancer treatment. They persist in their continuing approach of putting their political ambitions for power above everything else. They have displayed that attitude in this Legislature and throughout the public since 1975 and they continue to display it. They persist on their continuing attack on our health care program in the hope that in some way they can undermine them and cause people to look on them with disfavour so that they, if ever by some unfortunate chance should ever get elected, they could do away with universal health care programs, and that is clear. Those Conservatives over there. Mr. Speaker, they fought the implementation of every health care program in this province and in this country, every one of them. They fought the Hospitalization Program; they fought the Medicare Program; they fought the Dental Plan for Children; they fought the Prescription Drug Plan and they fought the Community Clinics. They served notice in this Legislature, or their leader did. Under the consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Health, they served notice that they would deal with those plans if ever they were to form the government. They would deal with them all right, to the expense of the people of Saskatchewan, who are benefiting from them.

You know, Mr. Speaker, a year ago the Conservatives tried the filthy hospital allegation and they got caught. Mr. Collver, the Leader of the Conservative Party, and I wish he was here, promised that there would be proof and that there would be documentation on that issue and today is May 1978 and we are still waiting. The press should ask Mr. Collver, and the press should ask the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Lane), and the press should ask all of those members opposite, when is it that they are going to produce that promised documentation and evidence about their allegation that the hospitals of Saskatchewan are filthy?

I challenge the member for Souris-Cannington, who is the health critic, for this session, to come up with that evidence. He might want to do that in closing the debate on this resolution. I am sure it will be very enlightening and would clear up the doubt that people may have about the sincerity of Conservatives in this Legislature.

You know, Mr. Speaker, let me just make a comment on something outside this province. In Ontario and Alberta medicare taxes on people are overwhelming and getting worse as premiums and deterrent fees keep going up. You know there is a trend in all this, Mr. Speaker, and the trend is this - it is a gathering of those forces who fought to prevent the establishment of medicare and other health programs in some large effort to destroy them.

The letter that I received, which the member opposite mentioned from the Regina and District Medical Society, asking for the resignation of the Cancer Commission, I say to you and to this House, was a product of only a very, very few members, with Tory connections and who seemed to think that they are still back in 1962. Not once, not once, prior to that letter being sent out with publication all over the province, did any

member of the executive approach me, as the Minister, to indicate that they thought there was a problem. I say that that letter, and I know from comments that have been made by doctors in the field, that that letter is not representative of most of the doctors in Regina and district.

Mr. Speaker, Conservatives opposed universal health care. They are trying to undermine them now and if given a chance will create a situation so bad that ultimately it will lead to destruction of these programs. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that is why this resolution is here today. It's here because the Tories have been caught again, as with their filthy hospital allegations, they were caught last year. Every one of their allegations has been answered in this House and proved untrue. The allegations by them and people like Dr. Mallik have been answered by Dr. Amies and I want to let the members know there is a press release that was issued on May 18 by the Chairman of the Cancer Commission and I am going to read it to this House and into the record, indeed. Mr. Speaker. I will table a copy of the press release for the benefit of the members opposite and whoever else may want to read it. May I have a Page please?

I found the press release rather interesting because you know I have to say this, Mr. Speaker, throughout the period of this debate and this discussion I can't say that the dealing of it with most of the media has been unfair. I think the media have been very fair. But I have to take a look at the latest one in the Regina Leader Post about this statement of Dr. Amies, with which the writer of the article did an excellent job. But I am amazed at the editorial people in the newspaper who would say under a news release from the Chairman of the Cancer Commission which explains the position of the Cancer Commission, that the headline would read 'PCs Want Question Answered About Cancer Care in the Province.' I had to look real hard to figure out whether the story had anything to do with the headline.

Now, Dr. Amies said that,

In responding to recent criticisms of the Cancer Program the Chairman of the Cancer Commission, Dr. David Amies of Moose Jaw expressed disappointment today that certain persons appear to be deliberately attempting to undermine public confidence in the program by making unfounded allegations.

Dr. Amies, a Moose Jaw physician, was responding to statements contained in a letter of resignation from Dr. A. Mallik, radiotherapist, Regina Cancer Clinic. Dr. Amies said that Dr. Mallik's statements are full of misleading and unfounded statements and if Dr. Mallik does not feel he can work with his colleagues in the clinics and the Commission to provide patient services he probably made the correct decision by resigning.

Dr. Amies expressed surprise that Dr. Mallik's concern for patient care would allow him to leave the clinic by giving slightly over two weeks notice and this places a greater workload on his colleagues and a greater inconvenience to his patients. However, Dr. Amies assured members of the public that care will be provided at the clinics irrespective of Dr. Mallik's resignation.

In referring to the need for high energy radiation facilities in Regina, Dr. Amies stated that the Cancer Commission has never denied such a request. However, before approving such a very large expenditure we do wish to evaluate clearly the need for various services and facilities in the Regina and

Saskatoon clinics. Dr. Amies said that Dr. Mallik had been asked for a report some weeks ago and we are still waiting receipt of this report.

A new three quarter million dollar radiotherapy facility is currently being built at the Regina clinic and will be ready for occupancy later this fall. In addition Dr Amies stated that the facilities do provide flexibility so that high energy radiation can be added at a later date if being desirable.

It is very clear to me that Dr. Mallik is not aware of the facts if he made statements as reported in the Leader Post dated May 17, 1978. The directors of the clinics attend all meetings of the commission and provide expertise advice. If Dr. Mallik feels that the members of the commission should be all specialists in cancer treatment, he is inviting the commission to meddle in the day to day operations of the clinic and this is not the role of the commission. It is a public body charged with overall administration of the cancer program. However, the day to day clinical decisions must be made by the physicians in the clinic and not the commission. It is the intention of the Saskatchewan Cancer Commission to maintain a high quality cancer program in this province and I want to assure the public that this program will be maintained and continue with the high quality service that it has become noted for.

Dr. Amies stated that he took strong exception to Dr. Mallik's statement that Cancer Clinic physicians are responsible for providing primary diagnosis and follow-up of patients with cancer. This has always been within the realm of the private physicians of Saskatchewan. It is the policy of the commission to send the patient back to his doctor for continuing follow-up as soon as the patient's condition permits. These patients return to the Cancer Clinics for periodic visits or a letter is sent to the family doctor requesting a report. It is therefore a team venture between the doctors of the Cancer Clinics and the private practitioners of the province.

In referring to the Johnson Report, Dr. Amies noted that all major recommendations have been implemented and the only one remaining concerns joint appointment by the College of Medicine and this has been delayed at the request of the clinic staff.

Dr. Amies expressed disappointment that the turnover of staff has become a political issue in the Legislative Assembly since this creates an atmosphere that may lead to undue public apprehension and concern. Dr. Amies has stated that the commission has made offers of appointment for highly qualified physicians this week to join the program and it is hopeful these people will be available within the next few months.

'I am pleased to note Dr. Watson is completing his review of the program and the commission looks forward to considering his recommendation.' said Dr. Amies.

I read that. Mr. Speaker, because I think it is important that the comments of one with a reputation of Dr. Amies, the Chairman of the Cancer Commission be recorded in this debate on this resolution. If anything, Mr. Speaker, the deliberate attempts by the members opposite and their friends to discredit the Cancer Commission and the Clinic, have made it more difficult to resolve the problems such as the vacancies. I can't help

but think that Conservative opposition motives have been to try to cause the staff situation to deteriorate. They never wanted the position filled so that they could justify the positions which they have taken and the allegations which they have made. Never have I seen a more malicious and cruel act by anyone or any political party than trying to instill fear in the hearts of sick people and their relatives for the purpose of gaining some politics. This has got to be the lowest form of political behaviour that can be displayed by any party or its leadership.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen in these past weeks an attack on the members of the Cancer Commission that I want to say is unwarranted. The members in the opposition have called them amateurs and have alleged them to be incompetent and uninterested in the cancer program. I want to put on the record that I do not agree. Three members of the commission are highly respected physicians, both Dr. Rusnak, a noted surgeon in Regina, and Dr. Kilduff, from Saskatoon, are on the staff of the College of Medicine. Dr. Amies, the Chairman is a well-respected physician from Moose Jaw and is the representative of the College of Physicians and Surgeons on the commission. One member has a Doctorate in Education, three members are registered nurses and two are senior public servants with post-graduate degrees. The commission's role is not to make day to day clinical decisions but rather it is to make policy decisions and it has done this well. I have confidence in the commission. Opposition attacks on its members are totally unjustified.

It has also been alleged. Mr. Speaker, that the clinic's directors and staff have no input into the commission. The members over there have made those allegations. This I say again, Mr. Speaker, is just not true. Clinic directors attend all commission meetings and take an active role. They didn't know that, or tried not to admit that they knew it. The commission is a public body. It is recognized that the medical expertise should be within the Cancer Clinic and they should make recommendations to the Commission. Both clinic directors attend all of the commission meetings to provide this expertise and this advice. The allegations, Mr. Speaker, that the Johnson Report has not been implemented are also a long way from being correct. I want to say to this House, Mr. Speaker, and to the people of Saskatchewan that most of the major recommendations have indeed been implemented. It is interesting to note that one recommendation relating to joint appointments with the College of Medicine has been deferred; it has been deferred at the request of the Clinic physicians. This is particularly of interest when one considers the statements of Dr. Mallik and the Conservative members opposite that there is no input to the commission by the clinic physicians. It may very well be, Mr. Speaker, that the communication can be improved and I accept that. It certainly has not been totally absent and Dr. Watson should help in making it even better.

There have been other allegations, Mr. Speaker, which I wish to correct, because I think they need correcting. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) got up the other day to ask a question. He said, in his usual colourful way, it took 21 days for the staff of the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic to get a meeting with the Cancer Commission executive. Well I want to say. Mr. Speaker, that the Cancer Commission received the request on April 11, and the Cancer Commission executive met with the physicians at the clinic on April 19 — a span of eight days. Not exceptionally long, Mr. Speaker, when you keep in mind that the members of the Cancer Commission are volunteer people who serve without pay, who are from around the province and are dedicated to the program — eight days is not an exceptionally long period of time. It has also been alleged that in the last four years five radiotherapists have been fired or have left the clinic.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's wrong, not one single radiotherapist has been fired in the last four years and I wonder where the members get their evidence and information. I would like them to present it to us and I am sorry that the member for Souris-Cannington did not do so in his introduction of his resolution.

AN HON. MEMBER: — They dream them up when they have nightmares.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — It has also been alleged, Mr. Speaker, that the residency training program in Saskatoon lost its accreditation because no physician had fellowship qualifications. I want the members of this House to know that this is not applicable today since there is a physician with Canadian fellowship status and therefore the clinic presumably meets accreditation standards.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the lack of high energy facilities in Regina present some treatment problems. Let me make it quite clear, as I have done in the past, that the government has never denied a request for this unit. Its cost and that's very important to keep in mind, its cost would be in the area of \$ 1 million at least. The commission has discussed its need at some future date. However, a strong case has never been made in spite of the out-of-context quotes by the member for Qu'Appelle on Friday. A strong case has never been made on why the Saskatoon betatron has not been used to a greater extent. High energy equipment can be added if a decision is made that it is required because of the flexibility in the planning of the expansion that is taking place now.

The members opposite refer to the lack of high energy treatment facilities in Regina. High energy treatment facilities were installed in the Saskatoon Cancer Clinic a few years ago by the previous government, a very wise decision. It was done on the advice of the medical staff of the commission. It was the intention at that time to refer all patients to the Saskatoon Clinic who required high energy radiation treatment. Recently Dr. Mallik stated that high energy radiation treatment is required in Regina in addition to Saskatoon. This may be so; however, a strong case must be made to justify such an installation, at \$1 million for the installation. High energy facilities have not been denied in Regina as I have said but to date no solid request has been forthcoming. Recently Dr. Mallik was asked by the commission to prepare a report on the need for high energy radiation in Regina and to date he has not done so. As has been mentioned already, Mr. Speaker, a new radiotherapy addition is being built at the Regina Clinic with a schedule completion date of fall, 1978. There is the capacity to add high energy equipment at a later date if it is deemed necessary.

Let me just conclude on that subject, Mr. Speaker. Back in 1966, and I raise this because the member for Qu'Appelle raised it in his usual misleading way, but in 1966 there was a committee established to review the needs of the program for the next several years. I'm reading from the minutes of a commission meeting. It was discussed at that time that appropriate facilities must be established in Regina for the people in southern Saskatchewan and that is being done, as evidenced by the \$750 million radiotherapy facility which I just referred to and the stage two which will begin later this year.

Indeed. Mr. Speaker, it was noted that the report that the commission was considering did not provide sufficient hard data supporting the need for some of the equipment that was requested. That is the part of the discussion that the member for Qu'Appelle did not point out in his questions last Friday.

But let's take this thing in a nutshell. Let us consider, Mr. Speaker, that this high energy thing is worth a \$1 million. Let us consider that those kinds of services are being provided in Saskatoon. Let us consider that referrals can be made from Regina to Saskatoon and then let us look at some interesting statistics. Let us consider the member for Souris-Cannington and he should listen carefully. The number of patients sent to Saskatoon from the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic for betatron treatment in 1976 was two; in 1977 was none; in 1978 was one. And he wants to set up a \$1 million unit in Regina those statistics. I want him to contemplate that very carefully as he goes throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, talking about waste in government and talking about the need to look at the expenditure of money carefully. I want him to consider that because I can assure him that I and my colleagues are going to be telling an awful lot of people of the position that he took in this House on behalf of the Conservative caucus on this resolution and this issue.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion let me say this. Every effort has been made and is being made to provide the best possible care at the clinic. There is an active recruitment program and offers to four physicians have been made as late as last week. The commission executive has met with clinical staff to discuss matters of concern. It is interested in their points of view.

All the equipment necessary has been provided or is in the process of being provided. Dr. Watson of London, Ontario, a very noted cancer physician, is doing an assessment of the clinic so that the commission and the government can have any problems that he identifies and can be in a position to act on them. I have said before and I say again that I intend to make that report public at the same time as I indicate the action that we as a government and the Cancer Commission are going to take on his recommendations.

I also am going to make it public because of the damage that has been done by opposition members, by the Conservative Opposition members, in particular by some of their connections outside of this Legislature. The damage that has been done to the confidence some people may have had in the cancer clinic has to be repaired and hopefully making that report and the actions taken on it will help to repair that damage.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that contrary to some of the allegations made by some people outside of this Legislature and by the Tory caucus opposite, the clinics are providing adequate follow-up for patients. Primary diagnosis and follow-up have always been within the realm of the private physicians in Saskatchewan. Patients return to the clinic periodically for review and the clinic sends the reports to the private physician. Patients who require care and treatment are not being turned away from the clinic and any patient requiring treatment is being attended to. No person requiring examination is being neglected.

Mr. Speaker, with those words I want to say that in everything that the members opposite have said, the member for Qu'Appelle and the member for Souris-Cannington, in this House on this resolution, there is not one shred of evidence to support the need for this resolution, not one shred. But everything that they have said and all of the actions that they have taken clearly shows them and their political party as being so politically opportunist that it would grab at anything and do damage to anyone, in order to try to gain some small political points on its behalf. That is unacceptable in our democratic system, in this country and in this province. I think the members opposite ought to be rightfully ashamed of the kind of post that they have

taken.

The members opposite have made some comments on this Mr. Speaker. I may have some more to say on the comments that they have made and I want to consider them after the printed answer is out.

Therefore, I beg leave to adjourn the debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cameron that Bill No. 29 **An Act to provide for an Economic Impact Statement to accompany Government Bills when introduced in the Legislature** be now read a second time.

And the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Lane (Saskatoon-Sutherland).

MR. S.J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker. I said, Mr. Speaker, but I am letting him consult his notes.

MR. ROMANOW: — You are the mover.

MR. CAMERON: — Yes I am.

MR. SPEAKER: — The member is speaking to the amendment only?

MR. CAMERON: - No.

MR. SPEAKER: — The subject before us is the amendment. The member for Thunder Creek.

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, this bill unquestionably does have a great deal of merit. I would like to have an opportunity to study the bill further and make some future remarks at an appropriate time. I would therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Cameron (Regina South) that Bill No. 33 - **An Act respecting the Right of the Public to Government Information** be now read a second time.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, we would very much like to have this particular motion come to a vote. We think that the subject matter of the motion that was introduced by the member for Regina South is indeed an important matter. We believe that governments all over the North American continent have recognized the need to make government information more accessible to the public. Governments in the United States have done this, provincial governments have

done this and the federal government is now moving in that direction. I think that we can assume that any government that is not afraid of its record from the past or its record in the future would be in a position to support the act as proposed by the member for Regina South. I believe it is an important matter. It is a matter that has substance to it and I don't believe any member in this House can really take exception to the subject matter of this particular act. Those who decide to vote against it or those who will try to move it off the order paper by having it adjourned today are simply indicating that they are afraid to have this information become public; that they have something to hide; that they have something that they do not want the public to be aware of.

I urge all members, Mr. Speaker, to cast their vote in favour of this act and I am sure that all right thinking members will do so.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, very briefly, that I will not be supporting this bill. I believe that the bill is predicated on legislation which basically follows a United States form of government, which is a government of, in effect, no ministerial responsibility as we know it in the parliamentary system of government. I am also concerned about certain other aspects of the bill which relate to the Ombudsman's role because I believe that as proposed in this bill the Ombudsman's role has certainly changed radically from that which we know the Ombudsman to be in a traditional sense. Note, for example, under section 4(g) it says:

Section 3 does not apply to any record or part of a record; (g) where the information in the record relates to the private affairs of any personal organization and upon a balance of convenience between private and public interest, it is not in the public interest to provide or to make the record available.

Later on, the order of the Ombudsman decides what's in the public interest. I don't view that to be the role of the Ombudsman with all due respect to the Ombudsman. What's public interest is to be decided by those who are elected to discharge the role and responsibility of deciding public interest and that is the elected representatives, the spokesmen of the people.

I notice also under section 7 that no appeal lies from any order made under this act. I just only make this parenthetically speaking; this is a section which we are greatly criticized on from time to time when we introduce it in government legislation, as being something that takes away the right of access to the courts and the right of the courts to deal with these matters in appropriate ways and so forth and yet we see it here in this particular opposition bill.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the need to provide a policy toward access of government information to the public is something which needs to be looked at; there is no doubt about that. The difficulty is to compromise on what I think are two conflicting principles, the principle of ministerial responsibility with the principle of diverse dissemination of public information. In the United States where there is no direct ministerial responsibility for what a person says below that individual the system works fairly well. But in our system of government where the minister is responsible it therefore follows there has to be some mechanism which allows the minister in that form of responsibility the right to determine what aspects of information are released or are not released. In short, I think this concept requires a great deal more consideration and more thought before it is promulgated into legislation. Witness the

fact that it has been promulgated only in one province as far as I know. Nova Scotia. And with very, very limited, if any, applicability there.

Mr. Speaker, I will be opposing this motion.

MR. CAMERON: — Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General is dead right when he says that this whole area needs a great deal more study and more consideration than what has gone into it in the presentation of this bill and I fully concede that. My dilemma in this respect has been to somehow get some interest in the government to the problem. It isn't one that has a very sexy political appeal to it but it is a problem in terms of the proper functioning of democracy which is growing larger and larger as governments, themselves, grow larger and larger. The question here is to capture the interest of the people who have the power to do something about a situation which isn't good. If they were on this side of the House, as I said before, and they were looking at some of the major decisions that are being taken in this province with the sparsity of information available to us, they would see that the system cannot function properly in those respects. I refer to the past in many decisions including the potash decision which was such a large one. Do you know that to this day we have yet to see a contract with respect to the purchase of a single interest in a single mine, let alone all of the studies and the base of information that the government accumulated with which to make that decision.

No one listens over there. That's the problem. No one listens to this. The government cannot function properly when opposition people do not have access to information of that kind and there is an area upon area where we are in the same position. We are intellectual eunuchs in a sense because we are being asked to take a look at these things as legislators without the base of information we need.

You know, the Attorney General rises and makes some offhand comments about the thing with precious little thought because it just doesn't interest him. That is one of the problems with the government at the moment. It has lost its sense of any idealism. Its whole purpose and objective is to stay in power. That is a sad thing when you see that happen to a political party and that is what has happened to this one.

Many of them came here some years ago as idealists and they were going to accomplish a lot. They had leadership which showed them that the pursuit of an idea is something to be sought in itself and for itself and that is most often seen with respect to questions which don't have a lot of political merit to them in terms of their political appearance. This is one of them.

The only way that you can get this government off its rump these days is to have a situation arise which has a potential political embarrassment for them. Then they will move, every one of them, with some dispatch with the exception of the Premier who is still off there in some sort of no man's land maintaining this Mr. Grant appearance out there. But you see what happens is that they are stripped intellectually of any notion of meeting an ideal. This is a situation which is arising in every jurisdiction. Other jurisdictions are contending with it, even as the Attorney General said, in the United States, in a far more effective way than we. Look at the information that has accumulated there on the FBI, on the CIA and the masses of information and the massive government that has massive responsibilities. They can legislate to provide the public with access in those situations and then you have the government of Saskatchewan here and it is not prepared even to look at the question. It is not prepared to because, as I say, it has lost any sense of pursuing an ideal, of pursuing excellence.

merely for excellence sake. That is gone from them now. Their only purpose is to maintain themselves in power at the moment so they can pursue some economic objectives.

The Attorney General will recall that the last time it introduced this legislation, it provided for a right of appeal to the court. He and the Premier took that one on and said that that was an intrusion upon the concept of ministerial responsibility and you cannot have the courts functioning in this area because it is such a drastic intrusion on the concept of ministerial responsibility. I thought perhaps that was a fair point in sort of naively debating the proposition, so this year, I brought before a bill that wouldn't do that, which provides no access to the court. Then the Attorney General has the audacity to rise and criticize that omission in the bill when last year he argued that access to the courts was a denial of ministerial responsibility. This year he says that one of the major weaknesses of the bill is that it doesn't provide that access.

What does that demonstrate? It demonstrates a man and a government that doesn't have the least interest in this question—you know, go away, and it's not very important politically and, why do we worry about anything that isn't important politically. Right or wrong matters not; substance matters not; appearance is all and we will just concentrate on the appearance and get ourselves re-elected. That is the attitude that is encrusted on the government.

The Ombudsman, when you legislated, empowered to set up the office of Ombudsman and gave him his powers, that was an intrusion into the system of ministerial responsibilities as well. One of the old arguments against ombudsmen is that they would intrude upon the ground of ministerial responsibility and that is why governments, for years, resisted the establishment of offices of ombudsmen. Then of course, once having done it in one or two jurisdictions, it was seen that the effect upon ministerial responsibility, which is fast becoming an antiquated concept anyhow, was minimal and that the Ombudsman was able to function pretty effectively despite ministerial responsibility. So this year, in bringing the bill before you, I vested the review power in the Ombudsman who has already intruded, with your consent, into the area of ministerial responsibility and would give him the powers to make the final decisions in this respect. Of course now you argue that that isn't very satisfactory and that the Ombudsman ought to be making these decisions.

What I really say in the end is that I wish in some way that I could stir you to take some interest in this problem because as I say it isn't a particularly attractive one in a political sense, but it is a very real problem. There is no question that we suffer here on this side of the House from that very real disadvantage in attempting to judge government actions. And the people if we suffer a disadvantage, are suffering the same disadvantage. They can't make the assessments that they have to make. You know, information is power, the denial of information is the denial of power to the people. All it really demonstrates again, as I say in conclusion, is that the government now is focusing that 99.9 per cent of its effort on maintaining itself in office. It simply is no longer interested in anything of excellence, no longer interested in ideals of any kind, only in continuing to cling to power.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we would get some support at least from the Conservatives with respect to the bill and maybe over time, sort of drop by drop we will fill the bucket and finally get a government to move in this respect. The one thing the government should have done at least is to have agreed to examine the setting up of an intersessional committee to look at the question as they did in Ontario I think a year or a

year and a half ago, as the federal government also did. Those two governments are moving towards solutions; Nova Scotia has come part of the way; other jurisdictions are studying it; Australia has gone some distance down the road, but this old encrusted government you can't even get to take that first step.

Motion is defeated.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 16 - GAS TAX - DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. A. N. McMillan (Kindersley):

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for failing to take action which would have substantially alleviated the serious financial problems faced by Saskatchewan petroleum dealers as a result of the gas tax difference between Alberta and Saskatchewan.

and the proposed amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Robbins:

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

'congratulates the Government of Saskatchewan for taking positive action to reduce the impact of the elimination of the Alberta Gas Tax by providing assistance to fuel vendors who face competition from Alberta fuel outlets'.

Motion agreed

RESOLUTION NO. 18 - REDUCTION OF COST OF ENERGY TO CONSUMERS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Nelson (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reduce the costs of energy to consumers in Saskatchewan to assist those hurt by the recent huge increases in electricity and natural gas rates, particularly those on fixed or low incomes,

and the proposed amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Messer:

That all the words after the word That' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

May 23, 1978

'this Assembly commends the Government of Saskatchewan for its efforts to provide a secure supply of electrical power and natural gas to Saskatchewan consumers at a reasonable cost and commends the Government for surpassing the record of almost all other provinces in this regard, and further that this Assembly commends the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for the establishment of a rate stabilization fund to curb the impact of any future increases.

Motion as amended agreed.

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merchant that Bill No. 21 - **An Act to amend The Public Service Superannuation Act** be now read a second time.

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): - I want to close debate on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: — Someone has asked that the matter stand.

MR. MERCHANT: - . . . that member could get back into the debate if somebody else

picks it up and adjourns it. On a point of order I can now speak to the matter unless somebody else..

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, if the member will just give me a moment, please. Order, order! The member wants to conclude debate on Bill No. 21 and the matter has been asked to stand. No one has opposed that, therefore, the matter stands. Now, if the member wants to contest the motion to stand, well then he merely has to rise and do that. I will deal with it immediately.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. How do I do that other than by standing and indicating that I want to speak and close debate? Let's suppose that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — The member merely has to rise to speak and say no. I will take a vote and find out what the sentiment of the House is.

MR. MERCHANT: — With respect, Mr. Speaker, as my colleague, my leader says, it is opposite from what happened the other day when you then indicated there was a request to stand and then you indicated that one of the members could speak. Then the hon. Attorney General turned to the most . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! The member is getting into something that happened the other day and if the member wants a detailed ruling on the matter, I can do it. I am telling the member now, someone has said I move the matter stand. If the member for Wascana doesn't want it to stand, he merely rises to his feet and says no. I will take a vote and decide whether it stands or not.

MR. MERCHANT: — That is different from what you did the other day.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! If the member didn't like the ruling I have made the other day, he should have dealt with it at that particular time. Order, order! The member from Lakeview brought up a ruling and I find the ruling to be perfectly adequate to cover the situation then and today.

MR. MERCHANT: — On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. All we ask is that there be some consistency in your rulings. The ruling the other day was very different from the ruling today. I stood and said that I wanted to address myself to the matter. Clearly, I am saying that no it should not stand. I did exactly the same thing that the member did the other day. I think if you check the records, you will find that nobody rose and said no, I don't want it to stand. He rose and said, I want to speak to the matter. The member was trying to close debate. You then said the other day, the member may close debate. There was a little flurry on the government side. The Attorney General turned to the member for Saskatoon Centre and he rose to speak because the member was trying to close debate and you were prepared obviously to recognize another member. This happened on two occasions, Mr. Speaker, and on both occasions, the hon. member for Saskatoon Centre then spoke to adjourned debates.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. I think if I could direct you to the act that prohibits Saskatchewan Telecommunications from interfering, etc, that is the case where this took place. I asked you a couple of weeks ago for a ruling. You gave it last week and we are proceeding on that basis.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I thank the House for giving me a moment or two to consider

May 23, 1978

this particular matter.

There was a ruling referred to previously by the member for Lakeview (Mr. Malone) and I just want to refer to it, in part, to that ruling which was given in the House on Wednesday, April 20, 1977. It says:

With regard to an item that has been moved and adjourned, this item is the property of the whole House. This item stands in the Adjourned Debates section showing the name of the member who adjourned the debate. This member or any other member may ask for the item to stand when it is called. Yet on the other hand, the one member who adjourned the debate cannot block any further debate on that item.

For example, if the item was called, even though the member asked for it to stand, another member may rise to speak to the matter, and if recognized by Mr. Speaker may take part in the debate. The member who previously adjourned the debate may re-enter the debate at a later time if the debate has not been concluded.

Now, I think, members will agree with me that I will be consistent at this time, since the member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) has risen and says that he wished to proceed with the debate and the effect of him proceeding with the debate will be to conclude the debate. I would at this time read the declaration to the House with regard to his concluding the debate. If any other member wishes to intercede at that time they may rise and make the point on the occasion. Therefore, the member for Wascana has asked to conclude the debate, in effect, and it is my duty to warn the Assembly that the hon. member is about to exercise his right to close the debate and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. Therefore, if any member wishes to speak, let that member do so now.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

BILL NO. 74—AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN RIGHTS OF BLIND PERSONS

Sections 1 to 6 agreed.

Section 7 as amended, agreed.

Sections 8 and 9 agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

BILL NO. 34—AN ACT TO AMEND THE INDUSTRIAL ACCOUNTANTS ACT

Items 1 to 7 agreed.

Item 8 deleted and 9 renumbered as 8, agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

**BILL NO. 71—AN ACT RESPECTING THE CERTIFIED GENERAL ACCOUNTANTS'
ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN.**

Items 1 to 47 agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

The Committee reported progress.

SECOND READINGS

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek) moved second reading of Bill No. 41 - **An Act respecting the Accountability of Crown Corporations.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to have an opportunity to finally speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be very brief on this because we are down to that time of the year when we would all like to get out of here. I'm sure we would all like to have been out of here quite some time ago. I suppose I haven't made my third annual it's-time-to-get- out-of-here speech. I'm not going to do it right at this moment.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that this particular session of the Legislature has pointed out many inadequacies in our present legislative procedure. We have really not been very productive in this session of the Legislature. We have passed an awful lot of bills, not very many of which have any particular consequence. Had none of this legislation which has gone through this session, gone through, I really have my doubts that the people of Saskatchewan would have had a great deal of difficulty in surviving into the year 1979. There have been many inadequacies in our system; whatever has gone on I think all parties in this House have been equally guilty of, but certainly the time has come when our legislative procedure must be streamlined.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that one particular area that at least I have found very glaringly deficient in our system, is pertaining to Crown Corporations and I suppose that I did come to some of these conclusions by spending a year serving on the Committee of Crown Corporations. I found it a very frustrating procedure and as I have indicated before, a total and complete waste of, not only our time, but everyone else's time that is involved.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) if he can't retain some degree of silence, perhaps he would like to go out back, or perhaps he would like to go campaigning, or perhaps you would like the floor.

Mr. Speaker. I believe the line of real deficient areas that we have, particularly in this province, is in the area of Crown corporations. Mr. Speaker, the Crown corporations everywhere have moved into the big leagues, whether you are talking federally or in other provinces, but particularly in this province. Crown corporations have now become big business. It really doesn't matter whether you are in favour of all our Crown corporations or opposed to them. They are a fact of life, they are here and they are in existence. And not only that, Mr. Speaker, they are also responsible - maybe that isn't the correct choice of words - but they are the cause or they are the vehicle for approximately 95 per cent of our gross provincial debt.

May 23, 1978

Mr. Speaker, the total debt of this province is about \$2.2 billion or for a per capita debt from every man, woman and child, of about \$2,200. Mr. Speaker, about 95 per cent of that is invested in Crown corporations. Granted, it is taken out by the Department of Finance, but nonetheless, behind each and every Crown corporation the entire credit of the province of Saskatchewan rests behind it.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking in terms of big, big dollars when we go into Crown corporations. In the Budget this year, 1978, the closing lines of the Budget went something to the effect, that while we are going to require borrowings of about \$650 million this year, about \$200 million of that was going to be generated internally. So the province is now going to go into the markets for borrowing, for this year alone, for \$440 million.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is only 14 years since my father delivered the Budget in 1964. You know the total Budget back in 1964 was then \$ 292 million and yet with one blithe statement in 1978, just a very common and innocuous statement that the province is going to go into the money markets for \$440 million, Mr. Speaker, it makes one wonder what you have become immune to. We stand in this session of the Legislature and we have millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars tossed at us as legislators.

I think the most terrifying thing about it is, that you can become so immune to those numbers that you can totally lose perspective as to exactly what they are. Mr. Speaker, \$1 million is not very hard to say. \$10 million isn't very much a great deal more difficult to say, but you can very easily lose the perspective of just what \$1 million is. You get brought back down to earth when you return to your personal affairs. But as you sit in here, the term of \$1 million, \$10 million, \$100 million you just become totally immune to what it means.

Mr. Speaker, we have reached the point, as I indicated earlier, that Crown corporations have become big, big business. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have also reached a point where there is virtually no accountability on the part of our Crown corporations. I readily concede that the accountability of the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan may be a great deal superior to what it is in some other provinces. Some provinces do not even have a Crown Corporations Committee. Very respectfully, I would suggest that they are none the worse off than what we are in Saskatchewan, because the system that we have here is absolutely and completely useless, to my way of thinking.

Mr. Speaker, the concept of examining Crown corporations a year after the fact is tantamount to the old archaic expression of 'closing the gate after the horses have long since run away'. You talk about items that have transpired one year previously. The minister in charge may or may not choose to answer. And if he does answer and if a point is made, so what? The point in Crown corporations is totally lost unless those people in the press gallery who choose to get up at 9 o'clock or 9:30 o'clock in the morning, happen to be of the inclination to report it. If they are not, then it is totally lost forever.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest to the Assembly, that it is the intent of this bill that this province take a very gigantic step forward. When we refer to Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, we are referring to public funds. Because we refer to public funds then there must be an accounting for those public funds. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest to this Assembly that there is very, very little accountability at this point in time.

Mr. Speaker, I am suggesting to this Assembly today that before a Crown corporation can borrow money or submit a request to Treasury to borrow money, that this Crown corporation should have to go through very intense and difficult scrutiny and that they should have to go through that scrutiny to a Legislative Committee. Mr. Speaker, I think it is an unrealistic proposition in terms of the increasing size of our Crown corporations that our existing Crown corporations structure could be revamped to accomplish this end. There is no conceivable way.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that what is required is a completely brand new, all encompassing committee, comprised of members which would sit throughout the entire year; that they could not necessarily be restricted to the confines of the existing Legislature. Mr. Speaker, this is a very radical change but, I think, one in view of the very massive, massive numbers that we now talk in terms of in Crown Corporations that we really do require.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who will suggest that this may perhaps be an American- style committee. We heard the term used earlier in the day in regard to another bill, that it is the American system and consequently cannot be applicable here in Canada. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest to the Attorney General who, I believe, made that comment, I really don't think it matters whether you are talking United States, Great Britain, Ecuador, Spain or anyplace else, if they have something that is plausible, that we can use and that is applicable, then let's borrow it; let's take it; let's not get tied into something as archaic as the British Parliamentary system.

Mr. Speaker. I propose a system that, for example, if Sask Power Corporation wanted to raise its rates, or to make a massive capital borrowing as they are doing every year, that Sask Power should have to go before this Legislative style committee and that they should have to go before this Legislative Committee and account solely and completely for their position. The opposition members on this committee should be able to talk directly to the head of the Sask Power Corporation, something which is not possible under our existing Crown Corporations Committee. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the head of Sask Power in this particular example should be prepared to face very tough technical scrutiny from an expert who may or may not be called in by the opposition people on the committee. For example, I envision a situation where Sask Power wants to borrow \$500 million to supposedly accomplish a certain objective. It should certainly be within the opposition's power to requisition a technical expert, say for example, from Con Edison out of New York State, bring him in and put them head to head. Mr. Speaker. I can suggest that when there is such very tough and strict accountability before the dollars are spent that the money which is ultimately spent will be spent probably or hopefully for the best possible purposes. At the present time, Mr. Speaker, if Sask Power tells this Assembly that they want to borrow X number of dollars, they simply go ahead and do it. Frankly, who are we to question them? When you are talking in terms of some of the highly technical Crown corporations that we have, there are very few members in opposition who are qualified to really question and accurately assess the feasibility and the viability of the proposal. Yet if they were able to bring in the top technical help, the top technical expertise in that area, I can only suggest that perhaps the taxpayers of this province would be the ultimate benefactors of such a proposition.

Mr. Speaker, the bill that is before you is merely something that is put down on paper in principle. I'm sure any member who has taken the time to look at it can find lots of holes in it. I am certainly no expert in writing bills. You know the procedures for writing bills.

There are a lot of things in there that don't mean all that much to me.

It is the principle that is important, Mr. Speaker. It is the principle that I would very much like to see adopted by this Assembly. Certainly there will be amendments and changes. The numbers that I have proposed and the make-up of the committee are academic. The point of the matter is that the Crown corporations are operating with virtually no stringent limits put on them. Some of them are becoming so massively large that really I wonder if it is possible for a Cabinet minister, who is in the process of other duties, to keep tabs on them as he should be.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the spread of Crown corporations in this province grow to an alarming size. I point to the Sask Potash Corporation which now has about \$340 million of taxpayers' dollars safely tucked away as equity. Mr. Speaker, under the new Heritage Fund that is being set up, the Potash Corporation will enjoy almost unlimited access into the Heritage Fund. Mr. Speaker, whom are they going to be accountable to? It will be very quickly blown through the Legislature and we won't get an opportunity to talk to the head of the Sask Potash Corporation. We will not have the opportunity to bring in technical people to converse with them so that we can intelligently form an opinion. It simply just doesn't work that way and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, to handle money, particularly in the volume that we are now handling in Crown corporations, it is time to streamline things as many other things are and make the financing of Crown corporations much more accountable than what it is.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of business that we want to do in this House and nobody wants out of here more than I do. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing more to say on this. Again, I ask this Assembly to consider the principle. The bill itself you can chop up into little pieces without a great deal of difficulty. It is the principle that is important.

Mr. Speaker. I put this forward as a concept almost in a non-political fashion because I ask the members of the government to consider that very possibly in about 18 months, or about 12 or 13 months, it may very well be that we are sitting on that side of the Assembly. Having moved a bill like this, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be almost obligated to put such a system in effect. So in other words, Mr. Speaker, we are almost being put in the position now of some day being forced to practise what we are preaching.

Mr. Speaker, let me assure this Assembly that if we are in government over there there will be some very stringent changes as to how the Crown Corporations will account for the dollars that they are spending, not only the rate increases, but also in terms of their capital expenditures.

Isn't it nice to know, Mr. Speaker, that the boondocks are still over there with nothing better to do and I suppose there is a living example of what happens when you earn more money in this place than you can anywhere else, so you show up.

MR. MOSTOWAY: - Inaudible.

MR. THATCHER: — Well the buffoon from Saskatoon made it back too. Isn't that wonderful? I can't decide whether the member for Saskatoon, whether he had a bad night with the other member for Prince Albert, or whether or not that he had a bad weekend knocking on doors and he found out that everybody was going Conservative. He usually reacts in such a way when he has had one of these bad weekends.

Mr. Speaker, with that little gem of wisdom from the member for Saskatoon, I look forward to his support in this bill and I look forward to all members' support in this bill. I think it is a principle that is worthy of consideration and I look forward for amendments to it from any source in this House, but I think it is a bill with whatever its deficiencies may be, that at the very least does define a problem and that is the vast number of dollars that are now going into Crown Corporations with what I sincerely believe to some extent is a generally acceptably held view in this Assembly that there is far too little accountability for the massive millions and millions of dollars that now go out.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all members can support this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the member intend to move second reading?

MR. THATCHER: — I would move second reading of this bill, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker. I want to just say a very few brief words before adjourning the debate on this particular bill.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, one of the obvious observations that has to be made is that when one listens to the member for Thunder Creek talk about a new method of review for Crown Corporations.

One wonders what relevancy it has to the bill which is before us, because I submit. Mr. Speaker, that indeed the printed bill before us Bill No. 41 does not set up a new method for the review of Crown Corporations. What this bill does in reality is set up something which is known in other jurisdictions as a public utilities board. I'd like the members to take a look at the short bill rather closely. In fact don't take a look at it closely- a very cursory look at it will show it is the case.

What the member proposes under Section 3 which is one of the operative sections, is the establishment of a Crown Corporations Review Board. I find it interesting by the way, that three of those members should be designated by the Premier, something which the PC opposition itself has very strongly objected to in respect to other orders in councils and regulations and three other members from the opposition, one of whom shall be the chairman. Now what shall be the function of the Crown Corporations Review Board, Mr. Speaker? Now under Section 5, where a corporation intends to increase its rates or to borrow any moneys for any purpose it shall advise the board in writing of its intention. Then under Section 6 there is an inquiry when there is this kind of intention. Under Section 7 there are rules as to evidence to deal with this intention. Under Section 8 there may be advisors brought in to determine whether or not the rates should be increased or changed, no increased, not decreased, Mr. Speaker, but increased or to borrow the moneys. Under Section 9 anybody can have a lawyer in the course of this hearing and under Section 10 what happens here is that in the end result a recommendation is made which is tabled according to provisions of the tabling of documents act, and Section 11 and 12 are the last two sections of which the matter comes into force

Mr. Speaker, what the member seeks to set up by legislation is a Public Utilities Board, or a concept akin to a Public Utilities Board.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think one could debate with him whether or not a Public Utilities Board is a desirable creature given the set up of Crown Corporations that we have in the

province of Saskatchewan. My personal view is that a Public Utilities Board is probably not of any significant advantage, since ministers are responsible to this House for their Crown Corporations, ministers are responsible, albeit the members descry the fact a year later to the Crown Corporations Committee and that there is adequate safeguard to the public in that regard so that a Public Utilities Board is not needed. In any event, I think the member himself gives the answer to that issue in Section 11 when he says, no corporation shall increase its rates or borrow any moneys for any purposes without the approval of the Legislative Assembly. So that prompts me to ask the question, why in the world do we need the Crown Corporations Review Board, if our only application of the rates should be set up under Section 5.

Mr. Speaker, I think the answer of course is that in any true Crown Corporation set-up as we have them in Saskatchewan, the fact of the matter is, the Legislature through its various arms and agencies should be the scrutiny board and not something called a Public Utilities Board or a Crown Corporations Board - call it what you will, as this member does here.

The second point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is, apart from the obvious one, the bill says one thing, the member talks another thing. Let us deal for just one brief moment on this argument of the need to review Crown corporation procedures in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to this House without reservation, that Saskatchewan has the best method of reviewing Crown corporations of any legislative body in Canada, bar none - including Canada's. You take a look at any of the legislative authorities, anywhere (and I challenge the hon. member from Regina South to show me an authority to the contrary) and one will see that there is no other legislative body in Canada that has this whip.

There are two things that the members opposite complain about. One, they say you know the Crown corporation involved comes to the committee one year later. I don't know how you can get around this particular problem, unless you review the particular year during which the Crown corporation is carrying on business, without complete financial statements, without complete operations that are involved in the day to day operations of the committee. How else in the world can you analyze the performance of a year completed, with other years completed, without working on the system that we do at present?

The second thing the members complain about is the question of the need of officials to talk. They want the officials to talk in the Crown Corporations Committee. Well, Mr. Speaker, what happens if there is a difference between the official and say, the minister? How is that consistent with the theory of ministerial responsibility? You can bet your bottom dollar that the Liberals and the PCs would nail the minister to the wall on a particular statement made by an official and yet they wouldn't allow, under this mechanism, the minister to make the comments as is the situation now presently before the committee.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is full of contradictions; it is unnecessary; it is unnecessary and not consistent with the facts of the province of Saskatchewan. When the member for Thunder Creek talks about stringent changes if ever his caucus should come into power believe me. I know that there will be stringent changes. First of all, there will be no SGIO; they would sell back all the hardware to their cable operating friends; they'd sell out in Sask Power like the Liberals did to the gas fields and others; they would sell

their sodium sulphate for one cent a ton, Mr. Speaker — they would sell sodium sulphate deposits to private enterprise operators and today it is selling at \$40 a ton. That is the kind of a giveaway we would be having and the kind of situation. Believe me, those kinds of stringent changes, Mr. Speaker, we don't need because we know them full well in the province of Saskatchewan.

I will have quite a bit more to say about the PC and Liberal position on Crown Corporations and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition) moved second reading of Bill 75 - **An Act to protect Senior Citizens on Fixed Incomes from Inflation.**

MR. ROMANOW: — On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. May I raise my point of order and perhaps you can think about it?

My point of order is that Bill 75 should be ruled out of order on the following grounds. Beauchesne's, citation 249, is clear that private members cannot introduce bills involving the expenditure of public money and I quote:

No principle is better understood than the constitutional obligation that rests upon the executive government of a loan initiating measures imposing charges on the public exchequer.

Beauchesne also gives examples of motions and amendments by private members which have been ruled out of order, including one motion increasing the senior citizens' allowances without authorization by the Crown. Similarly, May 19th edition, page 487. quote:

The Speaker has refused a motion for leave to introduce a bill on the ground that its provisions would entail a charge on the revenue.

Mr. Speaker, what is a charge on the revenue? May, page 701 states, quote:

For releasing or compounding of any sum of money owing to the Crown, i.e. the writing of any portion of a debt owed to the consolidated fund is treated as a charge.

For example, if SPC were to reduce the charges for senior citizens, as this bill proposes, this would in effect be the same as writing off a portion of the fee that is charged to all residential users in the province.

Is the reduction in revenue equivalent to an expenditure from public funds? Mr. Speaker, my submission is, yes. Beauchesne's citation 243, defines a money bill, which cannot be introduced by private members. It states, quote:

A money bill means a public bill which, in the opinion of the Speaker of the House of Commons, contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following subjects, namely, the imposition, repeal, remission, alteration or regulation of taxation, the imposition for the payment of debt or other financial purposes of charges on the consolidated fund, or on the money provided by parliament, or the variation or repeal of any such charges.

May 23, 1978

Clearly a bill which proposes to limit the collection of revenues or very charges is similar to one which calls on the government to collect new revenues and which would likewise be ruled out of order, as, quote:

The responsibility of recommending applications for pecuniary redress or relief to the consideration of parliament should rest solely upon the executive government who are strictly accountable for every item of public expenditure.

Beauchesne's citation 249.

MR. MALONE: — I would like to speak to the point of order. Mr. Speaker. It doesn't surprise me that the Attorney General is reluctant to have this bill proceed, but I see that it is 5:00 o'clock and perhaps I can speak on it when we come back after dinner.

The Assembly recessed until 7:00 o'clock p.m.

CORRIGENDUM

Correction to Hansard, May 18, 1978, 2:00 p.m. No. 52A:

The words in the verbatim record from 'Let me remind the member' on page 3015 to 'I don't think that you do' on page 3021 were repeated in error and are not to be considered as part of the official record.