

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

**May 25, 1978**

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

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**HON. H.H. ROLFES (Saskatoon Buena Vista):** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and to the House, a group of 31 students from George Vanier School. It gives me particular pleasure to introduce this group, Mr. Speaker, because that is the school that my children attend and it is a school that I have had a close relationship with.

The students are seated in the Speaker's Gallery and they are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Straub. It is my understanding that I will be meeting with them a little later. I believe they will have a little tour from 2.45 to 3:00 p.m.

I do hope that you have a pleasant stay in the city of Regina and that you have a happy and safe journey back home. Thank you.

**HON. MEMBERS** Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**YOUTH IN PARK - WASCANA CENTRE AUTHORITY**

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier regarding the Wascana Centre Authority. I wonder if the Premier would indicate to me and to the House why, last night, the Wascana Centre Authority decided to harass all of the many young people who were using the park? There were road blocks set up; about two dozen cars were impounded for things as inconsequential as having faulty exhaust systems.

I ask the Premier why the Wascana Centre Authority has chosen to impose far more stringent penalties upon people guilty of modest misdemeanours than is ever imposed on somebody committing a similar offence allegedly, if they are arrested either by the RCMP or the Regina City Police?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that the Wascana Centre Authority is an agency of the government of Saskatchewan and, if it is, I'm surprised to hear that. It is an agency of the government of Saskatchewan in the same way as the University of Saskatchewan is.

I think, strictly speaking, it is not within the administrative sphere of competence of the government of Saskatchewan to answer for the Wascana Centre Authority. I want to make that point clear at the outset. Secondly, there are government representatives on the board. The chairman of the board is a minister of the Crown and it may be that he is informed. I am not, nor do I have any obligation to be informed.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Premier, in light of the fact that the majority of the board are government members and that the funding comes almost entirely from the government, if the Premier would investigate the incident which seems to me, and I would ask the Premier whether he would agree with this assumption, to be designed solely to stop the use of the Wascana Centre Authority by the many young people who have been using the Centre Authority in far larger numbers this year than possibly in any year before? It would appear, you may agree with this, that it is a determined attempt to stop the adequate use of this park in the way that I think it was intended to be used.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I have to remind the hon. member that the government of Saskatchewan appointees do not constitute a majority of the board, but a minority of the board. The combined representation of the University of Regina and the city of Regina exceed the number of appointees of the government of Saskatchewan. The member apparently is arguing that the University of Regina is within the legislative competence and administrative competence of the government of Saskatchewan and that it is appropriate for ministers of the Crown to answer for the University of Regina. I think that's a shameful thing for any member to say.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — If ministers are supposed to answer for the administrative acts of the University of Regina then where is the academic freedom which I thought all members of this Legislature supported?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will, however, ask one of the government representatives who are on the board of the Wascana Centre Authority to see whether or not there is some substance to this particular wave of allegations by the member for Wascana. Electrical Servicing at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting

**MR. R. E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg):** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the Minister in charge of SPC.

Is it a fact that SPC will not allow the present electrical servicing of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting at Flin Flon to proceed after 1981 and will the minister not be endangering jobs of many Saskatchewan citizens in the Creighton area who are working in that plant?

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources):** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I thought that the whole basis of the oral question period was to deal with matters of urgency. The member himself is alluding to 1981 and are there going to be some problems after that date. Hardly an urgent matter. But let me respond, Mr. Speaker, in saying that we have conveyed to Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting that our decision is not to renew the licence for the hydro installation at that time and we think that we give them ample opportunity. We have also, I think, conveyed that there should be no real hardship because of that decision due to the abundant amount of time that we have to negotiate any arrangements that have to be negotiated by that date.

**MR. NELSON (As-Gr):** — Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, the people whose jobs may be endangered do believe it is essential that the item be looked after. Will the minister keep

in mind the fact that the company has spent thousands of dollars in the Phantom Lake area and resort on recreational facilities in the province when he is negotiating that contract?

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

### **TASK FORCE - CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**MR. S.J. CAMERON (Regina South):** — Mr. Speaker, a question of the Premier.

Premier Lougheed in his latest series of endeavours in support of the Canadian Wheat Board has established a task force in Alberta ostensibly to examine the export policies of the Canadian Wheat Board (to put it kindly); others would say it is another in a series of attacks upon the functioning of the Canadian Wheat Board in Alberta. I am interested in asking the Premier whether or not prior to the establishment of the task force in Alberta, Lougheed had consulted with the Premier as to whether he would be prepared to participate in the exercise?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether I can answer the hon. member's question because it may have been that Premier Lougheed may have mentioned this to me. I have had a number of discussions with him on many matters, particularly when we were at Yorkton. I want to comment a little bit by saying that we are desirous of taking no step which however well intentioned, might be interpreted as undermining the authority of the Canadian Wheat Board and their ability to speak with a united voice for the grain industry of Canada with respect to export sales. Accordingly, we would be very cautious about entering into any arrangement by our government which might be interpreted or misinterpreted as undermining the work and the united voice of the Wheat Board, which work and which united voice our government very firmly supports.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear.

**MR. CAMERON:** — The stand the Premier has taken, I am still left a bit confused as to whether or not you knew in advance that an announcement was coming and if you did, why you didn't lodge a strenuous protest with him about that sort of thing, but that aside, what have you done since by way of protest to Premier Lougheed that you don't take very kindly to his taskforce and its efforts and what are you prepared to do to lodge in no uncertain terms, your protest with the government of Alberta over that action?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I don't believe it is necessarily the function of the government of Saskatchewan to protest to the government of Alberta that they are setting up a task force. Please understand that it is a, as I understand it, or shall I rephrase it by saying it is my understanding that the government of Alberta, in its public statements, fully support the Canadian Wheat Board and in its view, is not doing anything to undermine the Canadian Wheat Board, but seeks only to support and strengthen the work of the Canadian Wheat Board. I am prepared to accept that statement of intention by the government of Alberta. I fear however, that it is capable of being misinterpreted and because I fear it is capable of being misinterpreted; our government would not wish to take part — because of the fear, because of my fear that the misinterpretation might undermine the Wheat Board.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Well, by way of supplementary, I would say to the Premier that not only does it have the potential to undermine the Canadian Wheat Board, it serves as a lightning rod for all the anti-Canadian Wheat Board sentiment in Alberta which is

growing and some in Saskatchewan which is significant. Again I ask you, that surely given your own government's responsibility in this area, the province in which we are the major producer of grain and the major supporter of the Canadian Wheat Board, surely you will take some more action than the kind of timid response you have given us today, to that undermining effort in Alberta?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to acknowledge that it is appropriate for our government to make a protest which in effect calls into question the stated intentions of the government of Alberta. However, because of our support of the Canadian Wheat Board we will give consideration to what additional steps we should take in order to make clear that we support the Wheat Board concept and that, in general, not every step, but in general, we support the work that the Wheat Board has done during the past several years as being very worthwhile work on behalf of Canadian grain producers.

### **SWEDISH FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY**

**MR. A.N. McMILLAN (Kindersley):** — Mr. Speaker a question to the Minister of Industry and Commerce.

I refer him to an article I read in the Prince Albert Herald, recently, about the minister being optimistic about the coming Swedish forest products industry in Saskatchewan. I would like to ask the minister if he can give this House some indication of when the people of Saskatchewan and, particularly, the people of northern Saskatchewan can expect this new industry to arrive in this province?

**HON. N. VICKAR (Minister of Industry and Commerce):** — Mr. Speaker, I, too, read that little article in the Prince Albert Herald and I think the people in Prince Albert are a little overemphasizing the fact and they are hoping that this will become a reality and, of course, established in Prince Albert.

I cannot give the member any official data on the status of the industry. I can truthfully tell him, however, that things are progressing real well and we are looking to something in the very near future.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — A supplementary question. Is it not a fact, Mr. Minister, that you are no closer today to the development of this phantom forest industry from Sweden than you were six months ago, when this issue first came to the attention of some of the people in Saskatchewan? I would like to know if you have one single instance of negotiations or further negotiations with this Swedish company which would lead you to be the slightest bit optimistic about the establishment of this industry in northern Saskatchewan?

**MR. VICKAR:** — Mr. Speaker, I think that is wishful thinking on behalf of the member in question. I am hopeful that in due course there will be an announcement which will set the member at ease.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Well, one final supplementary. Would the minister not agree with me that all the people in Saskatchewan have every right to be sceptical about this government's announced industries in view of your past record about your establishment, particularly in the forest business and in view of the fact that the only industry you have, are two large centralized white elephant sawmills that the government built on poor advice themselves?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I will take the next question.

### **TAXES ON TRAILER COURTS**

**MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South):** — A question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It is rather an enjoyable question period without the sort of inane interruptions from the left. That is welcome today.

The city of Regina is reported to have written you some time ago, asking you to consider amendments to the act, to permit them to discount the taxes that trailer court owners pay and, secondly, to permit them to have a voice in the way burgesses generally do on money by-laws. It was reported that they haven't had the courtesy of a reply from you. I don't know whether that is right or whether that's wrong and I want to ask you whether, in fact, they did write you and when and whether you have replied? Secondly, more substantively, have you been looking at and do you intend to bring forward amendments to permit the two things that they are seeking?

**HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs):** — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question I can't say off the top of my head whether I have replied or not. I think likely I have. The legislation in The Urban Municipality Act, which was passed in the House, is legislation which has gone through the process of being examined by the Urban Law Review Committee before it was brought forward here. All requests for urban municipal legislation are going through that process and I think it is likely that I did reply to the city of Regina saying that the proposal would be put before the Urban Law Review Committee for their consideration as to incorporation in the wholesale change of the law or perhaps being put forward to the government for consideration before that report of the Urban Law Review Committee is complete.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister will understand that that process is extremely time consuming. The city of Regina wants to give to trailer court owners the same right that others enjoy and that is a discount if their taxes are paid early. It is a clear case of discrimination that it wants to rectify. Why don't you bring before the House a simple amendment to give the cities the option to do that if they want pending your further inquiry into the state of the law as you intend to do?

**MR. MacMURCHY:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, in bringing forward the proposal to review all urban law, it was agreed with SUMA that that process would be the complete process and that any request for immediate change would be considered by that Urban Law Review Committee before going to the government or going to Cabinet for further consideration. I think we are committed, as well we should be, to that process and unless I hear from SUMA, who I will be meeting I think on Monday with respect to that process, we will stick with it.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Supplementary. Mr. Speaker. The minister may recall that I questioned you once about this matter and said that both the city of Regina and also Mayor Cliff Wright had indicated that as far as the question of a burgess was concerned that they both thought it inappropriate that trailer court owners, trailer owners, be treated like second class citizens and not be allowed to vote. I asked the minister whether you would not, in light of the fact that the two largest cities in Saskatchewan both want that changed, go back to SUMA and say, could we make an exception over this matter where we are in fact treating mobile home owners as second class citizens of the province?

**MR. MacMURCHY:** — Well. I think the same response that I provided for the hon. member for Regina South would apply to the hon. member for Wascana, that in fact Regina and Saskatoon are members of SUMA, albeit important members, but I think that the matter can be pursued if it is SUMA's desire, on Monday when I meet with them and if they do not raise it, I will raise it with them.

### **POLICING OF WASCANA PARK**

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A question to the Hon. Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, about the harassment last evening of the young people who were here in Wascana Park. I ask the Attorney General whether you would examine the fact that Wascana Centre Authority has their own independent police force and, since the Premier has said that though they fund it they are not responsible (and I suppose I should ask God or the pope these questions), I now ask you, assuming that you are in charge of Saskatchewan, whether you would look into the matter.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I will take a new question.

### **HARASSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN WASCANA PARK**

**MR. MERCHANT:** — I will ask a new question. I wonder if the Attorney General would be prepared to investigate the matter last night of the harassment of a large number of young people.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I will take a new question.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Will the Attorney General investigate the matter?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I have not received a complaint from anyone other than the hon. member today, just now, if that is a complaint with respect to the question of harassment. I do not know what was going on out there which has bothered the member for Wascana so much. Let me say before I take my chair that the Wascana Police Force is in my judgment, by analogy, like any other police force, say the Regina police force, which reports to the Regina municipal authority. The Wascana force reports to the Wascana Centre authority. There are some provincial government funds into Regina or municipal forces as there are, I suppose, provincial funds into Wascana. It is true that the Attorney General, in his capacity as being responsible for the administration of justice on a province-wide basis, on occasion will look into matters which require his department's view.

I would not want to commit myself at this stage in the game, based on what I think are the limited facts which have been put forward to me by the member at question period, to undertake a full scale of review on this matter. But if the member has some additional information, I guess that door would certainly be open.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It may be that the complaints come to me because I am a little closer to the youth of Regina than the Hon. Attorney General. I ask the Attorney General whether you would not view it an alarming circumstance, and this is a case that happened, a car being impounded because it had a leaky exhaust. There were over two dozen . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. Are there any new questions? Ministerial Statements. Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Mr. Speaker, in 1972 . . .

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. If the member has a point of order with regard to the question period he can raise this under Orders of the Day.

**MR. CAMERON:** — (Interjection - inaudible).

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order!

The member is obviously asking a question about the question period. He should do that under orders of day.

The Minister of Agriculture has the floor.

#### **STATEMENT — SALE OF LAND BANK LAND**

**HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — In 1972 our government introduced a bill cited as The Land Bank Act, 1972. The purposes of the act were stated to include the provisions of assistance, first to residents of Saskatchewan to enable them to establish or maintain family farms here in Saskatchewan by increasing the opportunities for them to acquire land for farming, secondly, to increase the opportunities for owners of farm land in Saskatchewan to dispose of their farm land at fair and just prices.

The program was not designed to solve all the problems associated with farming in Saskatchewan. However, it does contribute to the overall objective of this government to help establish and maintain family farming in this province. The act provided for long term security leases to a lessee to age 65. It is a lease which gives the lessee confidence to plan a lifetime of farming and commit the necessary funds to the input costs of farming. The act provides that the lessee may pass the lease on to other members of the family upon his or her retirement.

The act also provides that after five years of leasing, the lessee can exercise an opportunity to purchase the land. For some 420 lessees who commenced leasing in 1973 the privilege of purchase is now theirs. The lessee does not have to buy. The opportunity to purchase is a continuing one and can be exercised any time after five years. The lessee can continue to lease; he can buy one quarter or he can buy all of the land that he has leased for five years.

In February of 1978, I announced a new policy which provided the Land Bank lessee with assistance to purchase his home quarter, or if he did not live on the land, assistance to purchase one quarter of his choice. This assistance is 20 per cent of the sale price of the quarter to a maximum of \$5,000. This assistance will be paid out in equal instalments over the next five years as long as the lessee remains a bona fide farmer. This morning I had the honour to present to Brian and Linda McKnight of Duval, a certificate to commemorate the Commission's recognition of the first sale of land to a lessee who has leased for five years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KAEDING:** — I was pleased to participate in that ceremony, not only to recognize the first sale of Land Bank land but to honour Brian and Linda McKnight who are typical of those people the Land Bank is helping. In 1973 this young man had no hope of becoming established on an economic farm unit. With the assistance of Land Bank, he has progressed in five short years to where he is now one of the progressive family farm operators in Saskatchewan. Land Bank has now come a full circle. The objectives of the program have been continuously met. People who had no hope of fulfilling their lifetime dream of operating a family farm are now an integral part of life in Saskatchewan and an asset to their rural community. Without Land Bank this would not have been possible. There are those, Mr. Speaker, who would have had you believe that the Land Bank would never sell an acre of land. This sale this morning together with the many additional sales which are now being negotiated with eligible lessees should finally put those unfounded statements to rest.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. LW. BIRKBECK (Moosomin):** — Mr. Speaker, it's quite a day to say the least when the Minister of Agriculture rises to make such a statement, to announce such windfall profits on behalf of the government with regard to their Land Bank program. Because, boy, that's what it is, windfall profits for the NDP and its government of Saskatchewan over the backs of the agricultural people of this province.

You made a big deal out of the first sale of land. You made charges that opposition members have been criticizing the Land Bank program that you wouldn't sell land. I would inform the Minister of Agriculture it was not Progressive Conservatives that fought it at that time five years ago that you wouldn't sell land. But I'll tell you, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, as a result of your new policy announced in the Land Bank program only a few months ago, now we are certain that, in fact, your desire is not to see that land gets out to the agricultural people in this province but to retain it unto yourself and unto your own control. You know that, Mr. Minister of Agriculture. Your policy in no way, whatsoever, is encouraging and making it accessible to those people who have leased Land Bank land. You look at this example that you have just given us today about Brian McKnight of Duval - \$47,900 he pays, purchased for \$24,000 by your government five years ago. Those are the windfall profits by this NDP government. Those are the windfall profits and they are on the backs of the agricultural people of this province and you know it, Mr. Minister.

You said that you want to sell land in your new policy a few months ago at the average current market values. That was what you said. That was your stated policy. Anyone that's up in the press today will fully realize that even this individual has said that he was surprised that he was able to get it at the price that he got it for. Now, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, surely that's not consistent with your policy and I think, Mr. Minister, it is high time that you laid out a very consistent and concise policy with regard to the Land Bank program.

I'll just say one more thing. If the farm program that we are advising right now to the people of this province had have been in place five years ago this man would not be out some 20,000 odd dollars. You know that, Mr. Minister, and so do I.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Speaker. I am, in a way, pleased to see that the government has



finally established its show case deal for a land sale with respect to the Land Bank. It gives the members of this party some satisfaction because it brings at least to some conclusion, the work and pressure that we put on this government since the Land Bank was conceived. Nothing has driven this government to change its policy and allow the sale of farm land in Saskatchewan more than the voting public did in 1975. Now, this government in order to relieve some of that political pressure, has established its initial showcase deal. I suspect the land sale that was established is perhaps even less than the average price the land would have sold for in that district in order to put this person in that position where he could buy.

We are pleased to see that the government has finally taken our advice and gotten into the sales business and I hope this situation continues day after day after day, until every acre of land in the Land Bank is sold to the farmers of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McMILLAN:** — I hope, while you are performing these sales, you will continue to try and clean up some of the administrative mess you still have in your land bank and some of the strange anomalies that exist when people are trying to purchase other farmland and lease Land Bank land at the same time.

I say that you were driven to this position by the people of Saskatchewan. We have pressed for this sale position for years and there is no doubt in the minds of anyone in this province that at the time you instituted the land bank program, you have no intention to sell any of the farmland that you took in.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McMILLAN:** — I say, we welcome this sale and we hope that it is the first of many such sales in Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **MEDICAL STAFF VACANCIES — ALLAN BLAIR CLINIC.**

**HON. E.L TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a brief announcement with regard to the medical staff vacancies at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic in Regina.

I indicated last week that offers were sent to four qualified physicians to fill the existing vacancies at the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic. Confirmation has been received and that all four have accepted the positions that were offered. Three of the four have been recruited from Ontario; one is a Radiotherapist and the other two have Canadian Fellowship qualifications in Internal Medicine with additional post-graduate training in chemotherapy.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth position is also a specialist in internal medicine, who was in private practice in Regina for many years. He is returning from a year of private practice in the United States, in the State of Oregon, to accept the position of senior cancer clinic associate in the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I am happy to make this announcement because I know that the people of Saskatchewan have been anxious to hear the statement of the positions being filled as confirmation of what I have been saying all along in this Legislature, under questioning from the members opposite, that the Cancer Commission was doing a very good job in dealing with the problem of the vacancies. I think I have presented here the evidence that shows that to be perfectly true.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, when I first raised some questions about this matter, many weeks ago, I don't think that I or any member was challenging the competence of the people or the staff, the medical staff. I don't think that the replacements now.. if you would keep quiet for about seven or eight seconds you might learn something . . . (Inaudible interjection). And I don't think that anybody is challenging the competence of the four replacements. The problem is that four replacements were necessary and that that clinic has been operating like a revolving door. There have been people coming and going in that clinic for some years, over something so crucial as the care of cancer patients, something so important to Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan health. I would be more interested in knowing how long those four will be here than what their qualifications are on coming.

Mr. Speaker, the revolving door problem in the cancer clinic is a problem of administration—a problem at the government level, not at the medical level—that the people in charge, not the doctors, but the administrators and the people that this government has imposed to pick and pull at the medical staff are making that an unpleasant and a difficult place in which to perform their services of assisting people who have a problem with cancer in this province.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to hear that the government has been able to find replacements that may live up to the quality of the people who have left. That says nothing about the problem that has caused all of the staff to leave and it will continue to cause staff to leave unless there are some very drastic changes made in the operation of the cancer clinic.

**MR. E. A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, to add, briefly, to what has already been said. I commend the minister on his, what must have been a high pressure job of recruiting akin to leading a horse into a burning barn.

Mr. Speaker, it is just mind boggling to me how the minister can say that the problem is solved because he has recruited four well qualified people. I commend the minister on the recruiting. However, it has not got to the root of the problem. The root of the problem does not lie in the staff at Blair; it lies in the commission and at the ministerial level.

We have a situation that exists whereby applicants for positions have not even been acknowledged, where positions have been filled by under qualified people and as long as this situation exists the morale problem will still be low and, quite frankly, the problem has not been solved. I would still urge the minister to have a judicial inquiry into the whole matter of cancer care in Saskatchewan.

### **POINTS OF ORDER ON QUESTION PERIOD**

**MR. MALONE:** — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day I rise on a point of order in

connection with your ruling on question period, today.

I seek from you an explanation, Mr. Speaker, as to why the normal time allotted for question period until 2:30 o'clock was cut off? May I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, with respect, that it was apparent today that the Progressive Conservative caucus was not going to ask any questions after we were into the question period for a few moments. It was apparent, as well, that the members of the Liberal caucus had determined that it was our wish to have the member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant) recognized to pursue this line of questioning with the Attorney General and that is relating to Wascana Centre.

The effect of your ruling, Mr. Speaker, is you now put yourself in the position of determining what order the questions will be asked by our caucus, and perhaps more important than that, you are determining the subject matter of the questions. Mr. Speaker may come to the conclusion that a question is out of order at the time it is asked. You have said this on numerous occasions and when we brought it to your attention you have always replied and said, 'If you feel it is that important, you can rise again during question period and ask the question again.' which is precisely what the member for Wascana did. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, if you continue to act in this manner you are going to completely cut off our rights in question period and that you, yourself, will be determining what is of urgent and vital public importance, and that is a role for opposition members.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I want to assure the member and all members of the Assembly that I, in no way, wish to shorten the question period. That is not my desire at all. I want to also say to the members that I was not, in cutting the questions off from the member for Wascana, attempting to establish an order in which you would ask questions or who would ask the questions. That is not my personal concern. I will take all the questions from one member if the members wish.

Now, the reason that I cut off the questions is as follows:

The question period began with the member for Wascana asking a question about the Wascana Centre Authority. At the moment he asked the question I was raising the question in my mind about the jurisdiction of the government to answer the question. However, I thought the member for Wascana intended to relate it to the government and I permitted him a supplementary.

On his second supplementary I cut him off. We went on and later on the member for Wascana rose again and asked a question on Wascana Centre Authority. I cut him off after the question because of the jurisdiction and because I thought the nature of the question (and I think the record will show it) lacked urgency in the general sense of this question period.

I called for a new question. The member for Wascana stood. I recognized him again. I didn't deny him the opportunity to ask another question. He did something which is not permitted in the rules. He multiplied with some variation (as a matter of fact with no variation at all really), the same question which was already asked. Consequently! Ruled him out of order at that point and was not prepared to accept that question from him. I then, on my feet, said, are there any new questions? I waited. No one answered. I said 'Ministerial Statements'. The Minister of Agriculture rose and made a ministerial

statement. I think that concludes the question period.

If there are at any time more questions I am prepared to take them right up to the time (and as a matter of fact if there is any doubt to go over a minute or so to allow members ample opportunity to ask questions).

**MR. MALONE:** — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! I am not going to permit the member to debate the point of order with me. I think the record will show that the decision that I made is correct. Now if the member has something new on the point of order I would be prepared to hear it. But I am not going to allow him to debate it.

**MR. MALONE:** — Let me put it this way if I may. Mr. Speaker. I put this point to you. The governing factor in question period is whether they are of urgent public importance and I think the Speaker accepts that. We take the position, Mr. Speaker, that we determine here what is of urgent public importance. That's our right as members of the opposition. Mr. Speaker may say, when the question first comes up, in his view it's not and move to another question. But in this case we determine what was of urgent public importance. We determined that this was the most important thing of the day. We directed the member for Wascana to proceed on that basis. It is our decision, Mr. Speaker, not your decision. Furthermore may I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the final question asked by the member for Wascana was directed to the Attorney General on the administration of justice within the Wascana Centre Authority. It had nothing to do with Wascana Centre Authority per se.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if you persist in this line of ruling what you will do is in effect destroy the question period and destroy our rights to determine what we want to ask the government opposite.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I think that it is clear that I said right at the beginning of my statement that the member asked for that I ruled the question out on the matter of jurisdiction, primarily, and secondarily on the matter of urgency. Now the final question the member for Wascana asked had to do with a leaky muffler which is in someone else's jurisdiction. Now I determined in my mind sometime before that it was of questionable importance with regard to jurisdiction. There was a question rising with regard to jurisdiction. Consequently, I am not prepared to allow members to ask all kinds of questions that are not related to this jurisdiction here. Therefore, I went on to the next question. There was no one there to ask a question. I will take the member for the Battlefords.

**HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways):** — I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, if I may and it has to do with, I think, a matter that concerns every member in this House.

Last night on the late news the question of members' indemnities and members' salaries were raised and one member of the press, Mr. Mantyka, indicated (either mistakenly or otherwise) that MLAs in the Saskatchewan Assembly earn \$18,000 a year. That is false and I think it should be corrected. I don't think the public should be fed that kind of garbage. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that we pay income tax on a little better than \$12,000. That's our earning. There is nobody in this country that pays out or includes in their income their expense allowances. This has been going on in the press in Canada both on the national level and the provincial level and continually the

public is being fed this kind of bloody nonsense when it is concerning members of the Legislature. I could even get into trouble with my wife. She listened to that last night and she said, what have you been doing with the other \$6,000?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe, in the public interest and in the interest of the members of the Legislature, that it is only proper and fair that the press should report what we are earning, not what our expense accounts are. I would like to ask the press respectfully to correct it. I say that this is the only report that I heard and it is not singling out anyone particular member. I don't know whether that has just become a habit or not. I say that it is not in the best interests of good government; it is not in the best interest of the members of the Legislature and this House.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — On a point of privilege if I may.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I am not going to let the Minister of Highways get away with calling it a point of privilege. I think it is a point of correcting misinformation, (would only accept it on that basis. . . . Order! I think the member has thoroughly made the point and all the other members . . . Order! I don't want other members embroidering around the edge of it because I think he has made the point, the central point. If the members feel they have something serious to contribute towards the point of information that was raised then I would take it. The member for Nipawin.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, if you call it a point of correction then I would like to correct the point of correction. If you are going to call it a point of privilege then I would like to speak to the point of privilege. Whatever it is, I would like to say to the Minister of Highways and with reference to his comments that if that is designed to somehow suggest to the people of Saskatchewan that we as MLAs are somehow taking home \$12,000, then, I think the Minister of Highways is certainly forgetting the sessional indemnities and the other allowances that are made to the members of this Legislature. If it was suggested as a specific suggestion to get us to agree to increase those members allowances . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! The member is out of order.

**MR. ROMANOW:** - Mr. Speaker, I must, if I can, beg the indulgence of the House to say that with respect to Mr. Mantyka's report. I was asked this question by Mr. Mantyka specifically yesterday and I stand guilty of what the Minister of Highways accuses because without thinking I said \$18,000 to the member.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** . . . I take full responsibility for that, I don't think Mr. Mantyka should take full responsibility for that. I think the Minister of Highways is 100 per cent correct in his remarks and I conclude by saying the report was not given with any suggestion of MLA indemnity for expense increases because the government has no such intention.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker. I rose in the time that is set aside under the rules for question period to ask a question and I wasn't given the opportunity to do it. I would like to address myself a little bit if I may to the rule.

May 25, 1978

Under the rule question period is to start no later than 5 after 2:00 o'clock. It is to conclude no later than 30 minutes after 2. It is the intent of the rule, if not the specific application of the rule, that the question period be 25 minutes. If Mr. Speaker were permitted in the course of question period to call for ministerial statements prior to 2:30, it means the question period can be contracted any day Mr. Speaker chooses. At the time I rose to ask my question, the member for Wascana was still on his feet, Mr. Speaker. He had asked two or three questions; you had ruled them out of order. He was down to his last question and he was rising in his place. He was still standing in his chair at the time you called ministerial statements. His last question was this, "Will the minister investigate?" That was his last question and the record will show that. Mr. Speaker. I was incredulous that the 10 minutes or 15 minutes of the question period today contracted in what I may say with deference to you, please believe me it is deferential, in that arbitrary way in which Mr. Speaker misapplied the rule today in cutting off the question period. I advise, Mr. Speaker, that we had five additional questions; the members were ready to go with their questions. As long as the member for Wascana was on his feet he still had the floor. When Mr. Speaker called for additional questions, I was up right a way and my colleague was up shortly thereafter, Mr. Speaker. May I make one concluding point and that is this in broad terms. Mr. Speaker, there are several occasions in this Legislature, this past one, when we have not been happy with the way in which Mr. Speaker has conducted the question period.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order!

**MR. CAMERON:** — May I say this . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! If the member wants to deal with something that happened today, I'll take it. But I won't take anything that has happened in the past.

**MR. CAMERON:** — I'll tell you what is going to happen today in consequence, that's where I'm leading. Mr. Speaker, the point is this, that every time these things have arisen, we have gone outside the door and we have not criticized the Speaker; we have not criticized the Speaker because we have felt the need not to do it, because of the way in which the House ought to be conducted. What I am saying to Mr. Speaker, is, if you apply the rule, mis-apply the rule in the way in which you did today, which we found totally 'you will find us going outside the door and raising the incredulous, matters in I there that we won't be allowed to raise in here.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — By way of final comment, if this happened in Parliament, the roof would be coming off the place.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! I can take no responsibility for the member for Wascana. He does what he does on his own responsibility. When he is called to order and refuses to sit down, that is not my problem, that is someone else's problem.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . Can't ask a question?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — That's unfortunate. The member for Wascana is out of order when he was on his feet. Any other member is at that point privileged to rise to his feet. If he

doesn't do it then I call "Any new questions?" No answer. I recognized the Minister of Agriculture.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — He was standing . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! Order! I can't help it. I have told the member for Regina South that the actions of the member for Wascana are not my responsibility. Never have been. I have attempted many times in the past to get the member for Wascana to sit down when he is out of order but he doesn't do it. That's not my problem.

**MR. CAMERON:** — You don't cut off question period . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I cut off question period . . . Order! I cut off question period after there are no more questions. There is nothing in the record or in the rules governing this question period that says that it has to go 25 minutes if the questions aren't in order. That is what I have found. The questions were out of order and I explained that before.

Now the member has said that there is a problem accumulating. The member for Regina South has said a problem is accumulating and this is going to cause some further problem at some time in the future. I invite the member to check the record of the question period for the last 10 days and I doubt if there was more than one point of order raised. Now if the members have something that is bothering them about the question period they should rise before orders of the day and raise it at the time it occurs. I don't think it does us any good, any of us to stand up at this time and say we have a huge log of grievances which have not been dealt with and we are going to go outside and going to talk to someone outside about it. The record will show that no points of order have been raised in the question period of any nature, of any significant nature, for at least 10 days. I have the record in my office and it is available to all members right here. I think that deals with that.

I'll take the member for . . .

**MR. DYCK:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might be permitted at this time to introduce a group of students from Richmond Heights School— they'll be leaving at 3:00 o'clock this afternoon?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! Will the member for Saskatoon Mayfair be allowed to introduce students? Proceed.

### **WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. B.M. DYCK (Saskatoon Mayfair):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to this Legislature 50 students from the Richmond Heights High School in Saskatoon. They are sitting in the west gallery. I would like to welcome them to this Legislature. I hope they have an informative and worthwhile afternoon. I believe they are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Les Popp. I welcome him as well. I hope to meet with the group in the rotunda area at about 3:00.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear

### **POINTS OF ORDER - QUESTION PERIOD**

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, there may be some confusion, and I believe some indication in the rule book that perhaps question period should be a fixed time. By leave, I would like to move. That this Assembly adopt the next eight minutes for question period.' If that is all right with the Assembly and with yourself, Mr. Speaker, that we could continue and conclude question period over the next eight minutes. Would that be satisfactory?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I haven't got a motion here. I require a written motion. The member has . . .

**MR. COLLVER:** — . . . I would be happy to write it out. Mr. Speaker. Can I have leave?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. The member has said what his motion will be, has asked leave.

Is leave granted?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Who said no?

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I would I like to ask for some clarification with respect to the question period today about a matter that arose. I distinctly heard the member for Wascana while he was on his feet state to the Speaker — 'New question, Mr. Speaker' — and yet the member for Wascana was not allowed to proceed and I would like to ask you if I am to rise to my feet at some future date in this question period and say to you, 'New question, Mr. Speaker', am I to be ruled out of order for that statement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I want to say two things about the comment raised by the member for Kindersley. The member for Wascana said, 'New question, Mr. Speaker' and I allowed him to proceed. The second comment I want to make is that when that situation occurs with the member for Kindersley, I will deal with it then. I don't make rulings in advance. I have to hear the situation occur and then I will deal with the matter as it occurs at that time. So the member for Kindersley, if he has a question at some time in the future, a new question, he doesn't even have to say, 'new question, Mr. Speaker'. He just needs to rise and I will recognize the member for Kindersley.

## **MOTION**

### **QUESTION PERIOD - EXTENDED TIME**

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Assembly for leave, because of the position on the Green Rule Book, states that question period shall extend to a full period of time. Since it was cut short today, I would ask for leave . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! Is the member repeating what I have already dealt with?

**MR. COLLVER:** — I will ask for leave to make the following motion.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — O.K.

**MR. COLLVER:** —

That this Assembly resolve into question period for the next eight minutes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! I will take the member for Lakeview.



**MISS CLIFFORD:** — He put the question.

**MR. SPEAKER;** — That's the same question we just dealt with.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, I am sorry I didn't place the motion before and I would like to ask the Assembly for leave to put that motion.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! This, I find, is essentially the same question which I asked the Assembly for leave for just a few minutes ago. I feel the matter is dealt with. Therefore the motion is out of order and I can't entertain it again because it has just been dealt with. The member for Lakeview.

#### **ANSWER TO QUESTION ASKED ON TUESDAY - SENIOR CITIZENS**

**MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order on an entirely different matter.

On Tuesday last the Attorney General, aided by the Premier, took exception to the Senior Citizen's bill as to whether or not it was going to be in order. I spoke briefly to the position that they stated. Mr. Speaker advised that he was going to reserve his decision as to whether the bill was in order or not. My question to you now, Mr. Speaker, if it is a point of order, is: are you in a position to give us your decision on that bill today?

May I say that the reason I rise today and ask for your decision is that if it is not favourable to the bill proceeding it would allow me tomorrow to place a resolution on the order paper that may be in order which could be debated Tuesday if we are hereto proceed with the matter further. So I ask you to accommodate me if you will to let me have your decision today, if at all possible, on whether or not the Senior Citizen's Bill was in order?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I appreciate the member's predicament and I have started looking into the matter and done some reading on it. I cannot promise the member a decision before tomorrow on the matter. I am just not able to do that at this time.

**MR. MALONE:** — Tomorrow will be satisfactory, Mr. Speaker. Will you be in a position tomorrow to give a decision?

**MR. SPEAKER** — I think I will do my best to get a decision to the member tomorrow.

#### **COMMITTEE OF FINANCE - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL - VOTE 10 (CONT'D)**

**Mr. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition):** — I am not sure whether the Premier concluded his remarks the other evening or whether he wants an opportunity to go back at them. If not, I would like to say a few words about the remarks that he did make and I must confess that I would have preferred to have made my remarks on Tuesday night rather than now. Nevertheless, if the Premier is not wanting to get back in I would like to proceed and if he would give me some indication, fine, I'll proceed.

I'd like to say that the Premier, I think, was somewhat surprised at the approach that we took on his Estimates and I think that he made some statements that he would probably want to reconsider if he had found some time to prepare for the remarks he was going to make.

I would like to just deal with some of the remarks that he made before getting into specific questions on some of the matters that I raised in my opening remarks, last Tuesday.

In reply, the Premier dwelt at length about why he wasn't involved as Premier on some of the issues of the day and why he was not making statements on various issues that I raised, whether it was unemployment, or resource taxation, or the Chester case or whatever. He referred to what he called ministerial responsibility and he pointed out that he believed that the role of his government was to have ministers responsible for the various departments, responsible for the various issues that arise in those departments. And I can see that that is an appropriate approach and it is the proper approach — notwithstanding that the Premier himself is responsible, in the broad sense, for all the departments of government.

But if that is the approach that the Premier wants his government (when I say his government I mean his Cabinet) to follow, let me suggest to him that you are not following it very well. Let me give you some specific examples where you don't let your ministers respond, either because of a lack of faith in their abilities or for whatever reason.

I point out to you the recent questioning by all members in connection with a certain lawsuit commenced by SGIO affecting one of the members of this House. On numerous occasions, we tried to ask the Minister in charge of SGIO for particulars of that lawsuit. Questions that were in order. Who always answered those questions? The Minister in charge of SGIO? The Premier? No. The Attorney General rose. What the Attorney General has to do with SGIO, I really don't know. The Attorney General's department was not involved in that lawsuit; time and time again the Premier and the Attorney General made that abundantly clear. It was all a matter for SGIO, all a matter for their Board of Directors, all a matter for their independent counsel. If that is the case, in a Cabinet with ministerial responsibility, why was the Minister in charge of SGIO not permitted to answer those questions?

Let's keep going. We raised a number of questions to the Minister in charge of Telephones about the hook-up of converters to facilitate CPN Cable TV service. Time and again we directed questions to the Minister of Telephones. Was he allowed to answer? Did the Premier answer on behalf of the government? No. Suddenly the Attorney General once again, became involved. The Attorney General has nothing to do with the Telephone portfolio; he didn't know the answers and indeed on several occasions, on several occasions, both ministers rose, the Minister of Telephones and the Attorney General. And who sat down? Not the Attorney General, but the Minister in charge of Sask Tel.

Again, Pelly by-election. That is the ministerial responsibility of the Premier, when we questioned the actions of the Chief Electoral Officer. And again, for many, many days we were seeking to gain information about the Chief Electoral Officer and her approach to the problems that were raised in that by-election. Who should answer those questions? I suspect, I know, the person who should be answering those questions is the minister directly involved — the Premier. Who answered the questions? Oh, it wasn't the Premier. He wouldn't get his fingers dirty by talking about something like the Pelly by-election. No, it was the Attorney General —once again and the Premier wonders why, from time to time, we get annoyed with him getting out of these issues and we get annoyed when it seems there is only one person in that Cabinet whom we can direct

questions to, on issues that are a little messy, on issues that really are not lily white. It is always the Attorney General.

Ministerial responsibility indeed. Ministerial responsibility — one minister, the Attorney General of Saskatchewan.

The Premier went on to talk about teamwork. He said as Premier that he was captain of the team and presumably the other players on that team would be taking their responsibility for the issues of the day.

Well, some of the team members on your side are not very happy, Mr. Premier. One of the team members, the member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange), quite publicly (indeed in your own party's publication, *The Commonwealth*), stated his dissatisfaction with the team that he belonged to. He indicated that he was not listened to in caucus. He was quite candid. He said he wanted to be in the Cabinet but he was not going to be allowed in the Cabinet. For those two reasons he has abandoned the team. He has jumped off and he has gone somewhere else.

But there are other things when you talk about teamwork. Your Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) comes in here and delivers a Budget, a Budget that he was very proud of. He got up and he said that there is going to be certain things that will be done and certain things that will not be done. He got up and said, we are going to spend \$40 million on the uranium industry in Saskatchewan. It is in writing in the Budget; it was not an aside. It is in writing in that Budget.

Under questioning, he again says, we are going to spend \$40 million on uranium development. We then turned to the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Messer) and we asked for some particulars as to how that \$40 million is going to be spent on uranium development.

That minister got up as if he were surprised. What do you mean 'uranium development', he says, the Bayda inquiry is still there. We are not spending anything on uranium development. That \$40 million is going to be spent in other ways, by SMDC.

What nonsense! We all know it is going to be spent on uranium development, notwithstanding what Bayda reports. Some teamwork!

Another thing in the Budget: — The Minister of Finance gets up and he says, that I guarantee, as Minister of Finance, that the Sask Tel, the SPC rate increases, will be no more than 8 per cent, right across the board. No more than 8 per cent. Within a matter of days, I think two or three days later, the Minister in charge of Sask Tel (Mr. Byers) gets up in the House and announces an across the board increase of 8.2 per cent, a small amount above 8 per cent, I concede, but nevertheless a direct contradiction to what his own Minister of Finance just said a few days before that in the Budget.

What teamwork is there, Mr. Premier? You were put in the embarrassing position of having to rise a day or so later and bail the both of them out. I would suspect that some of these decisions must be made in Cabinet. Were the two ministers not in Cabinet on the same day when this decision was arrived at? Teamwork indeed!

Let's turn to another matter the Premier dealt with. He talked about the administration of criminal justice in Saskatchewan and he said how proud he was of the Attorney General and what a great job he was doing with the administration of justice in this

May 25, 1978

province. Well let me suggest to the Premier, are you proud of that job when you consider that in Regina we have the highest crime rate of any city in Canada? It is higher than in Montreal, higher than in Toronto and higher than in Vancouver. I suggest to you that that is the commentary on the administration of criminal justice in this province.

Are you proud that the legal aid workers are out on strike at this very moment? That affects the criminal justice system in this province and I suggest is a fair commentary on it as well.

Look at the prosecution staff of the Attorney General's department. Look how many have left over the past few months. These people were obviously dissatisfied with the administration of criminal justice in Saskatchewan.

Look at the court system and I give the Attorney General credit for the court system. He tried to open up that particular nest that was there by appointing new magistrates and by paying them a decent salary but again in the two cities of Regina and Saskatoon those courts are clogged with criminal cases. Serious criminal cases where judges have all of about 30 seconds to determine sentencing, to determine probation or suspended sentence, things they must do under those suspended sentences. You ask any magistrate in the city of Regina whether they are happy with the administration of criminal justice in this province.

Look at the prisons. I know that's not the Attorney General's portfolio, it's the Minister of Social Services' but that is part of the criminal justice system. How many riots have we had in the past few years, Mr. Premier? Sure, we haven't had one for a few months. I suppose we should consider ourselves very pleased about the situation but those prisons remain the same festering sores now that they were five, six years ago.

We could keep going on about the general administration of law. How many provinces of Canada are involved in constitutional confrontations with the federal government? Yours is, the Attorney General is your chief law advisor. But you are involved in constitutional confrontations on cable TV, on the potash regulations, on oil taxation. You have got the Cable Commission sitting now where your government, where the Attorney General was made to look like a fool yesterday by Mr. Justice Bence. Every province that went in behind the province of Quebec was made to look silly and idiotic. If you watched the news last night you would know of what I speak. The Chester case. What kind of administration of justice in this province is it that puts the whole force and power of government to persecute one man? I wouldn't be very proud of the Attorney General. I wouldn't be very proud of the enforcement of criminal justice in this province when you consider those things.

Let's turn to a couple of other issues. You talked about resource taxation. You said how proud you were of your record on resource taxation and you said that the Liberals would have bungled it; they wouldn't have got as much money as your government has. Well, let me just say a couple of things, Mr. Premier. If the Liberal government had been in power in 1973 I can dare guarantee you a few things. First of all we would have passed laws that would have stood up in the courts. We would have passed laws that wouldn't be subject to challenge by the multinational corporations and if we were challenged we would win those cases. Not like your government. Bill 42 struck down. Bill 47 in my view will be challenged somewhere along the way. Potash legislation, three separate cases right now challenging the reserve tax. What kind of legislation is that? Let me say as well, that if we had been the government in 1973 and if we had collected money from the resource industry, we would still have the money. We would

have it in Saskatchewan either in governmental programs or in reduction of taxes. Our government wouldn't have paid \$500 million to \$700 million to the multinational potash corporations. Money that left this province never to come back, never to be returned. What you have said to the people of Saskatchewan is, we are giving away \$700 million of your money either directly or through loans to the multinational potash corporations. You who are supposed to detest these people so much.

One of the other things we would have done if we had been the government after 1973 is we would have a healthy resource industry. We would have jobs being created in the oil industry and the potash industry and all the other industries. We wouldn't have to go down to eastern Canada and mouth the foolish slogans, 'jobs today, energy tomorrow'. It should have been jobs today and energy today and more jobs today, if you had been handling the affairs of this province in a meaningful way.

Now, let's go to another thing. The Premier talks about strikes and the labour situation, labour-management situation. He didn't talk about the issue. He didn't talk about what the government was going to do to try and get these disruptions ended once and for all. He didn't say what he was going to do if there is going to be a strike in the hospital sector. What he did, was he attacked the Liberal Party for having the bells rung in this Assembly, when the milk strike was being settled.

Let me tell you one thing, is that if we can bring about a settlement of just one of the current labour-management disputes going on right now by ringing the bells of this Assembly we would do so. We would ring those bells by the hour if we thought that would result in those disputes being settled.

Those are just some of the things that the Premier raised; there are others which I will get to in due course. But what I want to turn to now are the actions of this government in spending the taxpayers' money on Crown corporation advertising.

I want to say to the Premier that I have not forgotten about your remarks on national unity, some which were well taken, some which I believe were not and we will turn to that particular subject matter at a later time, hopefully today.

I believe we can easily put together The Election Act that you have proposed to this Legislature and the government's Crown corporation advertising practice. The Attorney General made it all very clear yesterday when in a fit of heat he got up at 4:55 o'clock and let it all hang out. It became very clear that what your government is interested in, is not controlling expenditures during the election period - something we agree with, something that, I believe, we voted for when the bill first came up. What you are interested in is controlling the day to day operations of political parties, not during the election period, but periods of time other than that time.

What the Attorney General got up and said is that we are going to restrict you to \$50,000 a year. Then he threw us a crumb, another \$25,000. I don't know, Mr. Premier, when any political party in this province, be it the one that sits to my left. Or yours, or my own party, has ever spent that amount of money in a non-election year. But what I say to you is that if we have that money, if we can raise that money we would spend it in an attempt to overcome the political propaganda that you put out over the airways on your Crown corporation advertising and other advertising. Why is it, that you as a government can sit back and say that we can spend limitless amounts of money from the public treasury to hammer across our political philosophy of a publicly-owned Potash Corporation and publicly-owned Saskoil, but the opposition

parties are going to be restricted in the amounts that they can spend? How can that possibly be justified?

Another thing became very clear in the Attorney General's blast at us the other day, too. If he wants to know how much money the Liberal Party has, how much money the Conservative Party has, he already knows, presumably, how much your party has. I say to you, what business is it of yours? Why should you be prying into the internal affairs of any opposition party? Indeed, I say to you, it is entirely appropriate to have disclosure rules, to have spending limit rules, but what the assets of the Liberal Party is is none of your business, just as it is none of my business what the assets of the NDP are.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They are published every year.

**MR. MALONE:** — That is fine. If you make that decision fine and dandy, but don't have the other parties be forced into the position of acting in your way because you determine that is the appropriate way.

So it has become very clear, Mr. Premier, that you are not interested in spending restrictions during an election period. What you are seeking to do, through the amendments to The Elections Act, is to control opposition parties in non-election years and to snoop and to pry into our own internal affairs. I suggest to you that that is not an appropriate way for government to be acting.

Let me conclude, then, by asking you a question. It is a question that we have been asking for months in this Legislature. It is a question which we put on the order paper on which date you refused to answer. It is a question that I warned you we would be asking when I spoke last Tuesday; it is a question we warned the Attorney General, yesterday, we would be asking today.

Very simply, Mr. Premier, how much money has your government spent on the advertising program known as the Family of Crown Corporations?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I think we need to get something sorted out at the outset here and that is what Estimates are under discussion. The Estimates that are under discussion are those of the Executive Council. I can tell the hon. Member that no funds from the Executive Council for this year's vote, last year's vote or any other vote of the Executive Council of which I am aware has contained any expenditures for the advertising program to which he referred. I want to get this sorted out. I am not here to answer every question about the government of Saskatchewan that the hon. member is going to ask. If he feels that I am here to answer questions which are more appropriate, indeed, only appropriately asked somewhere else, then we are going to have to sort that one out. I am simply not going to accept as the rule of this Committee that the first minister is bound to answer all manner of detailed questions about the expenditure made by Crown corporations, not even an executive arm of the government. We may as well sort that out now. I tell the hon. member that I am not going to answer that question because it has nothing to do with the items under discussion.

**MR. MALONE:** — You are not going to answer the question because you are afraid to answer the question. You are afraid for this information to come out.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MALONE:** — We ask this question day after day in this Assembly and we keep getting stonewalled by you people. You are the Premier of this government; you are the head of the government; you are the first minister of this government. Your ministers refuse to answer the question and now you are saying you are refusing to answer the question.

Let me refer you to one item in your Estimates, Mr. Premier, item 1, administration; Premier, Other Members of Council. I suspect that that is the Cabinet. I suspect that from time to time the Premier and the Cabinet have little meetings and they are called Cabinet meetings. At those meetings they discuss government policy. You are in charge of those meetings and you are saying to me that you are not prepared to come into this House and as Premier of Saskatchewan answer questions about government policy?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I am prepared to answer questions about government policy. I am not prepared to give figures on the expenditure of every agency of the government of Saskatchewan. It will be known that the Power Corporation spent some money on this program. No member of the Liberal caucus in the consideration of the annual report of the Power Corporation in the Crown Corporations Committee asked any question. . . .

Mr. Chairman. I will let the member for Kindersley get up and speak.

**MR. A.N. McMILLAN (Kindersley):** — I would like to ask the Premier if he can tell me how we were supposed to get figures about Crown corporation advertising out of SPC when they weren't advertising in the year under review?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — First, he didn't ask the question . . .

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Yes we asked the question!

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I have to (inaudible) myself on two things. One, that that question was not asked and, two that there were expenditures in the calendar year 1977 which was the year under review. Those are cold, hard facts. Because the hon. members did not do their homework in Crown Corporations Committee and in corporation after corporation did not ask those questions, not even in Government Finance Office, which to their knowledge is the umbrella corporation for many of the others, they now wish to ask me questions about whether it is \$243,000 or \$118,000 or \$41,000. I just want to settle down here and say it is not the function of the Premier to give detailed answers to expenditures in all of the many, many agencies of government. You can ask me this; you can ask me how much was spent on stationery by the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission. I am not going to tell you that because I would have to have all of those benches filled with officials. We have already sorted this out, that the minister who is here should have his officials and not officials from other agencies. And you made a point of that saying that we weren't to have officials from all other agencies. If you expect my Deputy Minister to know how much the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service spent on advertising in the Winnipeg Free Press, you are asking a little much. I don't know it, I'm not supposed to know it and it has not been the function heretofore and it has not been the custom of this committee. The information requested has been ordered. It will be produced in due course. But I tell you I am not going to answer detailed questions with respect to the expenditure of 50 or 100 agencies of

May 25, 1978

government because clearly if you get an answer to this one you are entitled to the one I suggested, of how much money the Fur Marketing Service spent in the calendar year 1955, or 1965 or 1975 in the Winnipeg Free Press. I don't have that information. No way I could have it and it is not reasonable nor in accordance with the custom of this committee for me to provide it.

Now I will answer the question he asked about the policy of the government. With respect to the policy of the government on the advertisement of the Family of Crown Corporations, it is the policy of the government to advertise institutionally for the institutional advertising of Crown corporations in the same way that other corporations advertise institutionally..that CN advertises, or CP advertises, or IMC advertises. It is our policy, you may feel it is a wrong policy, but it is certainly a policy of our government to try to convince prospective customers, prospective employees, prospective people who will do business with our corporations, that our corporations are good corporations, who are good corporate citizens and in the same way, as I say, that CP and CN advertise in a way to create the impression that they contribute to this country in the same way that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation advertises to create the correct impression that they contribute to this province.

The hon. members may dispute that policy. It is our policy and if we wish to discuss this policy (which policy I may say I have discussed from time to time with my Cabinet colleagues) . . . But with respect to the amounts of money I recall no discussions with my Cabinet colleagues on the details, whether it is \$50,000 or \$23,000 and I cannot tell you what each corporation spent because I do not feel it is my function so to do.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Chairman, I would like to tell our small-minded, badly misinformed friend a couple of things. We went after that information in Crown corporations for the percentage of money that was spent on the Crown Corporations Family of Crown Corporations advertising and I am not surprised that you don't know exactly what was asked in Crown Corporations Committee and that's one of the beefs we've got to bring here to you today. We asked your ministers. In some cases we were given estimates of the amount of money that was spent in the year under review. We, on those cases, perused that with the minister to try and find out how much they had intended to spend this year. You know what the answer was? It was, that's not our responsibility, it is not in the year under review. So we determined we had better ask somebody who had responsibility for that advertising program. You know what conclusion we came to (and probably mistakenly so) and that's that you as the first minister of this province had the responsibility. And we came here to ask you and you've told us you don't have the guts to answer us.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We are going to sort this one out. Now my question was very pointed and my answer was clear. The Saskatchewan Power Corporation..I say you did not ask that question..I have a minister here who will assert that you did not ask that question.

I have perused the minutes . . .

**MR. McMILLAN:** — . . . (inaudible) . . . call . . . a liar.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I know that some of the members are new, but I cannot believe that if they asked a question and did not get an answer, they would not have moved a motion to get that information. That is a standard diaper league, diaper



league tactics in order to get answers. I did it all the time and if you will tell me that you moved a motion to get the information on how much the Saskatchewan Power Corporation spent on the advertising program. The Family of Crown Corporations, and it did not come out or get recorded in the minutes, we had better discuss what happened to those minutes of the Saskatchewan Crown Corporations. (Inaudible interjection) My bet is, my bet is that no such motion was moved.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You want to find out?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** - Yup, and I . . .

**MR. McMILLAN:** — I tried to point out that we have asked on several occasions and in motion form for the ability to ask ministers questions about Crown corporations business up to date. We have been refused that and that is the only way that we can get the information we want about Crown corporation advertising. We have asked ministers of the Crown corporations and . . . (Order! order!.) we have asked for verbatim records and that might clear the Attorney General . . . (Inaudible interjections and noise)

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order, order. Could I have a little order? I wonder if. . . I am having a little trouble figuring out what is going on. That is nothing new for me I know, but I wonder if we could have a little order. Did you have a question?

**MR. McMILLAN:** — A fine time, Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible interjections). I would like to say to you, Mr. Premier, we have asked firstly for verbatim records of the Crown corporations so that we might be able to better explain to you, in your continual absence from this House, what exactly goes on in Crown corporations. We have been refused. We have asked for the ability in Crown corporations to ask questions up-to-date and been refused by your members on the Crown Corporations Committee. Our question to you was, how much have you spent to date on Crown Corporations Committee and how much do you intend to spend in the future. You refused to answer that as did your ministers in Crown Corporations Committee. Now, I don't know how you expect us to get that little piece of information in Crown Corporations, when in some instances your Crown corporations that are advertised in the Family of Crown Corporations . . . year end was March 31, 1977 and in fact, one full fiscal year has taken place since we were allowed to ask questions. Now you explain to me how we are supposed to get that information there. The public of Saskatchewan wants to know what your government is spending on the Family of Crown Corporations. The only person left for us to ask is the Minister responsible for the government and you refused an answer.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, it is not my function to advise the hon. member how to get information in this House but may I just make a couple of observations.

Firstly, (inaudible interjections) . . . firstly, the member for Kindersley made a great many statements at a very high decibel count, but the one statement he didn't make is that he ever moved in Crown Corporations Committee, that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation give the information on how much money they had spent on the Family of Crown Corporations. I am advised by the minister. I know that, because I perused the minutes. (Inaudible interjections) The minister advises, the minister advises that it was not asked verbally. I obviously cannot vouch for that but I did peruse the minutes. So we now have established that with respect to Saskatchewan Power Corporation in the Crown Corporations Committee, it was not moved formally and at least in the opinion

of the minister, it was not asked informally. But the . . . (inaudible interjections) the member obviously does not know, but there were expenditures under that program in the calendar year 1977 and these were in the year that which was reviewed by these corporations, but may I also point out, and I want to establish, that much of that money was spent by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, for example, or the Government Finance Office and there are certainly subvotes coming up for all of those, aren't there? Certainly the Government Finance Office, there is a subvote there. The Saskatchewan Power Corporation, you already let one go under the Estimates, number 52, Saskatchewan Power Corporation, you asked what you want to know about them. As I say you are not likely to ask that question about the Power Corporation when the minister is here with his officials. You rather want to ask that of the Premier on the grounds that the Premier . . .

**MR. McMILLAN:** — . . . explain what do you . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Look, what are you going to explain? If you're asking — I take the Power Corporation — if you are asking about past expenditures, you had an opportunity to do it in the Crown Corporations Committee and you did not do it. If you are asking about future expenditures, you had an opportunity to do it under item 52 of the Estimates, and you did not do it. You want to ask these questions of me because you believe that I will not have all of these details at my command and I will not have the officials to answer for you. And you are right. I do not have all those details at my command and I do not have the officials of the Power Corporation. If you ask of the Power Corporation you will ask of all the others and I don't have the Telephone people here and I don't have the Insurance people here, nor should I, nor should I. I have pointed out where you can get this information, past and future and it is not any of it ever under the Executive Council vote. Accordingly I do not see under what principle of the operation of this House you can ask the first minister under his vote detailed questions about the expenditure of Crown corporations. If that is true at Westminster I will eat my hat. If that is true at Ottawa I will eat my hat. If that is true in any Legislature in Canada I will eat my hat. I say to you that the hon. members opposite can show no example. Mind you, the Estimates in Ottawa are published, they are all printed, if you can find one example of the first minister being asked the expenditures of the CNR under the first minister's vote or any other federal Crown corporation. I want to see it. Because I say that is not our practice; I say that that will make a mockery of all the other Estimates because clearly I would have to have all the deputies here and all the general managers of Crown corporations, clearly. If you want to debate the policy, I am happy to debate the policy. If you want to know why we are expending money on this general program, I am happy to debate it. If you want to know how much money was spent by the Fur Marketing Service or any other Crown corporation in this advertising program or on want ads in the Kindersley Clarion, I cannot tell you nor should I be able to tell you.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Chairman . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — The member for Nipawin.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of Conservative Opposition):** — Mr. Chairman, I noticed the members . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order! The member for Nipawin has the floor and I ask you to sit down.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am surprised that the members to my

right weren't here in question period last spring when the answer to a question posed by us was that the cost of the advertising for that Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations was in total a million dollars of which \$400,000 was applicable to Sask Power. If you want to read Hansard, members to my right, instead of putting us through 20 minutes of questioning on this, you might read last spring's Hansard and you will get the answer.

My question to the Premier is simply this, in terms of his Estimates, how many of the people whom you are paying in your Estimates are directors of Crown corporations; which ones are they and would you give us their names?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will need to do a little bit of recapping on that. The Premier is not a member of a board of any Crown corporations. The other members of council, I believe, all of the others are on one or other board of the Crown corporations. I am not sure about Mr. Robinson.

**MR. COLLVER:** — I am not talking about the elected members. I am talking about your paid staff.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Bolstad, who is the deputy minister, is a member of the board of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and Mr. Lloyd, who is the chief planning officer of the government is on the board of Saskoil, Sask Power and SMDC, Sask Mining Development Corporation, Saskatchewan Power Corporation and Saskoil.

We have recently taken on staff, in the last three weeks, a man by the name of Mr. Douglas MacArthur, who used to be the deputy minister of Agriculture. Mr. MacArthur is a member of the board of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Mr. Bob Weese, who is heading the federal/provincial relation section in Planning and Research, is on the board of Sask Power, the Computer Corporation. I think that does it.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Chairman, we were informed that on two occasions, but especially with SGIO questioning during Crown Corporations, there were two members of the board of directors of SGIO that were paid officials of the government of Saskatchewan, one of whom was a member of the Government Finance Office, one of whom was a member of the Executive Council Office, or the Premier's office. We were also informed, during the course of that questioning, that there was a member of the board of every Crown corporation in Saskatchewan from the Government Finance Office and from the Premier's office. Are you telling me that there are other people . . . Well, the chairman was at that meeting at which time this information was presented. It was under Sask Power, I am sorry, not SGIO. Under Sask Power and we were informed that that was the fact, that there was at least one, and most of the time two, paid members of the government of Saskatchewan, in other words staff, if you want, who are members of the board of the various Crown corporations, one of whom was from the Government Finance Office, one of whom was from the Premier's office or the Executive Council. That is what was said; that is what was stated to us.

My question to you is, if that is not true please advise us in this Assembly. If that is true, is there some other way that your office pays employees besides under Executive Council?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The answer is, no. That information is not accurate. There are people from the Government Finance Office - first, the secretary, I believe, of each

board of directors is an employee of the Government Finance Office and I think on all or almost all, all of the major and, perhaps, all of the other corporations, there is somebody from the Government Finance Office, perhaps not from the Municipal Financing Corporation, just the major ones. Not from the Municipal Financing Corporation and some like that. And in some there will be people from my office. I speak of Mr. Bolstad, who happens to be on one and Mr. Lloyd on Power and Oil and SMDC and Mr. Lloyd is a key advisor to the government on matters particularly of energy and resources, as will be known, and he sits on those three boards.

There are a couple of people in the government finance office whose primary function is to serve on boards.. (Interjection - inaudible).. Yes, I am getting a little out of my field. They are not here, but I do not want to get hung up. They are a man by the name of Peter Kilburn and a man named John Sadler. I do not know their qualifications off hand but I can sure find that out easily.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Well, Mr. Premier, out of your Estimates then, are you telling us that only four of your employees directly — and I assume that you consider all of the employees of all of the departments your employees, I am sure, as the head of your government — but under your employees, are you saying that none of them, other than these four, sit on any boards of directors of the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan? Only the four you have given me?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes, I think that to be right. I cannot think of any other. I will just check that out. Certainly there is nobody who sits on any prominent board and there is nobody under the legislation vote. I think that to be right. I qualify that now, excluding Cabinet ministers.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Excluding Cabinet ministers. There is no one under the vote for legislative council either?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — No.

**MR. COLLVER:** — You have checked both the Executive Council and Legislation, and there are none of your employees other than these four?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** - Right.

**MR. COLLVER:** — O.K. My question to you, Mr. Premier, is, could you explain why it is your government's practice then, at the very least, to have on the major Crown corporations and on all of the Crown corporations, a member of the board who is paid by the government of Saskatchewan? For example, the secretary of every board is a voting member of the board.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** - No.

**MR. COLLVER:** — You are saying the secretary to the board is not a voting member of the board?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — That is right.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Our information during the investigation of Sask Power was that two paid officials of the government of Saskatchewan were members of that board. Is that incorrect, because that is what we were told.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — That is certainly true. That is Roy Lloyd and Doug MacArthur. Neither of them is a secretary. Both of them are paid indeed out of this vote, Executive Council, and both are on the board of the power corporation. You are right.

**MR. COLLVER:** — What member of GFO is also on the board of the power corporation?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — John Sadler. Let me see this board here. I have got the Power Corporation Board. Roy Lloyd, Arlene Hynd, who is the Deputy Minister of Consumer Affairs . . . I have mislead the House, the committee, because Fred Hodgkinson, the Assistant Cabinet Secretary at Saskatoon, is on the power board still.

So that was wrong. So we have got Lloyd, Hynd, Hodgkinson, MacArthur and Sadler, five paid officials on the Power Corporation Board.

**MR. COLLVER:** — How many Cabinet ministers are in the Power Corporation Board?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Two, Messer and Snyder.

**MR. COLLVER:** — How many members of the board are there altogether in Sask Power?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — 13, seven and six.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Do they control it?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes, they control it. They would anyway I may say, but they control it.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Well, Mr. Premier, you can see our concern in so far as the Sask Power Board was concerned. Certainly you have brought new life to what we knew already. We thought that there was one member of GFO and one member of the Executive Council on Sask Power Board, now we find that there are five paid officials of the Government of Saskatchewan, plus two Cabinet Ministers sitting on the supposed independent board of the largest and most powerful Crown corporation in the province of Saskatchewan. I don't want to take you through every other Crown corporation in the province of Saskatchewan but. Mr. Premier, today you now found Mr. Hodgkinson. How many of the Crown corporations do you control through, by you I mean the Executive Council, your paid officials and/or Cabinet staff?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I would have to work that out. I don't know whether there are any others who would fall into the category of the Power Corporation. I look at Insurance Office and it has two Cabinet Ministers and one official out of eleven, so that's a smaller number. I don't want to disabuse hon. members but I wonder whether or not the number of members on the board really determines whether or not the board is controlled. The Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service has three of its people out of five, either Cabinet Ministers or officials. Forest Products Corporation has six to four, six non-government and four government and so on. I think that it would be fair to say that the government exercises a considerable influence on the boards of most of the Crown corporations. That would be fair. I think that only on a couple, say the Fur Marketing Service and Power would we likely have a majority and the majority in Power is a little accidental since two of them, I believe, were appointed to the board before they became employed with the government or during a period when they weren't employed with the government, let's put it that way, and subsequently became employed and they were not removed from the board.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Well, Mr. Premier, do you consider that the Crown corporations because of this additional influence that you say and considerable influence that the government exercises on Crown corporations, do you consider them capable in any way of acting independently of the policy of your Cabinet?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I believe that they are quite capable of acting independently in administrative matters and indeed they do. They are quite capable of acting independently on matters of relatively minor policy. No Cabinet has a policy on everything and even if we have a policy there is no necessary reason for believing that, let say. Mr. Peter Kilburn is totally familiar with the policy. But with respect to any broad question of government policy I think the corporations will certainly try to follow government policy. That is really why in this province we have had ministers as chairman. I think an excellent case can be made for the policy we have followed herein our government and in the government which preceded us and an excellent case can be made for the reverse. Certainly, I suppose, anybody who has attempted to organize the government has wondered which way they should go. We have tended to stick with the traditional. I have often wondered whether we wouldn't be well advised to have a non-ministerial chairman, which we have had at times in the past. I have been a secretary of a board of a government airways, fur marketing services and forest products when the chairman was not a minister.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, certainly the Premier has stated, I think, rather succinctly that there is no way that the Crown corporations can, because of the fact that the minister sits as chairman and in the case of certainly Sask Power, as the biggest and most influential of the Saskatchewan Crown corporations, the majority of the board are actually either Cabinet Ministers or directly paid officials of your government. The fact is, Mr. Premier, that in other jurisdictions, such as the government of Canada and the government of Ontario as an example, they do not choose to place active politicians, nor paid officials of the government on the boards of Crown corporations. They have a very good reason for that. The reason is that they believe that it is better for Crown corporations to act just like that, as a corporation, not as a tool of the party in power; not as a tool of the political machinery of the party in power but as a corporation that is in fact owned by the people of the province or the country in which they serve, and appears to do that. Now certainly the Premier will agree, as he has already certainly in part, that these Crown corporations do not act independent of government policy; certainly not in the wide spectrum of policy. Administration — no board of directors of any major corporation anywhere makes administrative decisions at any rate. So for the Premier to suggest that that is a big deal, that Sask Power makes its own administrative decisions, is absolute nonsense. Because the board of directors doesn't sit down and work out administrative decisions at any rate. Their job, their function is to set policy for that corporation, to give direction to that corporation in the area of policy and to allow that corporation to appear to be and to act independently of politics.

Now, in the province of Saskatchewan that is not possible. In the province of Saskatchewan, your government, and in fact, the members to my right as well, chose to take the political course as it related to Crown corporations; they chose to place their own people on the board of those Crown corporations and the ministers on the boards, as chairman of the boards of those Crown corporations. What has happened as a result? Two things: 1. Crown corporations take up the vast majority of the conversation in this Legislature. Instead of being an independent vehicle, for example, to provide power, electricity, gas and other energy sources to the people of Saskatchewan at the lowest possible cost, instead of acting in that way Sask Power becomes in the minds of

many, in the minds mostly of the opposition . . . you heard the members to my right make quite a contribution in terms of the first half hour of the questioning of you as it related to the use of Crown corporations for political purposes. One example — any member of the opposition could give 1,000 examples of Crown corporations being used for political purposes. One example doesn't make a summer but 1,000 examples, example after example, of Crown corporations being used for political purposes that we hear about, we are informed of by our constituents — as I indeed believe many of your own backbenchers are informed of, as in fact you are informed of. Because I get copies of letters every day that are referred to you from constituents across the province of Saskatchewan, referring to the actions of a particular Crown corporation in the provision of power, or in the provision of telephones, or in the provision of a fur marketing service, or in the provision of any of the so-called services that these Crown corporations are providing — that they are political in nature.

Now, I suggest to you, Mr. Premier that perhaps in doing our political thing in this Assembly, that kind of focus takes place and sometimes we lose sight of the benefits to be derived from some of the Crown corporations. Certainly the benefit of Sask Power, I think, is well known and the benefits achieved by the people of Saskatchewan in the SGIO, Sask Tel are well known. But they not only are not looked upon by the people as being independent of political action; they don't appear to be independent of political action because of your conscious decision to place on those boards your Cabinet ministers and paid officials of your government.

In our judgment it is important that these Crown corporations that are providing the service appear to the people to be free of political ties. They are not and the people don't believe them to be free of political ties.

Now the second point that I would like to make about this dominance and over- domination on the board of directors of the Crown corporations, by your Cabinet ministers and by paid officials of your government, is this. In something like Sask Power, for the provision of power to the people (and I don't mean that in the figurative sense but in the literal sense), surely you would want to have the most independent possible agency looking after that. Surely you would want to have that free from the kinds of political pressures that are put on every member of this Legislature by their local constituents over, for example, power rates . . . power rates, dramatic increases in prices . . . utilized in the minds of some, in the minds of the opposition. Surely if you were sitting on this side you would look at it in the same way. If you have a profit in Sask Power, as an example, and you are contributing that so-called profit into general tax revenues, that you are using the rates that you are setting for Sask Power as a means of financing your political objectives. Surely you can see that that question would be asked. But if that board was independent of your Cabinet, was independent of your direct political influence by having officials of your government as voting members of that board, surely that kind of decision wouldn't be made, because those people are not subject to those kinds of political pressures that exist and are exerted on every member of this Legislature.

Now I suggest to you, Mr. Premier, that it is time now for a change in this policy. You, yourself have said, I have been thinking for some time that maybe we should go this other way. I am suggesting to you that perhaps you should think very seriously of it instead of flowing wishy-washy on it and say it is time we moved in the other direction. It's time we allowed Crown corporations to perform the functions that this Legislature votes them to do.

If, for some reason, that particular board that you have appointed from around the province of independent citizens, independent of the political spectrum and independent of your direct payment, your direct influence, such as members of your own paid staff, if those people were allowed to act independently and for some reason a decision was made that was contrary to government policy in the broadest spectrum, you still have the option to remove those people and replace them with another board. That, after all, is what the representatives and the shareholders should be doing. The shareholders of a corporation, if you are in fact going to consider it to be a corporation, the shareholders of a corporation should be able to institute policy for that corporation through their elected directors but once elected those directors are there to implement policy until such time as they are removed. As long as they are implementing the policy and acting the best interests of the shareholders, in other words the people of the province, you, the government, the representatives of the people, the representatives of the shareholders, should not act in any influential way on that board at all. You should not try to direct that board at all. You shouldn't try to influence that board. And when you deem that it is not acting in the best direction then you can always remove the board and go to another board and give reasons for it to the Legislature.

We are concerned, Mr. Premier, that the use of Crown corporations in the province of Saskatchewan and in fact, quite frankly, coupled with your new Heritage Fund, in the same way that we believe that the control of the Heritage Fund and the vast sums of money being accumulated by it in Alberta, are going to circumvent the cause of the free society and the cause of a free people, are going to be able to be used to politicize and queerize opinion so that vast areas of our people in the province of Saskatchewan — their ideas will not be considered, they will be thwarted — because of the use of these Crown corporations and because of the use of the power in them. We consider that to be a serious and direct threat to freedom. By a very small measure you could give these Crown corporations a little more latitude to act in accordance with the policies of this Legislature and still retain the ultimate control on behalf of the shareholders, if you want, of these corporations through this Legislature and the elected representatives of the shareholders.

We suggest to you, Mr. Premier, that you give this active and emergent thought because of the many, many letters that I know you are getting and I know that I am getting and that every member of this Legislature is getting on behalf of the Crown corporations that appear to be politicized and the people who consider them to be merely a political link to the government.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I think the hon. member is overly pessimistic. Crown corporations are not something new. The Telephone Corporation has been a public corporation, or a publicly-owned operation in this province for 70 years. For 40 of those years it was operated as a direct government department and was, in the highest degree, politicized, if I may use the hon. member's term.

For the other 30 years it was a corporation and was, therefore, somewhat divorced from government, but not totally divorced from government as the hon. member has indicated.

The Saskatchewan Power Corporation for 18 years, or 15 or 16 years of its existence, was a direct government agency, the Saskatchewan Power Commission and thereafter it was a corporation and was, therefore, set at least at a distance from the government. I don't think that over those many years, the 70 years of the existence of the Telephone



Corporation, there has been any excessive evidence that it has been politicized in a way which either meant that it was eroding personal freedoms, or being used as a way of advancing any particular point of view. But I think that is true of Sask Power, of SGIO. I think we need to draw this distinction. It is not possible, if the corporations are to do their job, that they not be responsive to government policy. I would be distressed if I thought Air Canada was conducting its affairs not in accordance with government policy.

If there is any point in having a publicly-owned air carrier it is to have it act in accordance with federal government policy. I don't put the pejorative term of political, and it was used in a pejorative sense, on all indications of government policy.

I look at the experience what they are having in Ottawa now and I think there is a feeling by the members of Parliament that Eldorado Nuclear, for example, is too distant from Parliament. And that it is making decisions which Parliament and elected officials ought to have more voice in, not less and that it is the day to day operations of Eldorado are committing Canada to particular positions which the elected officials should know more about.

I don't have any strong position on this. When I asked my colleagues, in Nova Scotia, how they are getting along with power rates there, they say, well power rates are going up and we are getting into lots of political trouble. And I say, surely the Nova Scotia Power Commission is independent and they say, well, it may be independent but the voters don't believe it is so. They blame us for what the Nova Scotia power Commission does.

That is some of the difficult facts of life and, indeed, in Ottawa it seems to me that the federal government is at least having to answer for some of the activities of Air Canada, at least they appointed a Royal Commission to examine into them and of Eldorado Nuclear and the Energy Control Board and some of the other corporations.

While acknowledging the need to isolate the corporations from undue political influence, and we think that the instances of that are not nearly as numerous as the hon. member for Nipawin would have us believe. It is also important that the corporations be responsible so that people feel that they are responsive to the views that are expressed by their elected officials. We only have to look at what happens if we set up an independent board and like the Wascana Centre Authority and we are immediately met in this House with being asked to ask questions about whether or not they are seizing vehicles because of leaky mufflers.

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — Now we can't ask this now.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — That's right and in the same way you would not be able to ask questions about the Power Corporation and Sask Tel if we set up these independent boards; certainly not questions about independent mufflers or leaky mufflers or the like. I think you want to ask yourselves whether or not you would want to isolate the corporations from the line of questioning on how much money is spent on this or that advertising medium, which we have been having lots of today, I think quite appropriate questions in the Crown Corporations Committee as it is structured. But it seems to me that if we went the route of the member for Nipawin, and there is much to be said for it, this Legislature would find itself spending a good deal less time on Crown corporations and thereby I think, having a good deal less influence, in many of these areas of public policy, which are of great interest to the persons who elect us. The activities of the

Power Corporation and the Gas Corporation and Sask Tel and the others and SGIO are of real interest to our electorate. I am not sure whether they would take kindly to being isolated from having a voice in the activities of those corporations. Because I would be able to say well, on broad policy, we tell them to make their income equal their outgo, but how much they charge to small businesses or how much they charge to industry, really that's not my concern because they are an independent board. I think I would have some trouble with that and I think I would have some trouble if I said well, they are going to make the decision of whether it is Poplar River or Nipawin. And tell them up at Nipawin, well, the board is deciding that and it is not a matter for the politicians. I don't think they would buy it up in Nipawin and I think they would be right because I think . . . (Inaudible interjection).. I think they would think that that's the sort of issue that ought to be taken by the Cabinet. And I think they'd be right and I therefore don't know whether you can appoint a board and say, you run the corporation and you maximize profits and you do this, but however, we are going to decide whether we build a dam at Nipawin or whether we build a thermal plant at Poplar River. Accordingly, I don't think it is all beer and skittles. I think that whatever we do, we will in some sense deprive the public. If we go your route, the member for Nipawin's route, we will deprive the public of a voice, an ongoing voice in the operations of these major parts of our corporate life in Saskatchewan. If we go our route, the route which has been followed since these corporations were set up, indeed since 1908, (but I say there hasn't been an independent board by his definition of independent boards since the telephone corporation was taken over in 1908), then we will have the situation where, you know, I don't think that freedom has been eroded since 1908. I don't think freedom has been eroded because these, in the member for Nipawin's terms, have always been political boards.

While I acknowledge some of the point he makes, I don't think I accept it totally. May I say in passing, that (and I don't want this to be other than a passing reference) on the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office, there are eleven directors and three of them are government's.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, the Premier wants to suggest that he is standing in a tub of water that is up over his head. The tub is at the top, well over his head. When he is standing in the tub and it has got six inches at the bottom of the tub, there is no problem with the water and there is no problem over who controls the water and that's true — that's true. Even when the water gets up to the waist, there is no problem with the water. It is a little harder to move around but there is no problem with it. But I say to the Premier of Saskatchewan today that when the water gets up over your nose, there's a problem. When the Crown corporations have such an insidious and invidious influence on the total life of the people of the province when we now have well over 100 Crown corporations actively pursuing, controlling and directing almost every aspect of everyone's day-to-day life in the province of Saskatchewan, that you do have a problem but you can't say that when the water was only six inches deep, we've run it this way and it's good enough for us to run it this way in the future, is in any possible way thinking seriously about the future of Saskatchewan. That is usurping the very responsibility that the Liberals are trying to pin on your shoulders today and I hope they are successful.

As soon as I sit down today, I hope the Liberals are 100 per cent successful in finally drawing to your attention the fact that the buck stops on your desk. You try all of the time to ignore it, to look all over the province for some possible way to avoid your responsibilities. If there are tough times, boy, I'm telling you. Premier Blakeney is in Vancouver; if there's a tough decision, he's in Nipawin; he is . . . but he sure as heck isn't

where anybody can get to him. And poor old Roy has got to take all the flak. Everybody attacks poor old Roy because he has got to carry the jug but let me tell you when there is a time to get in the paper with a nice little calf holding the mouth open, by gawd you are right there — right smack dab in with the little mouth open and the calf. Especially, I might say for the members to my right, especially at a time when the Cattle Marketing Commission bill is before the Legislature, what do we see but the Attorney General hammering the heck out of everything on TV and the Premier's in the newspaper picture holding the poor little calf up front for the people. That's good publicity but the buck stops at your desk and I hope the Liberals are going to be successful in their attempt to prove to the people of Saskatchewan that you are responsible and you are responsible for the actions of every bit of your government — you, personally, as Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. If things aren't going so well and the people aren't happy with the NDP and the government of Saskatchewan, you don't escape responsibility. You don't get to float over it on a sea of nice publicity. You are going to have to take the rap.

Now, that is from the one side. I wish you would take your responsibility and look to the future instead of looking to the past and accepting the fact that Sask Tel used to be run this way and it's O.K. now. When we've borrowed more than \$1.5 million, it's still O.K.

The second thing I would like to say, to conclude — the only thing I would like to say to you is this, to suggest that because the Crown corporations will be under legislative review through a Crown Corporations Committee, examining an independent board's actions, and if the board was in fact, independent, the legislation might possibly be slightly different so that it would indicate that the Legislature, this body, makes the policy of the people of Saskatchewan, not the Cabinet, this body and because we are responsible as a body for the review of the Crown corporations, does not mean that somehow the people of the province are not gaining the maximum benefit from those corporations.

For you to suggest that because the Cabinet does not directly control the day-to-day operations of that particular corporation means that the people aren't gaining input, but because the Legislature gets to examine it in Crown corporations in a meaningful way, because then, your members will be just as interested in what that independent board was doing as we will be. We would all be trying to get that independent board to ask questions; we would make laws that would get the questions out to the people of Saskatchewan. They would gain real knowledge, not the kind of knowledge we are able to get now from Crown corporations which is meaningless, too old, too late and I suggest to you, Mr. Premier, that once again you address your mind, if you don't care one way or another, for goodness sakes care on behalf of the people and appoint an independent board to run these Crown corporations.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — A couple of points. First, pretty clearly the hon. member for Nipawin and I have a different view of the role of Crown corporations in this province. Note the words he applied to our Crown corporations, that their influence was insidious and invidious. A little while ago we were accused of far from being insidious, we were accused of being rather blatant in the role of Crown corporations in this province. The accusation a little while ago was not that something insidious was being done but rather something far less than insidious was being done. So we clearly are going to get it both ways. But, I tell you this, when people start saying that the influence of the Saskatchewan Power corporation on this province has been invidious, then I draw the line. When people say that the influence of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office in this province has been invidious, then I draw the line. I know why people say

that the SGIO's influence is invidious and if I got my money from independent insurance companies, I would think that the SGIO's influence was invidious. But we take a different view. We say that these corporations perform a very useful public service and for the most part the public wants them. So we don't think their influence is invidious.

**MR. COLLVER:** — You will find out . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We obviously are going to find out lots of things at the next election. Members opposite are now speculating on the election date and I think I will refrain from getting into that debate until I make one or two other comments.

Note what has been put forward here. First, that the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Cabinet have not been accepting their responsibility because they are responsible for everything that is done by every government agency—point number one. Point number two, that we should set up a structure whereby for example the Saskatchewan Power Corporation would not be responsible to the Premier but would be responsible to the Legislature through a Legislative Committee. And that the buck would not stop here, but would stop with the chairman of the Legislative Committee. Now, I don't think the people are going to buy that. I think they are going to say that the Premier of Saskatchewan is responsible in a broad way for what those Crown Corporations do. I think we could set up committees here until Hades froze over and we could put up independent boards so called until Hades froze over a second time and the people of Saskatchewan would still look to the Premier and the Cabinet to answer, in the broad, for what those corporations do. I think the people of Saskatchewan would be right. I think the people of Saskatchewan would be right because I think that the broad policy should be set by the Cabinet, by the Legislature in the Cabinet. The Legislature through its legislation and through its annual review and the Cabinet should be responsible for the broad policy —

**MR. COLLVER:** — In . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — In the broad, yes, no doubt about that and certainly I am surprised to hear that hon. members suggest that the corporations could act, not in responsive government policy. However, I think we can all pick our ground here. My assessment of what Saskatchewan people want is Crown corporations which are, in general, responsive so that they can talk to their MLAs about power rates — (Interjection - inaudible) — or about potash, and the MLAs can clearly talk to the Cabinet and the Cabinet should not be able to say, don't look at me Mac; go to the committee.

**MR. MALONE:** — You just told us that a few minutes ago.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Quite wrong, quite wrong. Hon. members are saying that because I did not want to answer questions about the fur marketing service advertising Budget I am somehow telling them to go to a legislative committee. I am telling them to go to the minister responsible and when he is on the mat, ask him the questions. When he is on the mat, ask him the questions.

When you do not have the courage to ask the minister the questions when he has got his officials there, because he will mow you down, and then lie in the weeds and decide that you are going to ask questions of the Premier when he is here without officials, that shows a great deal of political perspicacity but it shows no guts. It shows no guts!

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

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Chairman, let me give the Premier a very tedious and slow lesson because I am scared to go too fast or you will miss it again. I am going to give you just a real careful lesson on what we have been after. I might have to explain very, very slowly to the Premier, because you are no intellectual razor blade, exactly what we have been after.

Now let me tell you something. What we wanted to know was how much this government has spent to date on Crown corporation advertising. We went after some of the Crown corporations' ministers and we said, tell us how much you have spent on Crown corporation advertising. Some of them said, oh, we did not spend any in the year under review so we do not have any intention of answering any of your questions.

I will tell you something. We learn a lot faster than you do, Mr. Premier. We learn a lot faster. Some of them said we spent in the neighborhood of \$60,000. Our share of the Family of Crown Corporations advertising would have been in the neighborhood of \$17,000.

The next question, the one we really wanted answered, we asked on several occasions. We said, now tell us Mr. Minister responsible, how much you budgeted for this year or how much you spent to date, not just in the year under review. Do you know what your courageous minister said? 'I am sorry, that is not in the year under review and we refuse to answer it.' So our question was, where do we go for that information? Who has the courage in this government to tell the people of Saskatchewan how much they have spent on Crown corporations advertising?

The first minister says, I am responsible; Crown corporations, the buck stops on my desk. Well here is one buck I would like to see both sides of. I would like to ask you not how much each Crown corporation spends in the year under review in Crown Corporations Committee. I want to ask you if the Minister responsible for the Executive Council and ultimately for all of the Cabinet ministers who administer Crown corporations, what this government has budgeted and will spend this year on Crown corporations advertising, specifically the Family of Crown Corporations. That was, Mr. Chairman, a question.

I would like to point out one other thing to you. We sought this information before. We sought it through very normal channels. We put an order for return on the order paper, December 13, 1977, and I will read it for you, very slowly, so you understand it. It says that the Assembly requested the Issue No. 38 showing:

The amount budgeted by each Crown corporation to the government promotion of the Saskatchewan Family of Crown Corporations and the amount paid by each Crown corporation.

That was information we could not get in Crown Corporations Committee and if the minister does not believe that then come to Crown Corporations someday and we will point it out to you. We learned very quickly in there that we couldn't get the answer we wanted in Crown Corporations Committee so we come to you. The buck stops here, let's have the information.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We'll go through it once again. I have the minutes of the Crown Corporations here and if we can show where it was moved . . . (interjection) . . . Look,

May 25, 1978

look, with all deference, I think I know what goes on in the Crown Corporations Committee. I suspect I have spent more hours in the Crown Corporations Committee of the Legislature of Saskatchewan than anyone here. You know I sat for five years at each meeting and I know the procedure. I know that with respect to the future you can't get future answers, O.K. So with the past, with respect to the years under review you can get all the answers. You didn't ask for them, you didn't get them . . . (interjection) . . . Not in the case of Power. Not in the case of Saskoil. Not in the case of Sask Planning Development Corporation, or so I'm advised by the minister. . . . (interjection) . . . Some of them did, some of them didn't in the year under review. Power obviously did and you didn't ask.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — I'll expect . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — All right. You want to know how much was spent after the year under review. It's a very simple process. I have done it hundreds of times. Simply sit down and write out a question for the order paper.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — inaudible.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — O.K. Once again, the difference between a question and an order for return. We'll take it slow again. You know if you want to know how much the Power Corporation spent, you ask how much the Power Corporation spent, you put it in and you get it back in 48 hours. That's the sort of system..

**MR. McMILLAN:** — inaudible.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, you can't debate a question. You can debate an Order for Return but you can't debate a question.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — . . . 48 hours.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Look, I don't want to get picky, but I don't know an opposition which has put on the order paper fewer written questions than the Liberal Opposition did in this session. Fewer written questions, and I invite anyone to figure out what one ordinarily does and what one hasn't done. Obviously, they much prefer the idea of saying that they haven't got the information and they can't get it, to the process of asking for it. Because, obviously, the answer will not give them the information they want because what they want is to be able to say, we can't get the information.

Now, one, they did not ask for the past in Crown Corporations Committee. Oh, let's take Power Corporation. In Power Corporation they did not ask with respect to Power Corporation. Secondly . . . (interjection) . . . I've got the minutes here and there is no motion, . . . (interjection) . . . No. But if you asked a question and you didn't get an answer, one, I can't imagine anybody in this House who wouldn't put down a written...I am not going to go through this year under review bit again. I am saying with respect to the Power Corporation, with respect to everything up to December 31, 1977, you had the opportunity to ask and you didn't ask, not at all.

All right, with respect to anything up to December 31, 1977 you didn't ask. With respect to everything after December 31, 1977 you had an opportunity to put questions on the order paper and you didn't do it. Look, I know you put an order for return and we will go once again - you can ask questions in the committee and that is not an order for return. That is a different thing. You can ask your questions in this

House and that is not an order for return; it is a different thing.

You did ask an order for return and that information will be coming. If you ask it for 8, 10, 12 or 50 outfits and you have to hunt around. That certainly will be coming. And, furthermore, you can ask under GFO (Government Finance Office) and get a lot of them and GFO is still here for Estimates.

I realize that all hon. members are anxious to get this information, not for the information, but because they then will establish a precedent that they can ask me for anything. If they are worried about this bit of information, I can doubtless scare up the order for return and get it to you. What I am not going to concede, is the idea that you can ask me any sort of question about any government agency and about how much is spent by any government agency in the Estimates under Executive Council. I say that has never been done in any Legislative Chamber in Canada and I challenge, I challenge, anyone there, anyone on the opposition side, to give me one precedent where that has ever been done in a Legislature of the British stamp anywhere in the world.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — Mr. Chairman, despite the Grecian formula, it is obvious that senility has reared its ugly head in the Cabinet.

Now, for the benefit of the badly confused Premier, for your benefit, when we ask questions, verbal questions, of the minister in the Crown Corporations Committee, those questions are not recorded. That is a fact. Good, we have established one fact for the Premier. When we ask in a written motion for questions about information we want that are not in the year end review, those motions are ruled out of order by the Chairman and are not recorded. Now, I will explain to you, once more, on several occasions in the Crown Corporations Committee we asked, verbally, for information about the amount of money that was spent in the year end review for the Family of Crown Corporations and on several occasions the minister gave us his estimate and he would say it would be \$17,000 or it would be \$60,000. Now that wasn't the information that we were seeking. I repeat this to you, again. We want to know what had been spent to date, not in the year under review. Plus, we want to know, and I will tell you we made a real effort for it, you say we want to find out until December 31, we gave you the opportunity to answer that. We put a question to you, debatable or non-debatable and that is your choice. The question ended up as being debatable. It was introduced on December 13, 1977 and it asked for the amount budgeted by each Crown corporation of the government. Pretty simple stuff. What happened? Your political magician over there, the member for Biggar, picked it up and adjourned it and stood it off the order paper and the Premier said, oh, if you trust me I may be able to scare that order up. Why not? We want that information provided for us. You say, no, don't ask for it like this. That's probably too simple. Maybe you couldn't get that; ask for it on a separate written question on each Crown corporation. Why? We put that question to your government. You have had the opportunity to answer it. Your minister stood it off the order paper. Why? We tried to get all of the information we could in Crown corporations and it was futile — absolutely futile. If you don't believe it, you come there next year and sit and watch and you will find out.

All right, the question we wanted answered could not be answered in Crown Corporations Committee by the very nature of the committee. So what did we do? We made an attempt to have the format of the committee re-established so that we could ask questions currently. That's not allowed by your government. We ask you here for the information. It is ignored and stood off the order paper. We can't get that information there. Now we are asking you here, as the minister responsible. Will you

May 25, 1978

give us that information? Why do you say, no? Because you don't have the guts to tell the people of Saskatchewan what you have spent on Crown corporation advertising.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Let's just take the Power Corporation. Obviously they need some more research staff because we will all concede, as the member for Kindersley does, that in the committee he could have got the amount spent up to December 31 because he was given it for other corporations and didn't bother asking it for the Power Corporation.

**MR. McMILLAN:** — That was to December, 1976. What about 1977?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes, all right, it will vary, but let's take the Power Corporation as one. Up to the year under review you could get it. With respect to the Power Corporation, nothing stops you from putting a question on the order paper from the period . . .

**MR. NELSON (As-Gr):** — You won't give us the information. Be honest . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order. I have hesitated as your Chairman, to get into this and make a ruling of any kind because I had hoped that the members would get on to some other matters. I'm hesitant to do it because I certainly don't want to limit the opposition in any way, but it seems to me as your Chairman, that as far as these Estimates are concerned that the Premier could be expected to answer questions that relate to general government policy under Item 1, and specific questions as it relates to the Executive Council Estimates under all of the items, but on specific questions that deal with other departments, it doesn't seem to me, as your Chairman, reasonable for the Premier to be expected to answer those questions.

This particular question has been asked repeatedly of the Premier. In all cases he has refused to answer saying that he . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Inaudible.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Well he has refused to answer as is his right to do and I would ask the members not to continue on this particular line of questioning and get on to some other questions that they might have.

**MR. MALONE:** — What the Premier is doing, what he has done today, is just visibly proven what I said Tuesday night. Any time an issue comes along that is in any way going to embarrass the government, in any way going to have some political connotation, in any way is going to put the government in a bad light, the Premier refuses to answer the questions. You have done it today, you have proven everything I said last Tuesday night, everything I said about you, about your government's attempt to make you Mr. Clean.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MALONE:** — Of you being afraid to get involved in political issues. Everything I said on Tuesday night, and I hope you will go back and read the record Mr. Premier, is you have proven it today by your action on the..your non-response to the legitimate questions we ask you about government spending as far as they affect advertising by Crown corporations.

What you have done is you have tried to squirm around and try and give some logical



reason why you shouldn't be in a position to answer these questions.

First of all you say, well I'm the Premier, and I don't really know what is going on in a particular sense as to government advertising. You try and put up a smokescreen and say, well it is like asking me how much is spent on stationery in the Fur Marketing Board. Hardly a valid comparison.

We have asked questions week after week in this Legislature about this particular problem. There have been editorials written. The people of Saskatchewan have said time and time again through newspapers, through letters to you, through comments that are made publicly, that they consider this a very fundamental political issue. Time and again. It's not a matter that is like the stationery in the Fur Marketing Commission. It's a very, very significant political point and you know it. That's why you are trying to duck the issue.

You come in here and you say, well you've got other devices to get the information. You can get it in Crown Corporations. You come in herewith the records and the minutes of Crown corporations and you say, well there was no resolution put. Well, so what? Do you have to put a resolution for every question you ask?

It becomes very apparent to us when you go through two or three Crown corporations and you get no answer to this question, no answer at all to this question about budgeting to date. That we are not really going to be very successful in pursuing it, with all Crown Corporations, so you drop it. So you come back in here and you say to a minister — which we have done and the Premier will recall we devoted one entire question period to this particular issue. We got no facts at all, no information whatsoever as to the cost of this program. Now you say, well, put it on the order paper; put it on the order paper and we may answer it. It was on the order paper. The member for Qu'Appelle put it on the order paper. Two questions in the last session of this Legislature. What happens, the minister from Biggar picks it up, adjourns it right off the order paper. You say, put it on the order paper again. O.K. Premier, for your information. In the 1976-1977 session, 11 matters were put on the order paper that have not been responded to to date, this is May of 1978. In the 1977-1978 session, 26 matters on the order paper, not responded to to date, May 1978. The current session, 22 items on the order paper for a grand total of 59 items on the order paper; then you have the gall to come in here and say we don't ask enough questions. Why should we be asking questions, we never get the answers. We can't get them from question period from the minister involved; we can't get them on Estimates from the minister involved; we can't get them in Crown Corporations; we can't get them by taking the device of a written question. What else do we have to do? Unless I ask you as the Premier of Saskatchewan for the answers.

May 25, 1978

You say. "It's not up to me, it's up to my ministers.' We have been asking your ministers for months and we get no answers.

Premier, what you have done today is just to dramatically demonstrate that you are afraid to get involved in any political issues. You are afraid to give us information that everybody in this province wants to have, because if you do so, it's going to be pinned on you. It's going to be pinned on you as Premier of Saskatchewan, the man responsible for this program and you don't want to have that pinned on you.

I ask you again, we have gone through every single avenue open to us to get this information. We have had the door shut on our faces every single time we have tried to get the information. We have no other way of getting the information except by asking you as the man in charge of the government of Saskatchewan and don't get up and read minutes to me of Crown Corporation meetings. Now, really I am surprised. We have lots of things to complain about about the government of Saskatchewan but I think that never did we feel that the Premier of Saskatchewan would come in here and show a lack of courage in the way you have done today. We have always admired you for being candid, for facing the issues, getting hung with a statement from time to time that you make. We have always had some admiration for the preciseness with which you answer questions and how you guard yourself when you do answer questions. But never since I have been in this Legislature, since December of 1973, has the Premier of Saskatchewan ever come in here and have taken the cowardly attitude that you are taking today. This is information that we are entitled to; it's information that the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to and when your government comes in here and puts the clamps on us as to how much money we can spend as a political party, how much we can spend in a given year and you come in here and are afraid to tell us how much the government of Saskatchewan spends in a given year, we say to you, shame! And I think you sit there and you feel shame. You know darn well that this information should be provided to us, for if it were the Attorney General and the Minister of Mineral Resources you would be slipping them a note saying, give it to them — they are entitled to it. But when it comes to you, you won't give it to us because you are afraid to get your fingers dirty in this political mess that you have created and what your government has created.

I ask you again, how much money was spent? If you are not going to answer the question, say so and we can make our assumptions from that and we will go on to something else. But don't come here and try to kid the troops—that we are trying to use your particular department unfairly. We are not trying to do it. We come to you as a last resort for this information; we ask the question again.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order. I'm afraid I can't allow you to ask that again because I made a ruling that said you couldn't ask specific questions of the Premier for figures in other departments. If I let you do that then I would be going against my own ruling.

**MR. MALONE:** — You set the ground rules then, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Well. I think I did.

**MR. MALONE:** — Well, O.K. But what the Premier has come in and said is that he will answer certain questions and he refused to answer other questions. What in effect, he

is telling us is, he will pick the questions he is going to answer and he is going to refuse to answer anything else. Now, I want some precise rules on this, Mr. Chairman. This particular issue in front of you . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order. I will give you those precise rules once again. As far as these Estimates are concerned of the Executive Council.

First of all, as I understand it, the minister isn't compelled to answer any questions — that's for a start.

Secondly, you can ask general questions of government policy under item 1.1 think it is true that the Premier cannot be expected to answer questions of detailed policies of other departments here, that those questions should be asked of other ministers. You can ask specific questions about the Executive Council Estimates under all of these items. So that is the ruling I have made.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A point of order.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Do you have a point of order?

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman. A point of order about the general operation under Executive Council. The rule has always been that because the Cabinet ministers' salaries are paid under the Executive Council, that very extensive questioning of the operation of the Cabinet ministers and their ministries in turn, was permitted. That was the guise, the fable, I suppose, by which questions on the Executive Council were allowed to develop into a general examination of government as a whole.

I suggest to you. Mr. Chairman, to suggest where spending has been a unified spending of many ministries that there could be no more appropriate place to ask a specific question about spending in a unified way of many ministries. I suggest to you that were we. for instance saying, what did Sask Power do in a specific way, that might be different, but the line of questioning has been about a unified campaign, a campaign crossing very many ministries and involving, virtually, the entire Cabinet.

The Premier has said that all of the members of the Cabinet sit on one or other — other than himself — sit on one or other of the agencies or Crown corporations involved in the spending. The Premier has said that a vast number of his personal staff in the Executive Council sit on those various crown corporations. What could be more appropriate than a question that cuts across all of those departments?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Well, I would like to thank the member for his views but I have made my ruling. The member for Wascana is the next person.

**MR. MALONE:** — On a point of order. I believe that notwithstanding your ruling, Mr. Chairman, that the Premier, if he chooses, could ask permission to answer the question and I think the practice would be to allow him to answer. I wonder if the Premier is prepared to do that?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, we are at 4:45 o'clock. I want to say this. The suggestion that somehow I or my government, or our government is unhappy with that program is not so. We are happy to debate the policy. If you feel that you can't debate the policy without the figures, I will undertake somewhere to get the figures of this question before we next take our Estimates and we can have at it. I am perfectly happy to have

that.

What I am not going to concede is the proposition that this point, which perhaps you will argue was a different point because it is illustrative of a government policy which we should debate, I agree. I am not going to concede that you can pick another batch of figures from that department, or that one, or that one, or that one and ask me to produce them, because I can't and it is not rational to expect me to do.

This batch is of no concern to me. We are perfectly happy to tell you what we spent and perfectly happy to defend it. I can find it, doubtless. Somebody will have it and we can produce it. I respectfully suggest that, without very much work it could have been produced through the normal channels and I won't go into all this again, but with all deference and I won't go into all of this again but with all deference . . . there aren't any questions on the order paper with respect to this. I won't go into the techniques . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . amend the motion.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Look, you can't amend a question, so by definition, if there wasn't a question, you didn't amend the motion. The whole point of giving questions is that you ask questions, narrow questions and get bits of information — you get eight of them and you get someone who can add eight figures and you've got it all there.

That is really childishly simple and I have done it any number of times. I don't know why you didn't do it and that is your business. You run your affairs the way you like. But if you feel that somehow, someone is not providing you with information, we are more than happy to provide this information and we will see, before the Executive Council Estimates are next called that this information will be provided.

I believe that arrangements have been made to adjourn the committee earlier.

**MR. MALONE:** — I would like to thank you for giving us the information. Could we have an indication as to when we will be sitting again as a committee, on your Estimates?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Perhaps I could speak to that. I think the situation is as follows — that the Premier is in Winnipeg. I think we could impose upon him and I think it would be an imposition. It's a family personal commitment to be back sometime tomorrow afternoon or tomorrow evening if the House were sitting or Saturday, if the House were sitting.

If the House is sitting, the Premier says he is prepared to come back. If the House is not sitting, quite obviously there is no way he can be back by 1:00 o'clock.

The Committee reported progress.

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