

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Nineteenth Legislature

Thursday, April 5, 1979.

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. N.E. BYERS (Kelvington Wadena): — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly, 17 Grade 10 students from the Kelliher High School. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery along with their teachers, Mr. Bernakevitch and Mr. Mitchell. I think they all deserve a special welcome for braving this unusual April weather to visit the legislature. I hope they have an enjoyable and educational stay in Regina. It is my intention to meet with the students later in the afternoon.

I ask all members to join with me in offering an extra warm welcome to the Kelliher students.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my desk mate, Ralph Katzman, I would like to introduce to you, a group of students from the Osler School. There are 75 students and they are accompanied by their teacher, Reg Peachey, Mr. Altman, Mr. Osmond, and Mrs. Genther.

I hope that as you visit in our Assembly today you will find your trip worthwhile, that it will be informative. I hope you are going to enjoy your visit to Regina and seeing this and many other attractions of this air city. Mr. Katzman will be here shortly and he will be meeting you following the question period for pictures and drinks.

I wish that all of the Assembly here would greet the group from Osler.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Cutback in government spending

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would address my question to the Premier. The Premier will recall, and I am sure he has read reports of the Lambert report on the federal government's excessive spending that is out of control. The Premier will also recall the remarks that he made to the federal-provincial conference where he talked about the necessity for governments in Canada and in Saskatchewan and throughout the country to cut back on spending, to be more responsible in spending and to control their spending to a much larger extent.

Would the Premier explain then to this Assembly, how we in Saskatchewan can be the highest province in Canada, according to Statistics Canada, in terms of the increase in numbers of civil servants in 1978 over 1977 by some 13.7 per cent, even though the total of government employees throughout Canada declined by 0.11 per

cent? Saskatchewan was the highest by far with a 13.7 per cent increase.

Can the Premier explain that apparent difference?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I do not have the figures from which the hon. member is quoting. I accordingly cannot comment how they are arrived at. I will simply take notice of the question.

MR. COLLVER: — Would you take notice of this question? Would you take notice in that I refer you to Stats Can Infomat March 23, 1979 to the paragraph where they say that among individual governments declines were registered in Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Alberta, Manitoba. Increases were seen in New Brunswick, 1 per cent; Yukon 1.5 per cent; Newfoundland, 2.7 per cent; North West Territories, 3.1 per cent; Quebec, 6.6 per cent; Saskatchewan, 13.7 per cent. Would you take notice of this question as well? Since this document expresses the view of Statistics Canada and compares all across Canada and indicates an increase in the civil service, would you tell me how come the budget that is presented to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, page 33, indicates that from 1975 through 1979-80 there is a continuing decline from \$14,000 . . .

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

Cost of Repairing and Renovating T.C. Douglas Building

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder). First of all I'd like to thank the minister for supplying me with a copy of the report on the T.C. Douglas building. I have not had the time yet to study the report. Have you established a cost of doing the repairs and renovations to the building to meet the requirements of this report, Mr. Minister?

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — In answer to the hon. member's question, I think it's somewhat premature to make any particular judgments with respect to the capital costs. However, I think in viewing the various recommendations I would expect that the recommendations do not involve a large amount of capital expenditure. I recommend, among other things, the fact that automobiles should not be left running in the parkade. Also, for example, more clearly marked exits for fire purposes should be established. I think a number of these require nothing more than what would have happened in the normal course of events.

However, there are a number of changes in the ventilating system — some suggestions with respect to routing exhaust gases in such a way as to not have them picked up and reintroduced into the ventilation system. Things like that will require some modification. I couldn't begin at this moment to express a thought as to the cost, but I don't believe that the departmental officials in government services regard it as being a very costly item to meet all of the basic requirements of the recommendations in the report.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, I haven't read it and I haven't studied it but there will be a cost. I presume that the cost involved will be as a result of design or engineering or something. Who will be paying for the cost of doing the repairs and the renovations or whatever is required?

MR. SNYDER: — In reply to that I would suggest again that perhaps that's somewhat

premature. It doesn't appear at the moment that either the architect or the contractor (mechanical contractor) could be held at fault for the problems that have been experienced. I think it was a general problem that arose as a result of a large and a complex design of a building of that nature and we will be viewing the whole matter very closely. It is obvious that the Department of Government Services, in the first instance, is going to bear the responsibility if there is a cost that should properly be borne by the architect or by the contractor. We will certainly be having a close look at that to determine where the responsibility rests.

Gardiner Dam

MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding).

The government, a few years ago, decided to halt the irrigation project on the west side of Gardiner Dam. Could you give us any information as to when this project might be reviewed and proceeded with?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, we don't have a government decision at this time to proceed with any construction on the west side. However, we have been considering the possibility, now that the east side is getting fairly well developed, and there are some pressures and demands now coming from the west side. I am doing some calculations and studies as to whether and when an appropriate time would be to move on the west side.

MR. SWAN: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There has been a problem created because the project was halted. The town of Conquest, during the time that you were building the canal on the west side, proceeded to put in a water supply for the town. When you halted your project some mile and a half from the town water supply, it meant that the town of Conquest is short of water almost every year. The government assisted the town to go into the project of putting water throughout the town. Now, when they are in financial trouble in paying for the pumping of water and this winter, in particular, the hauling of water to supply the town, they have not been successful in getting any assistance from this government. Can you tell me what will the government do to provide assistance for the town of Conquest?

MR. KAEDING: — Wait, Mr. Speaker, the provision of water to the town of Conquest would come within the purview of the Department of Municipal Affairs and is not part of the jurisdiction of my department. However, as far as I am aware, my department has not had a request from the town of Conquest.

MR. SWAN: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I realize that that comes under the Department of Municipal Affairs, but the minister is not in the House today. I have raised the item with the department, have not received satisfactory answers and I would like to get an answer from the House. Is there a minister backing the minister responsible for municipal affairs?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, only to the extent that I would indicate that I will relay the information to Mr. MacMurchy and ask him to respond to you.

Citizen Advisory Council

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — A question to the Minister of Social Services, Mr.

Speaker.

In a brief presented to you by the Citizens Advisory Council in March, on page 2, it states that when you met with them in November of 1976, you bluntly stated that on the whole, cabinet ministers do not appreciate citizens advisory groups and secondly, ministers tend to do the exact opposite to what has been recommended to them by such citizens groups. How do you answer that charge?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, my answer to that, simply is that that statement, I can't concur with that particular statement. Certainly, it relates to a comment that was made by one of the members during the meeting (if I recall correctly) when they had presented to me a brief pertaining to day care. The brief was very much the same as a brief that had been presented to me already by the Advisory Committee to the minister on day care and I had said to them at that particular time that I would put more faith in a brief that was submitted to me by a committee that was particularly, or specifically constructed to provide information or briefs to a minister on a specific area. I said I project that I would think that other ministers would put more faith, for example, in a brief that was presented to them pertaining to — let's say the Canadian Mental Health Association, if they presented a brief to the Minister of Health, I would think that he would put more faith in the professional people on that particular committee than he probably would on the advisory or a brief that would be submitted to him by the advisory committee. It was not meant to say in a derogatory sense, simply that I was trying to point out to them that in many instances their work was redundant, that they were doing work that already had been done by other groups. Therefore, I felt that in many instances I would put more faith in, for example, the Special Care Home Association or the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded or the Saskatchewan Council on Crippled Children and Adults rather than a brief that pertains to that particular area by the advisory council. That's what the statement was meant to convey to them.

MRS. DUNCAN: — They didn't seem to feel that way. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. They also stated that you have totally ignored the receipt of a lot of their submissions, submissions that they were given a mandate to do and that you very often denied them requests to even present them or to speak about them.

MR. ROLFES: — Well, Mr. Speaker, again, I don't concur with that. The statement that was made by them at the last meeting, two of the groups that were not present at the meeting were the Senior Citizens Organization of Saskatchewan which represents about 30,000 people and the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded were not present at that particular meeting. We called Dr. Dolan on this and asked him if he concurred with that particular report that was put out and he said absolutely not. He said the relationship that his organization has had with the government and he said specifically with me as minister has been very open and that they have never had any difficulties. They never had any difficulties making their views known to government and to the minister responsible. We've always had a very good relationship with the. I'm simply asking you, if you don't believe me, to phone Dr. Dolan of Saskatoon. I haven't got his phone number. Or you can phone the director of the Saskatchewan Council of Crippled Children and Adults that I deal with. Or you can phone the senior citizens of Saskatchewan or the day care advisory boards or any other organization I deal with and ask them if they agree with the comments that were made by the people who submitted them.

Let me say this. I don't . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm answering the question, Mr. Speaker. I can understand why these people offered the comments they did. Certainly,

their funds have been cut off. We felt that their services were redundant. Certainly at one time there was a role, I think, for them. We have expanded the many agencies and advisory councils, consequently . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. Next question.

Meeting with Citizens' Advisory Committee

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — New question, Mr. Speaker. Before axing the Citizens' Advisory Council, we are wondering why you didn't even meet with them. They have requested it . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I'll take a new question.

Nuclear Power Plant Defects

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, in absence of the minister in charge of SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation), a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, this morning there was a Canadian wire message that stated that the company that built the nuclear power plant at Harrisburg Pennsylvania has a subsidiary in Canada called Babcock-Wilcox Canada Limited. This company supplied tubes or boilers to the nuclear plants in Canada (the Candu reactors) and one to Argentina.

It is my understanding that the boilers at the Poplar River power plant were manufactured by the same company. The company has acknowledged that certain defects exist and in the case of the nuclear plants this would be very serious. Do you know if there are any defects in these boilers at the Poplar River plant?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — As the hon. member will note, Babcock-Wilcox have been in the business in Canada for many years and I would think that the great bulk of boilers in Saskatchewan and all the plants that have been put in in the last 25 or 30 years have been Babcock-Wilcox boilers. Certainly that was the case when I was associated with Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

I am not aware of any difficulties which have surrounded Babcock-Wilcox boilers when used for thermal generation, using coal as a fuel. I doubt whether there would be much cause for concern simply because, in a thermal station using uranium as the fuel, a problem was developed. But certainly I will ask the power corporation people if they have any concerns with respect to these boilers or if any of the many others have which have Babcock-Wilcox boilers around, by reason of the events in Pennsylvania.

Safety of Water Supply in Buffalo Pound

MR. G. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman). Is it true that the officials at Buffalo Pound water filtration plant have warned the Department of Health, Department of the Environment and also the city of Regina of the questionable quality and safety of the water supply at certain times of the year for human consumption?

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, I'm unaware unless it has been of very, very recent date that there has been any advice given to the department officials that the water in Buffalo Pound is not safe.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It sure seems very strange, Mr. Speaker, that I'm only the critic in environment and this information always comes to me instead of him. My question . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: — Good shot, Gerry.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, does the Department of the Environment in conjunction with the Department of Health monitor all public water supplies in the province?

MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I can give a precise answer to that question. I'm sure that the Department of Health does examine water. I can't tell you. You'd have to ask the Minister of Health whether that is the case and to what extent they go to monitor every water supply in the province but I know that they periodically do. I know also that the Department of the Environment does run periodic checks on water quality and water conditions within Saskatchewan. I can't give the member details as to what the specific tests are but I do know that they make examinations of water quality and water supply.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What steps has your government taken to guarantee the quality, quantity and safety of water supplied to all cities, towns and all country communities in the province of Saskatchewan?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: — Good one, Gerry. You're doing fine.

MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a little difficult to guarantee water supplies. That doesn't mean to say that there isn't concern for water supply and the ongoing analysis and testing that is done on water supply systems is not carefully monitored. It's just a matter of guaranteeing, as the member wants us to do, that they will always remain pure and safe from any harm. I can't give the member that guarantee.

AN HON. MEMBER: — In another few days, we'll have a hell of a question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Could the minister tell the Assembly and the public of Saskatchewan what maximum amount of chlorine content is considered safe in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I'll take a new question.

Investigation of File

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. A week ago last Tuesday, I gave you a file that you were going to investigate. The reason I gave it to you is that I didn't want the names bandied around in here. Could you indicate to me whether, in fact, that investigation has been carried out or not?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Yes, we've examined the file and I'm prepared to give you any information that you want to have on it.

Recycling of Liquor Bottles

MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman). It has been brought to my attention, Mr. Minister that each year in this province we have about 24 million pounds of empty liquor bottles. It has also been brought to the my attention that a company by the name of Canasphere Ltd., a glass recycling company, has been trying for seven years to have this government start a liquor bottle recycling program. Mr. Minister why have you not instituted a program of recycling liquor bottles?

MR. BOWERMAN: — The basic consideration, Mr. Speaker, had to do with the costs involved and the economics involved of getting such a program into existence; secondly, a market which would adequately utilize all of those bottles that may come in as a result of a province-wide program. It's interesting to note that members in the opposition want us to implement mandatory programs in some cases with respect to picking up beer bottles or with respect to picking up liquor bottles perhaps but not mandatory legislation with respect to seat belts.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware that because of no program of this type in Saskatchewan, this company has been bringing bottles in from Alberta and is therefore forced at this time to relocate in Alberta? This, of course, will result in a decline in employment in Saskatchewan. Are you aware of this situation, Mr. Minister?

MR. BOWERMAN: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am aware that Canasphere has decided or at least indicated that they have decided, that they must now move their company to Alberta in order to be able to get the glass which they need. I did meet with the officials of Canasphere about one month ago in which we discussed this program. I indicate to you that it is my information the costs to the Alberta government for running its program is estimated at about \$8 million a year, over and above what the revenues are from that gathering up of liquor bottles. We are reviewing our situation in Saskatchewan but we have not come to a conclusion as to what we would do in this regard.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary. I am glad to hear that you are reviewing it. I can assure you that I think they make money in Alberta on this. As you are a rural member, Mr. Minister, you must be aware that the ditches of our roads and highways are polluted with these bottles. In urban areas, I understand it costs about \$20 a ton to bury these bottles. Therefore, with regard to protecting our environment and conserving a valuable product by recycling, will you not institute a program of this type for Saskatchewan?

MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the member, we are reviewing the question that has been raised by Canasphere with respect to this as well as with respect to the environment. But, I also indicate that the Government of Alberta is reviewing their program at the present time as well. They don't know whether they can maintain the program in Alberta with the existing costs that they are having to face. So it may be a matter for review in Saskatchewan in consideration for the members of the opposition to raise it here but I indicate to you as well that Alberta being in that program are rethinking their position with respect to it.

Report Mandatory

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — I ask my question of the Minister of the Environment.

Why would you say, Mr. Minister that this is a mandatory program. It is not a mandatory program in Alberta. Have you made a study of this program? And if you have, will you table that study? If you have made a study I doubt that you will find it's mandatory.

MR. BOWERMAN: — No, I didn't say that the Alberta program was. Mr. Speaker, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), I believe was asking the province to implement a program for the return of bottles — a program developed by the Department of the Environment, something along the same lines as pop bottles and beer bottles are at this time. Well, very well and fine, but the member says it is not mandatory.

I indicate to you that, for those who sell pop bottles, it is obligatory to receive pop bottles in return when they are brought back. So there is that element in it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you, as I have already said, we are reviewing our situation in this respect and we will give further consideration to it when that report is in.

Rent Controls

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the minister responsible for rent controls. The minister is aware that rent controls exist only in Regina and Saskatoon. In particular with regard to Saskatoon, would the minister tell the Assembly why he is maintaining rent controls in the city of Saskatoon and if that reason is based on a vacancy percentage rate? If so, what is that vacancy rate in the city of Saskatoon?

HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, the rent control is being maintained in the city of Saskatoon because Saskatoon is the most rapidly growing and most expanding city in the whole of Canada at the moment. This means that there is a shortage of accommodation. Regina is a close second, but Saskatoon holds all the records for expansion and it also holds all the records for building accommodation for rental. In the year 1977 there were something like 2,000 rental units constructed in that city. That sets a record. So the people are building because they know that there are no controls on new construction.

Our surveys (and we are continuously monitoring and surveying the situation) indicate there is a drastic shortage of accommodation. We feel, and I said at the time in the House, that it would be a distinct hardship on many people at this time, to remove rent controls in Saskatoon and in Regina.

MR. BIRKBECK: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I would only reply and ask a question.

The construction industry has kept pace with that expansion and growth of the city of Saskatoon and it has been able to maintain vacancies in new buildings, and that particular, Mr. Minister, is the question. Those apartments that are older dwellings are being discriminated against and that's where the hardship lies. The fact of the matter is, would you not agree, Mr. Minister, that there is a vacancy rate in the average I would suspect of about 6.6 per cent? Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, would you agree with me on those points and also that it would appear that the only reason for your maintenance of

controls in the city of Saskatoon is to maintain jobs for employees of your department?

MR. WHELAN: — Mr. Speaker, the record shows that there was a reduction of 14 employees in the rental section. There was a reduction of 14 employees in the rental operation which indicates clearly that we're not maintaining the office to maintain employees, although there has been a large construction of buildings but it didn't keep pace. That's not true . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . that's not true. As I said, Saskatoon is expanding so rapidly that even with this construction they're undertaking it hasn't kept pace. We think that we have been very reasonable with the landlords. The landlords have had an eight and an eight and a 10 and a six and a six increase, and the number who are applying after this kind of increases, these increases one after the other indicates clearly to me that they're satisfied and that we don't think that we should be mistreating either the landlords or the tenants, but a sudden withdrawal at this time, we maintain, would bring about a hardship on the tenants and we're not prepared to do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Medical Practices Establishment Grant Program

MR. E. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take a brief moment to explain to the House details, terms and conditions which have been worked out for the Medical Practice Establishment Grant program.

Last fall I announced that the government would be introducing a financial assistance program to help newly graduated Saskatchewan physicians to establish medical practices in rural areas of our province. The recruitment and the retention of doctors has been a recurring problem for some of our communities. The Establishment Grant Program was intended to help both doctors who pay substantial costs in setting up practices, and rural communities which have limited resources to use in attracting doctors. When I announced the program I said that the government wanted it to be as helpful as possible and sensitive to the needs of communities and physicians. My department, with the help of the Saskatchewan Health Care Association has consulted with representatives of the medical profession, rural communities, and doctors who are potential grant recipients. I am confident that the details of the Establishment Grant Program that have been worked out as a result of the consultations meets the needs and the interests of doctors and communities alike. I would like to briefly outline the details of the program.

Grants will be paid where a community has recruited a doctor and has made a financial contribution toward helping him or her establish practice. Grants will equal the amount of community contribution to a maximum grant of \$15,000 per physician. Community contributions can be made by any one of a combination of three ways, Mr. Speaker:

— They may be direct cash payments to doctors.

— They may be for costs incurred for the construction, the renovations, equipping or maintenance of facilities to be used by doctors.

— They may be the retirement of a capital debt for existing facilities or equipment.

Communities will make their financial contributions through their union hospital board, if they are part of a union hospital district. If communities are not in a union hospital district they will make the contributions by way of a local hospital board or a local municipal council. Any contributions that are not eligible for other grants from the Department of Health, such as SHSP (Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan) construction grants, will be recognized.

Grants will be made available to our own graduates or to graduates of other Canadian medical schools. Applicants must be establishing practice in Saskatchewan for the first time.

Doctors can choose to receive their grants either in a lump sum, when they are establishing their practices, or have it spread out in instalments over a maximum of three years. They will also be able to choose to receive part of the grant directly and have part paid to the community. Where a doctor receives all, or part of his grant money in a lump sum payment, he or she will have a service obligation that will be retired at \$5,300 a year. For example, a doctor who receives the maximum of \$15,000 in a lump sum payment will incur a three-year service obligation. If a doctor asks that the grant be paid directly to community authorities, the doctor, of course, will incur no service obligation.

There are one or two other details. In order for this program to provide the maximum benefit to our smaller rural communities, we have concluded that grants should be paid only in communities of less than 5,000 population where there are hospitals or where, in the absence of a hospital, a doctor has normally been located. The first grants, Mr. Speaker, will be made available this April, in this month of this year.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Saskatchewan Health Care Association and all others who consulted with my department, while we were putting program details in their final form. I am sure that the Establishment Grant Program has benefited from these consultations and that it is as sensitive as we can make it to the needs of both doctors and communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski) for finally recognizing the problem. He didn't recognize it two days ago. In fact, he scorned and ridiculed the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) when he suggested that there was in fact a problem in rural Saskatchewan, in our small centres. We appreciate the program. We think it is a good program and just don't quite understand why these brief flashes of super intelligence keep coming just a little late. Thank you for the program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cody (Minister of Telephones) that Bill No. 22 — **An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act** be now read a second time.

MR. G. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I spoke for a few moments before on

this bill and I jotted down a few remarks that I would like to say regarding Bill No. 22 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act.

I have studied the explanatory notes given to me in respect to the proposed amendments, Mr. Speaker. My thoughts are that the act, in its present form without the suggested amendments, is large enough in scope for investments by a public utility whose object, I presume, is to prove the utility at cost to the consuming public which, rightly or wrongly, assume the utility should be theirs. Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of telephones and Telecommunications (real estate of whatever) saying in a nice sort of way to us in the House and the public in general, look we are proposing to borrow \$52 in the current fiscal year and we also expect to make a profit out of your recently announced telephone rates? We want legal authority by way of this amendment to invest it as we see fit, in fact, with little or no restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, wasn't that telephone rate increase perfectly timed — within two weeks after the great financial wizard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) told us we had the cheapest telephone rates in Canada? Mr. Speaker, what are these high-yielding highly graded commercial and corporate paper type of investments?

I am very much concerned as to whether these explanatory notes are sufficient explanation as to what the minister has in mind. I believe this House and the public in general are entitled to more information. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, he could give us examples of what the proposed type of investments may be if this amendment is passed. But, Mr. Speaker, it's a bit silly for me to say that this amendment is going to be passed. The public is becoming more aware the government has decided to spend the taxpayers' money in whatever manner they see fit and tell us and the general public as little about it as possible. They're saying look, we'll spend, borrow, raise rates as we see fit and you, Mr. and Mrs. Public can like it or lump it.

Mr. Speaker, is the minister of these explanatory notes saying in a back handed way that the Department of Telephones has already obligated our public utility to investments such as commercial property in downtown Regina, Weyburn or whatever and is now saying we need an amendment to make it legal? Surely, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Telecommunications hasn't guaranteed national and yes, even multinational corporations retail and office space which will, when legal, be paid for by the public utility funds.

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Telephones, being the honorable man he is, will not mislead this House but will take as much time to explain the future plans he has for investments of the Department of Telephones' money as he did to tell us about Bill No. 22. Mr. Speaker, surely, in view of the proposed increase in telephone rates and the announced \$52 million in borrowing by the department for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, the minister will tell us and the users of this public utility what his specific plans for investments may be? For example, is it commercial property, programming networks, because I'm sure without a shadow of a doubt, that the average man in the street, when told his telephone rates are going to go up April 2, and that the Department of Telephones is borrowing \$52 million and was also told the government wanted wider powers to invest the proposed revenue increase from the rate hike and from the borrowing would say, what do they need more power to invest for? Why don't they lower their rates and give us service at cost? He, like me, probably doesn't understand socialist financing. I'm sure the answer would be, if one were to ask the wizard Minister of Finance, you don't understand the complicated finance of government. Mr. Speaker, he's right. Many of us ordinary taxpayers don't really know

what they do with their taxes. Yes when it comes to socialist financing many of us are out to lunch. It becomes more apparent to me every day as I sit in this House that the NDP have a patent on sucking the public in and one day saying look, you get absolutely free medicare, free denticare, lowest telephone rates et cetera, et cetera, and the next day you sock it to us. The unsuspecting public with increased rates, increased taxes and the backhanded purpose will give them authority to spend public utility earnings and borrowings with little or no restrictions. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I say to this House and to the Minister of Telephones, tell it like it really is! Give us a full disclosure in language that every taxpayer can understand is the Department of Telecommunications only function better and cheaper communication or are they now into fields . . . (inaudible) . . .

HON. D.W. CODY (Minister of Telephones): — Mr. Speaker, I hadn't really intended on summing up today, but I thought in view of the fact that the hon. member for Arm River (Mr. Muirhead) made some comments which I thought were rather strong with regard to Sask Tel, I should say at least a few words to cap off this debate.

He talks about Sask Tel and its borrowings of \$52 million. That is quite right, we are borrowing \$52 million. But I would like to ask the member for Arm River and the people opposite if they think that we should not be borrowing money, or if they think that we should not be improving the services to the public with regard to telephones. We can certainly curtail such projects as rural assimilation of 870 kilometres of buried cable at Macklin and Unity in the Wilkie constituency, if they want. We could certainly go to the area of Davidson, in the member's own constituency where we are going to be burying cable this year. We can cut that off if he wishes.

We can go to a lot of areas in the province of Saskatchewan. We could go into the constituency of the member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman) at Allan, where we are going to be burying cable this year under the rural assimilation program. If they want us to do these things, we can certainly curtail that activity without very much problem. However, I am sure that the members opposite wouldn't want to even see us do that.

He talks about the downtown project. Well I would like to have him ask all of the citizens in the downtown area of Regina, what they call their friends, the business people, if they don't want Sask Tel go to and develop a new downtown project — a new downtown core for the people of this city. Mr. Speaker, there is little question, I think that the public of this province and the public of Regina in particular, are very interested in seeing a new head office facility for Sask Tel. They are very interested in seeing that public funds are being used to create new jobs for people in Regina, to create a downtown core which is good for the business people of Regina, so that the people of this province have a good, excellent place to shop, so that they have all the kinds of amenities that other communities and other provinces would have, using public funds.

Mr. Speaker, he talks about short-term loans. He talks about long-term borrowing. Well, we are, in this bill, asking the legislature to pass an amendment so that we can invest in short-term investments.

The hon. member, I think, missed the whole amendment, because he is talking about long-term investments; he is talking about us borrowing money and what have you. This bill simply asks the legislature to pass this very minor amendment so that we are able to take some of the funds which we have on a day to day basis, on a week to week basis, and invest it wisely so that we can do what we have for years done in Sask Tel, try and keep the rates for the public of Saskatchewan reasonable and the short-term

investments will do even more of that.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure I move second reading of this bill.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Cody (Minister of Telephones) that Bill No. 23 — **An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act** be now read a second time.

MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this bill. Perhaps I would have said very little if it hadn't been for yesterday's session in this House. Under section 15(1) we are asked now to authorize a bill to give the Sask Housing Corporation the authority to form any company or corporation that it sees fit. I think it is going a little farther than I am prepared to do and I'm certainly not willing to agree with that clause. But the clause that I find more serious is clause 5 asking for an extension from \$200 million to \$300 million. As it was pointed out yesterday time after time by the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow), once we pass this particular bill Sask Housing can spend that \$100 million or draw that \$100,000 without this House ever having an opportunity to decide whether the ventures they are going on are good ventures or bad. I believe it is a mistake for this legislature to pass that kind of legislation. I think if Sask Housing needs money that they should come back to this House, give an adequate description of why they need the money and what they are going to do with it and ask for an extension of the borrowing limit at that time. If they win approval for a project which is worthy, fine, go ahead. But to ask for a blanket approval of \$100 million giving absolutely no information as to what that money will be used for, whether it is to be used in this year, in the next five years or when, I think is going too far. I'm not prepared as a member of this legislature to vote in favor of a bill that's going to give Sask Housing that kind of authority. If the authority were there for us to bring it back to the legislature in the form of a vote, such as the one we dealt with yesterday, and we had an opportunity to question and find out what the funds were to be used for before they are spent, then I would not have concern about this type of bill. After the performance of yesterday I intend to vote against it and my caucus will vote against it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to very briefly reiterate the comments of the member for Rosetown-Elrose and state categorically that we will oppose this bill in the strongest possible fashion. I don't think any bill could further exemplify the point of yesterday's debate which consumed the bulk of the afternoon. Because what Sask Housing is asking this Assembly for is a borrowing limit of up to \$300,000,000. In future years, the money that they are going to borrow in any given fiscal year, published in estimates, will simply be larger. If this government, by some minor miracles, is still in power there will again be no vote, if they have their way, no discussion, no questions.

Mr. Speaker, I note that in the current fiscal year of 1979 ending March 31, 1980, Sask Housing Corporation is asking to borrow or will borrow, because as the Attorney General so eloquently pointed out yesterday, votes on borrowing are statutory. Sask Housing Corporation in this fiscal year will borrow \$43,400,000. That is what they propose to borrow for this year. You know, it's not very tough to borrow money. It can be a little more difficult to pay it back. Mr. Minister, when we come to this Vote 49 . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Did you take your ugly pills this morning, Herman?

MR. THATCHER: — . . . \$43,400,000. When we come to that and we attempt to ask the minister in charge of Sask Housing Corporation for what purposes he intends to use the \$43,000,000, I expect again that there will be an attempt to stonewall us. I don't know how successful that attempt may be but I would like to make a minor predication and that is that the minister is going to get on his feet when the lead question comes to him. What are you going to do with \$43,000,000? What will probably happen is that the Minister of Telephones (Mr. Cody) will be motioned to stay in his seat and the Attorney General will get to his feet and he will say ask that in Crown corporations. Don't ask it today. Ask it in Crown corporations.

Now under this system, Mr. Speaker, we can ask the question of what are you going to use the \$43,000,000 for in the Crown Corporations Committee of 1981. Yesterday I made that comment and the Attorney General turned red in the face and started yelling not true, not true. For his edification I perhaps should explain why it is true. The money that the Sask Housing Corporation will borrow this year is for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980. An annual report for this fiscal year on behalf of Sask Housing Corporation will not be presented until the 1981 spring session of this legislature. Therefore, in 1981, the opposition will have an opportunity to ask the minister in charge of Sask Housing Corporation what he wanted to do with the \$43,400,000. But now, Mr. Speaker, what is going to happen when Vote 48, which is this request, the statutory request, comes to the Assembly sometime during this session? When the question is posed, what are you going to do with the money you propose to borrow in this fiscal year, the Attorney General will get to his feet and say Crown corporations — get your information in Crown corporations. Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that back in the days when the Crown corporations did not borrow vast sums of money, and back in the days when the provincial debt was at somewhat of a controllable figure, perhaps there was some justification for having such votes, such borrowing listed under statutory legislation.

Mr. Speaker, that situation has changed and changed dramatically since this government came to power in 1971, and I refer specifically to the overall provincial debt. From slightly under \$500 million, by the end of the fiscal year it will approach (if not exceed) \$2.6 billion. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the situation has changed and obviously the opposition would be highly remiss in its duties if we were not to vigorously fight bills such as this.

Mr. Speaker, what this bill is doing is simply enabling Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to present even larger amounts than what we see in Vote 49 — even large than the \$43,400, 000 — because we are giving them, theoretically, another \$100 million in which they simply borrow with no accountability to anyone, least of all to this legislature.

The minister said, oh. Now, Mr. Minister, as you are closing debate tell me where the accountability comes in. Please tell me. Please don't tell the Crown corporations, because I want to tell you, categorically that I can't ask you about your spending this year until the spring session of 1981, if we are going to accept the government's answers of yesterday's debate. So please, when you are closing debate, tell us where you are accountable to this side of the House.

Mr. Minister, I suggest o you, were our positions reversed, that is not completely improbable that you would stand here and ask me, what are you going to do with that

\$43,400,000 and if I, perhaps, took the same attitude as the Attorney General has taken (and probably will continue to take) you might possibly have a few question raised in your mind. However, Mr. Minister, in the meantime I invite you to consult with the member for Lakeview (Mr. McArthur). Perhaps from his days as a bureaucrat he can be of some assistance to you.

Mr. Speaker, we will oppose this bill in the strongest possible terms. We have a great deal more to say on this matter and I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding (Minister of Agriculture) that Bill No. 36 — **An Act to amend The Department of Agriculture Act** be now read a second time.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 36 refers to grants to be made by the Department of Agriculture to different areas of this province. If the government has its way I assume the opposition will not have a chance to scrutinize where the money will go. They'll do it like we have seen them do it for SEDCO for the last while, it's none of our business and so forth. That's what they want to do. They want to give money away again without having the House scrutinize where it's going and make sure it's for good purposes.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that they have been giving our funds for years. It is a known fact. In fact, one of the members talked about grants to the national farmers, Saskatchewan livestock, or other groups that I used to be involved with.

I think, Mr. Speaker, what I would like the minister to do is produce for this House, before we go into Committee of the Whole, the people that will qualify for these type of grants, the regulations and conditions. Could he supply us with the people who have qualified for these grants in the past, the qualifications they used in other areas, the type of criteria they are going to be using in this area?

I look at one part of the bill where it says, promote, develop and expand. Is that expanding to the betterment of agriculture for everybody in the province or for a concerned group about a concerned project only?

The Lieutenant-Governor in Council, I gather, is going to give our any amount he wishes over \$10,000. There is no limit on what he is allowed to give out before he comes back to the House for permission. It seems that the minister, under \$10,000, can maybe give two or three grants to the same group in one year. I would question if that will be allowed in the regulations. I would like, if you can, the regulations before Committee of the Whole in this bill. Until we can see the regulations and know the criteria of who will qualify to make sure that it does not involve political patronage, I will have to oppose this type of bill.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding (Minister of Agriculture) that Bill No. 47 — **An Act to amend The Land Bank Act** be now read a second time.

MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments to make on Bill 47. Primarily the thing that I suppose disturbs this side of the House is that the government is again asking for \$200 million into its land bank program. The other day when the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) was present in the House speaking on the motion on the land back program, among other thing he made reference to a case in the Kindersley area. I would just like to reply to the minister's comment on that Kindersley situation.

What happened was that a small article came out in the newspaper indicating that the land bank program was going to buy 60 some quarters of land from the rural municipality of Kindersley.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Oh, that's as much as Messer's farm.

MR. ANDREW: — This was not completely passed and as a result some people became very concerned about the fact that this was going to be sold. Of course as everyone knows, if you are prepared to look into the legislation question, any land that has been taken as tax title cannot be sold in that way. It must of course be put up either to tender or to public auction. What I did as an MLA representing an umber of the constituents in that area was simply petition the rural municipality not to try to sell the land, in which case court would have to upset that decision, but to call a meeting of the local people. As a result of that action a meeting of the local people was in fact called. And the people in Kindersley, the farmers in the Kindersley area, at that meeting were very well represented, almost 100 people at it. They made it very clear that they did not wish their rural municipality council to sell this land to the land back. And as a result of that the local council responded as they had no other choice, and didn't in fact sell that land. What they did of course was through our suggestions, in fact the suggestion of a couple of constituents of mine, that there were two types of property, cultivated property and grassland. All people concerned decided that they should sell the grassland and that they should maintain the cultivated land and that's in fact what they did. They developed some formula for renting that land out and they continued to rent it out.

Now a couple of the concerns that I had about this particular sale as it was set out in the newspapers was that all the land would be rented to the existing tenant — not according to land bank regulations but to the existing tenant, which included members of the rural municipal council, which I felt was wrong. I felt that everybody in the area should have a right to it. In fact there were people renting that land from the rural municipality that would according to the suggestion put forth by the Land Bank Commission, be able to continue to farm the land under land bank when those people had four and five sections of land. Again, I thought that was wrong. So I challenged the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) to say that I, as an MLA, did anything wrong in the Kindersley situation. I notice he's not in the House today.

He also made some comments about some of the cases raised by the opposition with regard to land bank. One was the Plato case, that was the first one we raised and indicated that we did not document it but we presented the certified copies of title. What else do you want? What was that situation? The situation was basically this (and it's a common practise and if you check with the lawyers and the accountants of Saskatchewan, of course, their information is confidential and cannot be released, but I'm advised by many of them that there are many of these transactions and here's what's happening) land comes up for sale, farmer buys the land in price A, turns around and sells the land back to the land bank at price A, minus \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$10,000. I

don't think the land bank was geared for that. I don't think that was really the situation because surely, by doing that the person that sells it back, that buys in and sells it back and takes a loss, he has the advantage over, perhaps the farmer that doesn't have that \$10,000, that doesn't have that \$6,000, who maybe more deservedly should have that land in question. I think it's a bona fide point and I'm not trying to destroy the land bank concept. I'm not trying to destroy small farms by that. But clearly, I think the government has to recognize that there's something behind that and that's not a proper way of doing it and perhaps somewhere you could amend it.

The second case he referred to is Strass, but we'll call it the Strasbourg case and there, the farmer turns around and sells his land to the land bank and perhaps he had some financial problems. He sells his land to the land bank and fine that's the law, that's what he's doing. I have no objection to that. He sells it to the land bank and determines he's going to get X number of dollars, some of which he's going to use to pay off his debt. Nothing wrong with that. But then he turns around and takes his money and buys property in the city of Regina, nothing wrong with, provided that he gets out of the business of farming, but he locks himself into that farm, continues farming because he has a right under the regulation under the act to continue the farming, buys the property in the city and all I say in that situation, if he's going to continue farming. He doesn't deserve to have his land purchased so he can speculate on property in the city. I don't think that's the proper purpose of it.

The third situation we brought up was the Argue case. I don't think land bank was intended for this type of situation. I'm just going to draw the analogy here of what they type of case we'll talk about in the Argue case and don't tie me with the exact facts of the Argue case. But this can in fact happen, this is what can happen: a farmer can have four sections of land, and he can have four children, four sections of land and four children. He takes his land and he sells it to the land bank. With the proceeds of that land he takes and buys more land and if you follow that through, what he could do is double the size of the farm to eight sections by selling this land to the land bank, turning around and theoretically buying the same or some more land back with that money at the same price. So he has doubled his land now to eight sections, because he has had four children.

Now we're saying, well, the children have to stay on the land. Now, how do you insure that? A contract? The child has the permit book in his name. Perhaps the child is there in the seeding operation and the harvest operation. Surely you can't expect the land bank and I don't expect the land bank, to go out there and insure that the child is, in fact, out there farming the land, doing the summer fallow, doing the spraying, doing the seeding and the other operations. I think this is a legitimate thing and I think it's something that the land bank has to look at.

The final point was raised by the member for Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson), in which, I understand from question period today, the matter has been investigated but we haven't had the answer as to what it was. But what he raised there was another serious charge against the land bank. What that was is this. The farmer turned around and profited from the purchase from land bank. Now all I say about this act is that, again, the Land Bank Commission is asking for \$200 million, \$200 million! I just cannot, in all honesty, support any type of legislation like that when the minister is not prepared to sit down and seriously look at some of the legitimate claims we have raised. For that reason I cannot support that bill.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to rise today to speak on this land bank subject because I've been speaking in opposition to the land bank for quite

some time and, unfortunately, without any success whatsoever. I'm beginning to wonder whether that's my fault or theirs.

I surely have been reviewing the things I have been saying about land bank and that even is regrettable because I find that the things I predicted in the other speeches I made in this legislature regarding land bank have in fact today come true.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to have to make my arguments even stronger, I suppose. I'm going to have to document, along with the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) evidence to substantiate the arguments we placed from this side of the House in opposition to land bank. It seems almost impossible, Mr. Speaker, to convince this government that in fact they are making some mistakes and there are corrections they are going to have to make.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this government is not completely at fault. There have been instances in other programs, and I would cite one being the foreign ownership legislation. Upon speaking to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) and suggesting to him and speaking to the legislature on that subject that controls needed to be tightened up, this government took the advice of the Minister of Agriculture that in part came from this side of the House and the controls were tightened up. Mr. Speaker, possibly that is the route we are going to have to take with regard to land bank. I can understand the Minister of Agriculture being in a very difficult position as his party has campaigned on the philosophy of land bank but that has been this government's bag and I don't thin, as I've said before, necessarily the Minister of Agriculture's bag. I think that he is open to suggestion. It is just a question of whether or not, Mr. Speaker, this government will allow him to accept those suggestions and responsible positions on land bank that are presented from this side of the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we are suggesting with regard to land bank is much similar to foreign ownership controls and that is that the regulations governing the administration of land bank must be tightened up. That cannot be argued, not at least effectively nor, Mr. Speaker, responsibly from the government side of the House. Surely they have to take into consideration the documentation which we have provided to them, Mr. Speaker, in this legislature regarding the undermining of the spirit of that act. They are not violating the regulations. They have found the loopholes through the regulations. The very people that we want to stop and that they want to stop abusing that land bank by circumventing the regulations, getting around it, are things that that government and this opposition can agree on, Mr. Speaker. It's a very simple question, why won't you? Why won't you take our recommendations into consideration and tighten up those regulations? Those are the people that you say that you want to stop from abusing the rural land real estate, if you like. They don't want these big land mongers driving up prices but those are the very people that are getting around the regulations of The Land Bank Act. It is those very things, Mr. Speaker, that we as an opposition are saying they must tighten up, block the loopholes and let's stop that abuse.

That's the recommendation, Mr. Speaker, from this side of the House with regard to land bank. The question, Mr. Speaker, of whether or not the intent of the land bank program was good or bad has never been disputed, not from this side of the House. The intent was to provide a sale of land or a way for the retiring farmer to move out of farming and on the other hand to provide a mechanism by which the young farmers or the new farmer could move into farming. Nobody disagrees with that, in particular the Conservative opposition. We do not agree or disagree with the philosophy of the land bank.

Well, Mr. Speaker, any members of this government who are not clear on just what our position has been consistently since 1975, need only to refer themselves to my remarks made on the land bank in this legislature, and I would ask them to do that because there is nothing in there, not one thing that would lead this government . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — Well, I see the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Prebble) is pounding his desk and he wasn't even here then. I see another new member back there pounding his desk and he wasn't here then either. That's all right because they are not going to be here four years from now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the intent of this legislation now to further increase the spending on land bank land is a position that we are not going to find very easy to accept, if we are going to accept it at all. Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, I don't see how we can.

We are looking at three times the amount of land bank in some rural municipalities in the Moosomin constituency now, Mr. Speaker. We are looking at a trend, whether this government will admit it or not, of total state ownership of not just farmland in Saskatchewan, but of all lands in Saskatchewan. They will deny that. But, Mr. Speaker, they have no way, no evidence to support that denial.

Well, it would seem that this government is finding it difficult to understand whether or not we are for the land bank or opposed to the land bank. So, it would seem, Mr. Speaker, that I would have to retrack very briefly and tell them that we are for the intent of the land bank program, or any program that can provide a mechanism for transfer of land from the older to the younger generation, if the land bank was accomplishing that, then we would support it.

Mr. Speaker, since the land bank is not accomplishing that, we cannot support it. Until the government changes some of the regulations in order that it in fact accomplishes the intent of the original land bank act, Mr. Speaker, we will oppose land bank. Politically, we shouldn't be opposing it at all. We should be just letting them roll on with the land bank program in the manner that they are, because it almost cost the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) his seat in the last election. It most definitely will in the next election. Every rural NDP candidate's neck is in a noose because of the land bank program the way it is today. Mr. Speaker, we are the ones who are going to pull the rope. Definitely.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what this government is taking away from perspective young farmers in Saskatchewan is the right of capital accumulation. We had a farm group here today, laying complaints, not just to government but to opposition, because they know how effective this opposition has been in the past in bringing about change.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the very arguments that these farm organizations are making is that there is no effective control on prices, no effective control on costs, everything is up in the air. Mr. Speaker, this government, through the land bank, is adding to those increasing costs. They have added one more bidder for the lands of this province and whenever you add another bidder, for any product, the price ultimately is going to go up. They don't like it, Mr. Speaker, when I cite the example of the first person who ever bought land bank land in the province of Saskatchewan. Where I talked with that individual and asked him how he liked the land bank program and his answer was, to

the member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen), he said, well, I think it was all right. Now he did and he said it was all right. I said, O.K.

Now then, Mr. Speaker, I gave that man an alternative and that alternative was the Progressive Conservative alternative to the land bank program, Mr. Speaker. I asked him, now had you been given that choice which program would you have taken? And he ultimately and naturally said, well, I would have naturally opted for your program because I would have been the legitimate landowner five years ago. I would have had \$22,000 profit today, if I wanted to, if I chose to, rather than the government making \$22,000 on the backs of perspective young farmers in the province. Because that, in effect, is what they are doing.

Never mind the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the government doesn't have to pay capital gain tax on that \$22,000 and that farmer if he chose to capitalize on that \$22,000 profit, would have to pay capital gain tax on \$11,000.

Mr. Speaker, there are many problems with the land bank as it exists today. I would like to give this government, and in particular the Minister of Agriculture an opportunity to work with us, change the land bank program . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter), you know, he laughs at that suggestion. Now, I don't like it, Mr. Speaker, when members of the government laugh at the opposition when we are suggesting that we work together in a united body so that we can represent 61 constituencies in the province of Saskatchewan and not just 44.

Mr. Speaker, that is a point that this government needs to learn and learn fast. Because you can sit over there and be cocksure of yourselves, if you like, but it is not going to be long Mr. Speaker, when that very attitude is going to be the attitude that defeats you. I suggest to you . . . maybe I shouldn't, if I am looking to be in power, if I want to grab power as you say Progressive Conservatives do. That is nonsense, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that I have a concern for the residents of this province. I have a concern for rural Saskatchewan and I have a concern for the farmers of this province. Mr. Speaker, a concern that I'm prepared to lay aside my political career, lay aside my political interests, Mr. Speaker, and make suggestions to this government that they listen to our suggestions from time to time and we work together, Mr. Speaker, to make meaningful changes. We want to make meaningful changes now to The Land Bank Act, Mr. Speaker, because this government is not accepting those suggestions we make on this side of the House because there seems to be no way, Mr. Speaker, of getting through to the, that we have no alternatives but, Mr. Speaker, to oppose the land bank. Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, I have made many attempts in this House to attempt to convince this government that there are some problems that we need to seriously look at. I'm prepared to compromise some. Are you prepared to compromise? No, they're not, Mr. Speaker. We're prepared to give to the people of Saskatchewan but they are not. Mr. Speaker, very simply, that is the frustrating part of being a member of opposition in this House. Mr. Speaker, it's for those reasons that I only have to oppose this Land Bank Act. I have to oppose the increase in spending and, Mr. Speaker, that is all that I will have to say on this matter for today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) will want to consider the remarks that have been said by the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) and the member for Moosomin (Mr.

Birkbeck). I guess it is, on land bank, so I'm not going to make a speech today which should receive great applause from everybody. I simply want to say that . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: —He moved it. He closed the debate, boys. He closed the debate. Let out guys go.

MR. ROMANOW: —That's right. You guys will have lots of time to go. If I adjourn the debate, you'll have lots of time to go. You may not today but you'll have lots of time to go. Mr. Speaker, I honestly just don't understand what it is about the opposition. They've had two speakers on this bill, Mr. Speaker. I remind the House that on the orders of the day today, of bills which have been around for a month now, they have stood at least four or five of those bills and when I get up to say a few words and adjourn the debate, there is an opposition problem. Mr. Speaker, I am going to adjourn this debate to the Minister of Agriculture. I think the Minister of Agriculture will want to peruse the remarks and others will, I will say before I adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker, that the reasons that have been offered today of the statements that have been offered today by the opposition about land bank are but new variations of the perennial attack on land bank that members of Liberals and the members of the Progressive Conservative Party have been carrying on ever since land bank was introduced and passed in the House. Mr. Speaker, these criticisms, these serious faults which the members opposite have raised, are the kinds of serious faults and complaints that they originally had about land bank when we introduced the legislation. You will recall some of them Mr. Speaker. Some of the major complaints were that we were to establish a major land holding, major landlord-tenant situation with respect to the farmers of Saskatchewan. That was the major accusation. They said we would not be selling the land back to the farmers, Mr. Speaker, and they were proven wrong. They accused us of wanting to somehow convert all of the farmers into the landlord-tenant situation and they predicted that in a socialist government such as ours, we would not be selling back the land. Mr. Speaker, they were wrong.

They made allegations, not direct allegations but implications, that lease allocations with respect to land bank did not exhibit the utmost degree of fairness and impartiality. They could not document one single case of it, Mr. Speaker. They have not documented one case of an unfair allocation in this area.

MR. SPEAKER: —Order, order. I recall recently that the Attorney General sat very quietly and listened to the debate and I think other members of the House should give the same kind of attention to the Attorney General as he gave to other members when they were speaking. That's only fair and I think it will aid the debate in the House. Perhaps we can move the work of the House along if we all try to observe that common rule which is not only parliamentary procedure in this House, but is a rule of common decency as well.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, these kinds of criticisms we have heard today are in the category for the criticisms we have heard in the past, the criticisms which I have enumerated. The criticism that we would not sell the land, notwithstanding what it said in the legislation, was proven to be false. The criticism which said that the leases were going to be allocated on a partial, not an impartial basis was proven to be wrong. The kinds of statements we have heard today from the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew), who is a little more tempered and reasoned in his remarks than the member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck), in effect say, I am not necessarily speaking against land bank but there are these problems and then there is this problem and there is that problem and there is over there another problem. The sum totality of the problems, Mr.

Speaker, would make a reasonable man conclude no other conclusion but that the PCs are obviously opposed to the land bank approach.

The member for Moosomin is well known for his opposition to the land bank concept. The member for Moosomin's position on agriculture generally, for that matter, is very well known, Mr. Speaker. We all recall his statements made a couple of months before the last provincial election which indicated, in effect, that the farmers were not efficient and indicated that the concept of big is bad is perhaps an outmoded concept. This is the statement referred to in the Western Producer. We now the attitude of the member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) on land bank as exhibited by his remarks. Any kind of an agriculture program (which land bank is) that seeks to support and buttress the family units, Mr. Speaker, which seeks to support a method of transfer from father to son, which encourages new young farmers to take to the land, the members opposite give excuses as to what's wrong with the plan. You won't sell the land bank. Your leases are impartial. These people are selling at Z minus another figure, and they profiting on it. The allegations are made one day, never pursued to any extent, Mr. Speaker, in this House subsequently or outside the House subsequently, always very much the kind of accusation which skirmishes on the outside of the central problem, the central issue of this bill which is the concept of land bank.

Now Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that the Progressive Conservatives have any commitment to the idea of land bank. WE know that. The member for Moosomin says it. If the Progressive Conservatives are ever the government, which I think is unlikely, what they will do is dismantle land bank totally and completely . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, the member for Wilkie (Mr. Garner) says that he'll give back the land to the people. Mr. Speaker, this is exactly the situation which is happening now with land bank with the mechanism of transferring lands from father to son, in most of the cases. Surely, Mr. Speaker, if in rural Saskatchewan we hope ever to achieve and maintain the concept of family farm, and what is based on that, villages and towns, this mechanism of family farm ownership and keeping it in the family farm has got to be objective of all Saskatchewan people. Members opposite are saying state ownership. I don't believe that is state ownership. I believe that that is the transfer mechanism. I think what the term state ownership really means is a buzz word, a Progressive Conservative buzz word, a Progressive Conservative buzz phrase designed to try and get some fears (I don't believe that they exist as much as they think they do) in the minds of farmers to turn against the land bank concept.

Mr. Speaker, we fought the election in 1975 on these kinds of statements that we've heard today, and we won it. We fought the election in 1978 on the same kinds of general accusation and won it again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: —I don't know, Mr. Speaker, when it is the opposition will learn, if ever, about the acceptability of land bank. I've concluded like my colleague from Regina and my colleague from Redberry have that they probably never will learn the concept of land bank as they don't Mr. Speaker, by analogy the concept of such things like government insurance, the concept of medicare. These are concepts in principle which they oppose fundamentally. Philosophy of land bank is a philosophy which they oppose fundamentally. The philosophy of medicare is a philosophy that they oppose fundamentally and the result is, Mr. Speaker, that parties like ours are doomed (if I can put it that way) to defend land bank, to defend medicare, to defend our concept of rural

Saskatchewan each and every election, thus the need for the farmers of this province to be ever vigilant lest the PC Party should assume power in the province of Saskatchewan.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that while not being perfect, the program is far from perfect and there are difficulties, I say, Mr. Speaker, that it is a positive program on balance. A positive proposal by the New Democratic Party to the family farm concept in Saskatchewan which remains an outstanding example of our view in the light of the silence, the total silence of the PCs opposite as to what their approach to agriculture is. Mr. Speaker, if they have their views on agriculture, they would allow the concepts of the member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) to have his day, big is better would not be an outmoded concept — the very thing the land bank opposes. Cargill Grain, branch line abandonments and large corporate farms would be the order of the day. Mr. Speaker, that is the philosophy. What is standing in the way of the PC's view of Saskatchewan among other things is the land bank, is the policies and the principles of the land bank. And I want to tell the PC Party, Mr. Speaker, as I adjourn the debate that I welcome the next electoral challenge with the PCs on the concept of family farms and the land bank. Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding (Minister of Agriculture) that Bill No. 49 — **An Act to amend The Conservation and Development Act** be now read a second time.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): —Bill No. 49, Mr. Speaker, The Conservation and Development Act has some excellent points in it and has some bad points in it and it's interesting to note that some of the other bills we've seen today on the same aspect have some good points and some bad points. For example, we say in a bill that we'll change statutory votes in the House and not let members vote another bill that was introduced wants to raise the increase of the borrowing power from \$100 million to \$300 million and not give the members of the opposition the right to examine where the money is going . . .

MR. SPEAKER: —Order, order. The member is debating another issue which he is not permitted by the rules to debate now. I wonder if the member could deal with the issue which is before the House, Bill No. 49.

MR. KATZMAN: —Now, in this bill, Mr. Speaker, some of the areas seem to indicate that the people who are affected by it will not have a total vote or say on what happens similar to other bills we have seen in the day. I suggest, as I said earlier, that there are portions of this bill that I can agree with, the same as there are other bills in which there are portions I can agree with.

I suggest that if the minister really wanted to put good solid legislation before the House, he would bring in the good parts of this bill with better explanations of why he is attempting to do what he states to do. Therefore, I suggest when the minister winds up debate on Bill 49, that he indicate more clearly on some of the aspects of this bill, what the intent is, and what the feelings of those affected are going to be. I would recommend that until that time comes, I cannot totally agree with this bill, and I will be waiting for his wrap up in Committee of the Whole to make further comments.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding (Minister of Agriculture) that Bill No. 50 — **An Act to amend The Watershed Associations Act** be now read a second time.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, the watershed bill has some interesting portions in it. It seems to give some power away and I'm not just sure whether it is desirable by those affected in these suggested watershed amendments.

It is interesting to note that within the amendments there is going to be some payment to some individuals which is probably due and just in certain areas. It is interesting to note that this bill is similar to the last bill which I just spoke on. I said there are some areas which are excellent and some areas which are giving problems.

Once again, when the minister's seconding speech was read there were certain areas left unclear. It is interesting to note, as we have been debating for the last several days in the House, that in some ways the government hesitates to give us information. I wonder about some of the powers in this bill, from the past experiences I have seen from the Attorney General today and the last day or so, blocking the opposition from asking questions on the spending of money in some areas, as he may attempt to do in this bill.

Now, I realize that in the amendment of the bill the money area is not talked about, but in the original bill there are some concepts to money. Therefore, I believe, seeing as how we are amending an original bill, I can discuss that now. I use as a comparison to this bill the SEDCO money that has been talked about for the last few days in this House where under statutory amounts and where statutory amounts appear in other bills that the members on the other side say that the members of the opposition have no right to discuss them or bring up questions about the statutory votes. I suggest that within this concept in this area, seeing statutory rates are affected in this bill, I assume that I can talk about the custom and usage of the government's statutory areas in other bills. I would suggest from what we have seen for the last several days where in asking about a \$21 million statutory, when we talk statutory here we will not be allowed to debate it and be able to ask where it's being spent and how it's being spent and if it's the best for the people. I refer to other statutory areas, for example the \$100 million in the land bank, the \$300 million, we will never get to vote on that as an opposition, if we agree with that once they pass their bill with their vast majority. I suggest in this bill we may have the same problems with the government as they take statutory rates and tell us, you don't have a say on the, we're going to do as we please with them.

You know, it sounds a little like Otto Lang and his user pay policy in some ways. We'll tell you what we're doing and you just do it and crow rate and all the rest of it, he likes to tell how he is doing it. Back to the bill . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . oh, the member can't keep up with the House. Well, if the member would be listening, keeping in tune with the House, he would be O.K.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, some portions of the bill seem very adequate and required, some portions of this bill seem very ill conceived.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Kind of rotten-like.

MR. KATZMAN: —That's maybe an excellent word. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that my real concerns lie within an area where we were going to see another performance by the Attorney General or like we saw from the Minister of Industry and Commerce (Mr. Vickar) for the last few days, on the statutory rates and how they say we have no right to talk on them or to question them about them and so forth. I therefore suggest, Mr. Speaker, when the minister comes back for his closing debate on Bill No. 50, he makes reference to, as I have done, the other bills where statutory rates are affected. I suggest that maybe statutory rates should not be put into these bills and maybe we should be coming before the House to allow the opposition the right to decide if the money that they are requesting should be allotted to them or not. Once again, I must refer to the hoax that I think the Attorney General has played on the opposition for the last several days about the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: —Order. It's stretching my credibility of understanding when the member for Rosthern is speaking because he is referring to other debates. I don't mind a reference to a debate occasionally, but when the substance and main portion of the member's comments seem to be other debates and other actions that have taken place in this House and not on the principle of this bill, then I think the member is off the subject. I would caution the member to be on the subject, to speak to the principle of this bill.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I will take your remarks into consideration as I wind up my comments on this area. I suggest that my concerns for this bill are because of what I've seen in the House and, therefore, in Committee of the Whole, I will have numerous questions for the minister on these concerns on this bill. Therefore, I suggest that at the time I receive those answers from the second reading, I will have to reconsider my position.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS — VOTE 24

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Chairman, the hon. members opposite requested some information on Wednesday, I guess. I will provide what we have so far gathered together.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I will table for all members, as I announced I would do a week or two ago, the unconditional grant, or the equalization grant, for rural municipalities for 1978. I will table that. They asked for 1979, 1978, and 1977, both for the rurals and for the urbans. We haven't as yet, put that together.

I think a question was asked regarding senior staff's salaries. I have that available, both for rural affairs and for urban affairs. I think a question was asked about consultants on Saskatoon river edge and consultants for the regional studies. I have that information available and I will forward it to the municipal affairs critic, the member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Swan) and he can distribute it from there.

ITEM 1 (Continues)

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): —With regard to the special planning commissions, can the minister advise which ones are having particular problems in dealing with the local issues. I gather there are some that are having more problems than others. Would you mind indicating the status of, in particular, the ones with the great problems?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think, generally speaking, we are reasonably pleased with this development. It is going to take a while I think as the hon. member will know. Mr. Chairman, the two commissions which have had more than their share of the problems have been the Pheasant Hills and the Flying Creek.

The Pheasant Hills problem, regarding cottage development, I think is coming and there is a meeting of the Flying Creek, this coming week and it's hoped that we can sort out some of the issues there. The hon. member will have noticed that we've been making amendments quite regularly as we develop this process and as the commission develop their process. I think given a bit more time it will be sorted out. We feel and I think the commissions feel that we are on the right track. It just takes a while to get it going properly.

MR. LANE: — I think the problems, particularly with Flying Creek are significant and there's a great amount of distrust with that particular commission and I'm sure that's been communicated to the minister. With regard to Flying Creek, I think, a review of members of the commission by the minister may, in fact, be in order. I think there is a desire among the residents of that particular commission that the matter in fact works and that unless things are taken in hand, distrust may exist for some considerable period of time.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has raised a point. I point out to him that the councils themselves involved in the area do recommend their people to the minister. We followed their recommendations. The hon. member knows I have the power under the act to add other individuals representative of the broader community. I take the point as given by the member as a concern.

MR. LANE: — My question now deals, and it was a matter of some debate in the past, with the land-use study that went on around the province. Obviously there is no objection in principle to a land-use study. It's probably long overdue. What colored a lot of the land-use studies and struck me as totally irrelevant to a land-use study and brought a great deal of partisan political input was one of the criteria being a review of a suitable land tenure policy for the province. Now a land tenure policy is totally irrelevant to the matter of land use once a decision is made as to the use to which a particular area is to be put. It is not a land-use policy whether the form of that operation be it a corporation, an individual, co-operative, whatever. I suggest that that criterion so selected was one that perhaps did harm to a land-use study in the province of Saskatchewan. I appreciate the minister's comments.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I'm a little stuck here, Mr. Chairman. I take it that the hon. member is talking about the broad land use study that was headed up by the Department of Environment, and involved very heavily the Department of Agriculture. There is no significant involvement by the Department of Municipal Affairs. The area in which the Department of Municipal Affairs was involved was in the Qu'Appelle as part of the Qu'Appelle development.

MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Minister, I asked you for figures of the same type for '77 and '78. Will those be provided at another time?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes, as soon as they're ready, I'll forward them to the hon. member.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — I'd like also to have some idea of how the conditional grants compare over the last three years. Is that also available?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes, we will provide the road grant allocations both to main farm access and for super grid, with respect to super grid only for last years and the year before. As yet we haven't allocated the super grid, the \$2.9 million of super grid. As soon as it's allocated we will provide the information to the hon. member.

MR. G. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to ask the minister, I might be wrong here but I'd like to ask what connection the Department of Municipal Affairs has with provincial planning, if any. Maybe I'm in the wrong department here. Is the Department of Municipal Affairs connected with provincial planning department?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member means zoning and development control, and the approval of the community planning branch of those kinds of things, yes, we are involved. We are the department by which all those are approved. I don't know what the hon. member means by provincial planning. If he has some other thought in mind perhaps he could explain himself and we could provide an answer.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, my concern is this. I was at a meeting in Davidson on Saturday night where three municipalities met for a banquet and they had a gentleman come in from Prince Albert showing community planning. It's a problem in my area where some people want to build in the edge of Davidson. There seems to be a contradiction between provincial planning and the municipal idea shown by this evening, as I see it. I'll just explain it to you, this way, Mr. Minister.

They showed a slide of this cluster planning of homes around the towns and there were 13 or 14 different items that you had to abide by before you could do this. These 13 items were contradicted when I talked to a man by the name of Garry Parker, provincial planning. Is this the same department? Maybe I'm not in the right department here now.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think you are involved in the right department. I think what happened at your SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) or your municipal meeting was they invited someone down from Prince Albert. Prince Albert has a regional planning set-up, which they call district planning, which involves the city of Prince Albert and the surrounding R.M.s. They have had that in place for some time. It is likely the council people in your area invited someone down who was working in that Prince Albert district and had them talk about and explain the kind of planning work they are doing up there.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask one more question. In regard to provincial planning, our problem in this particular town is two municipalities arguing with the town on where to build — where you can or where you can't. The two municipalities are having an argument with the town of Davidson and provincial planning and the two municipalities have been arguing for over a years while people are waiting to build. Could you enlighten me on the municipal stand on this? What are their views on building around the edges of towns, say within a half a mile to one mile of town?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think we support and we encourage co-operation and in this

case it would be co-operation between the two R.M.s and the town of Craik I would assume . . .

MR. MUIRHEAD: — No, Davidson.

MR. MacMURCHY: — . . . the town of Davidson. We would encourage that co-operation and if there is anything the Community Planning Branch can do to assist in getting them to form a district or an area, whatever they wish to call it, we can provide that assistance. We would support plan development in that broad community. So I think what I can do is have someone in the Community Planning Branch get in touch with the hon. member and perhaps discuss with him what is going on out there. Maybe the staff member and the hon. member could go out to a meeting at Davidson and meet with the three councils involved.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Chairman, I would just like to thank the minister. That sounds really good, thanks very much.

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — Mr. Chairman, I have here a copy of a letter that I know was sent to you from the Rural Municipality of Brock, No. 64. It makes reference to a conversation the people from this particular R.M. and some other R.M.s as well had with you at their annual convention. It says that at a joint meeting of district 1 and district 5 the following resolution was passed unanimously.

That there be a new formula set out for super-grid, grid and main farm access road construction grants.

This resolution was passed for the following reasons:

1. The percentage of grant is not high enough, especially for low-assessed municipalities.
2. Low-assessed municipalities find it generally more costly to construct and maintain roads because of variations in soil conditions.
3. Farmers in low-assessed municipalities find it more costly to farm with more applications of field work and more maintenance of equipment, contributing to more travel on roads, and thus contributing to a higher amount of provincial sales tax.

He goes on to cite several examples and I'm sure that he's discussed with you from the Reeve of Rural Municipality 64, Clarence Hookenson.

I think his suggestions are valid and fair, bearing in mind that low-assessed municipalities usually are assessed low because they have lots of rocks, lots of water runways, the need for more culverts, and difficult soil conditions. I wonder if you've given any consideration to his request and, if you have, could you indicate to us what it is?

MR. MacMURCHY: — There are two requests in the letter. I haven't yet responded to the letter, although I did meet with the group in Saskatoon and we talked about main farm access and about super-grid formula. With respect to the main farm access, Mr. Chairman, it is on an equalized basis and perhaps in order to give the hon. member an idea of what the equalized basis means, I could provide him with the main farm access

formula as it applies to the municipalities from the constituency, which raised the concern.

The super-grid construction formula is on the same principle as the main farm access. It's on an equalized basis and averages 50 to some 70 per cent. I think this was the broader concern of the group that came in. I had to indicate to them, as I indicate to the hon. member, that our policy of super-grid is presently under review by a committee established by myself, involving Mr. Clappitt, the Deputy Minister and representatives of SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) and municipal government. I hope to have them reporting very shortly. They'll be looking at the mileage, the formula and the issue of maintenance areas, which the hon. member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Katzman) raised the other day.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Chairman, I take it then, by their request, that they are of the opinion that their maintenance area should receive a grant of approximately 78 per cent. I take it from your comments that this is in fact under review, not specifically for them but generally, and the answer then is not no.

MR. MacMURCHY: — It is not no. It's under review. I think with the main farm access, we've got to have some pretty good arguments to change that formula because it's been around for a long time and it's worked pretty well. It's build about 12,000 miles of roads. But with respect to the super grid, I think it's not no. We're taking a look.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I want to thank the minister for sending over the information on the consultants that I requested last Monday. I have just a few questions on that. There was remuneration paid to Mr. Moriyama of \$132,400 for 1978-79. Can you just indicate to us the amount of work, staff, people involved for that amount of money and for what period of time? How long has he been on the project?

MR. MacMURCHY: — We can't give the kind of details that perhaps the hon. member would like at this time and I'll explain the reason for that in a minute. But the entire firm was involved for about a year, 12 to 13 months. The explanation for not being able to provide that information is simply that we do not have it here. That development was put together on the basis of a committee involving government, university, city, municipality. There was 8 committee representatives of the various staff. Our person, for the provincial government, was Don Moroz who is in the Department of Finance. I think we can provide the information that the hon. member wishes. We'll get it from Mr. Moroz and forward it to him. Perhaps when the finance minister's estimates are on and you wish to ask further questions, that would be an opportunity to do it.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that and I'll wait for that answer and that report but just a couple more questions on it. Is Mr. Moriyama or his firm on a contract basis? Is he hired on a contract basis or is he hired on a cost plus? How much more work do you anticipate and for how much longer do you expect to be engaging his services?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I'm told it's a contract and he's finished his work. There is \$9,000 outstanding to be paid.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The \$141,400 was a contract price and it's now complete?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — O.K. There are two amounts listed under the University of Saskatchewan for 1978-79. Why the breakdown on \$19,000 and then there is \$16,186 for a total of \$35,186.11?

MR. MacMURCHY: — That is the payment for the models, which the hon. member saw, which were done by the university.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You say that Mr. Moriyama's services are now terminated. Will there be another firm hired to continue with the designing and completion of the project?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think the only information I can provide now is that he has completed that contract. We still owe \$9,000 as I have informed the hon. member. Whether there will be a new contract with Moriyama I don't know. That is a decision to be made by a different group than municipal or myself.

I guess the problem is the funding is provided through the Department of Municipal Affairs but, really, we have only been marginally involved in the development and it is not easy for us to answer questions such as, what does the future hold.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — O.K. If I understand this, perhaps the Meewasin project will go into another department of the government. Is that what you are saying? Let me complete the question the. Have you budgeted in 1979-80 estimates an amount for the continuation of the project, whether it is with another firm or the same firm? Is there an estimated budget for the continuation of that project?

MR. MacMURCHY: — There is about \$250,000 in this budget, which will be available to the authority. "The hon. member knows there is legislation coming forward in this session which will establish the authority. This funding will be made available to the authority. It is 40 per cent of what they estimate to spend in this fiscal year and they will make the decisions as an authority.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I take it, Mr. Minister that the 250,000 you are referring to would be coming under subvote 56, item 20 of the urban affairs, of \$237,000. Is that the amount that you are talking about?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes, \$237,000, that would be the item.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — O.K., then it will be the authority's decision as to whom they hire at that time?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you.

MR. KATZMAN: — On the same topic, Mr. Chairman, and if I can get the Attorney General's permission maybe I can get some answers, to assist the minister who is answering questions.

On the authority the project is indicated to be a 100 year project. You indicate that the government's portion of financing to any decision that this authority makes is going to continue to be 40 per cent of the cost. Is that correct?

MR. MacMURCHY: — We're getting ahead of ourselves, Mr. Chairman. I don't think the legislation is before the House. The idea is that it will be a budget of 5 mills on Saskatoon's budget and this particular estimate is 40 per cent of that. I think perhaps the better debate on the issues that the hon. member is seeking to raise can be raised when the bill is debated in the House and likely a more appropriate time would be in Committee of the Whole.

MR. KATZMAN: — I welcome the member's statement because he's getting exactly to my concerns. I don't think we can vote Vote 20 yet because that authority is not established by legislation. So, we may have to delay the vote on Vote 20 for that reason.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, it's an estimate and we've already been funding towards the development from last year's budget. We're providing \$100,000 for a similar kind of development in Moose Jaw and I think we want to allow these kind of estimates to proceed on that basis.

MR. KATZMAN: — The \$100,000 for Moose Jaw is not specifically indicated as a vote and to a special body or authority. I suggest to the minister, if he would wait till the legislation comes into the House on this vote before we can pass it, then at that time the minister will be able to explain the \$237,000, the portion that the government pays and we can compare it to the Wascana Centre Authority. I may be wrong, Mr. Chairman, but the authority does not exist yet and until we have voted the authority into existence, I can't see how we can vote the money. The money to Moose Jaw and the money that you paid last year was in other portions of your estimates for studies, not specifically given to an authority and that's the question I'm really putting to you. Under Item 1, do we have the authority to look at this one or do we have to wait until we pass the piece of legislation?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I don't want to have a long debate over this issue. I leave it with the Assembly. I think we can approve this estimate and proceed with completion of Urban Affairs. I think it's reasonable and I think we'll have an opportunity to debate the specific deal. We've provided general information as it's general knowledge to all the parties concerned and I think we can proceed on that basis.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, could I ask the lawyers or somebody to give a legal recommendation (or the Clerk) on what is the proper procedure for dealing with that vote? Can we vote money to an authority on which we haven't passed legislation for its existence?

MR. THATCHER: — We don't vote money any more in this House. Didn't you hear the Attorney General yesterday?

MR. KATZMAN: — . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I don't want to stall it, Roy, but can we legally do it?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I would argue that perhaps he's got a strong argument for paying the money but I don't agree with him on an argument for providing an estimate for paying the money. However, I leave it with the Assembly.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, on the same subject the hon. member for Rosthern had brought up, it brings to mind the \$130,000 that you referred to as having been spent with the consulting firm. Where was it voted in your Municipal Affairs estimates

last year?

MR. MacMURCHY: — It was provided for in urban affairs under urban development \$100,000 and under administration \$100,000.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, just before you carry on I want to have a look and see where it was. What vote was that?

MR. MacMURCHY: — 2401 and 2437. It wouldn't show there as an estimate but would be provided there as a contractual service.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — 2401 and 24 what?

MR. MacMURCHY: — 2437.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — All right. I have 2401. 2437 — well, I don't see an allowance for \$100,000 unless you've just got it under other expenses and that's all?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That's where it is? Other expenses.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes.

MR. HAM: — Mr. Chairman, last year during estimates in Department of Municipal Affairs I asked the minister if he could give me the administration costs for administering the home owners' grant. I believe his answer was approximately \$100,000. You were good enough to provide that some time later in writing. It turned out the costs were \$350,000. I am wondering if that has increased this year and how much.

MR. MacMURCHY: — I am trying to arrive at the figure and forward it to the hon. member. It will be up since that particular area will be dealing with the new programs — the renter's rebate, the senior citizen's school tax rebate program. There will be much more administration. We will provide the hon. member with the increase as soon as they can sort it out here.

MR. HAM: — Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the minister can tell me then at what point do you reach, what dollar value do you reach, before you feel it is not economic to collect it, versus a tax cut at city hall or a tax cut at the municipal office in a particular municipality?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I think there are probably two reasons: (1) being somewhat selective in the process. For example, we have ceilings as the hon. member knows, and (2) I think a more important issue and I recall debating the issue last year in the estimate the issue of income tax and the farmer and the small businessman. That's a fairly important reason we feel for going the approach we're going. It will cost for the three programs — property improvement grant, senior citizen's, renter's — about \$500,00 for administration.

MR. HAM: — Mr. Chairman, is there any conceivable way that either your computer apparatus or your officials could affect a separation between individuals, homeowners and farmers and businessmen, so that the administration cost could be cut

substantially?

MR. MacMURCHY: — No, I suppose we can take a look at it as the hon. member suggests, My deputy minister puts forward two arguments: (1) that the administration costs are less than 1 per cent; (2) we don't want to pay more than one grant to one person, but we can take the suggestion from the hon. member and the staff can look at it.

MR. HAM: — Just a final question or two, if I may, Mr. Chairman. You may have to explain this in some detail to me because I am not suggesting I totally understand it.

Now, this is in respect to the community grant program as of ending this particular year, I guess. My concern relates to the funding of the proposed swimming pool in Swift Current. I think you may be aware of the fact that it is in jeopardy because of some plans they made on the grant that might have been available had your program continued.

I am wondering if (a) the program is going to continue, and (b) if you can tell me now whether or not the city of Swift Current will qualify for that portion of the grant?

MR. MacMURCHY: — No, the community capital fund will run out this year. I think we have indicated in the budget (my budget remarks) that there was about \$5 million in the fund to be spent of which \$4 million has been allocated, but \$1 million hasn't been allocated. I will be bringing a bill forward in the House, very shortly, to extend the time frame from now until the end of the year, so the communities that haven't allocated will have an opportunity to do so. We think we want to clear up the existing program or pretty well clear it up before we embark on a new one.

Two problems, we really haven't had an opportunity to sort out what kind of a capital program we should have. That process has been started. In fact, a committee of department officials, SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipality Association) representatives, met yesterday to start that process. Now, our hope is to announce the new provincial capital program before a year from now — well before a year from now. So, I think, we have to say to the city of Swift Current and other communities that have had plans, that they, just perhaps, wait a little bit until we get an opportunity to sort out our new program.

MR. HAM: — A final question, Mr. Chairman. The remaining \$1 million in the community capital grant program — would it be fair to say that the city of Swift Current officials should be notified? Is that a fair question to ask you or are they in contact with you and your officials on a regular basis so if money is available within the next several months, that they may be in position to get it?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether the city of Swift Current has allocated all the funds that were available to them under that program. If they haven't, then they will have an opportunity to allocate it.

We have informed all of the communities that haven't allocated to do so. We did that, I think, early in March, saying that the program ran out by March 31. However, our plans are now to extend it, so to give them an opportunity and some time to make their proper plans.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Chairman, I have another question I would like to ask the minister.

I have been discussing this with municipalities in the area of Arm River. Their main concern, Mr. Minister, seems to be the reconstruction (I know this has been discussed before) of the old worn out super grid roads and farm access roads.

I just want to ask the minister, is there any concrete planning being made on this now?

MR. MacMURCHY: — There is no concrete planning at the present time, Mr. Chairman. I indicated at the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention and I indicated to councils that I met with there, that we feel there is some connection with grid reconstruction and super grid, particularly if we are going to revise the super grid policy. For example, the existing policy in terms of mileage is 5,000 of graded gravel, 5,000 miles to eventually be oiled. There is a great deal of concern about the level of oiling because of its costs, both construction costs and maintenance costs. We have asked the committee to look at that. Perhaps the committee could consider something like 8,000 miles to be graded and gravelled, and 2,000 or 3,000 miles to be oiled, or some combination like that. In other words, involving approximately the same kind of expenditure for the province and the municipality, but a lot more miles graded and gravelled and fewer miles oiled.

If that policy comes down, then it will have I think a significant impact on a policy of rebuilding the old grid. So we have indicated that we want to wait for the committee that is looking at this to report before we make any decision about upgrading the old grid. I do think there is a relationship. Connected with the committee's study, I understand that Mr. Wilkinson, executive secretary of SARM, is surveying the municipalities to try to get a grip on the extent of the old grid problem. Perhaps we can tie that information to the committee's work.

MR. SWAN: — Under your urban affairs, item 1, I notice there is an increase there in the administration area of \$600,000. I would like some explanation as to why there was that size of an increase in one year.

MR. MacMURCHY: — The increase is due to salaries, Mr. Chairman. There are really seven new positions, an associate deputy (and there wasn't an associate deputy the year before), a minister's executive assistant and a road ambulance co-ordinator. As the hon. member will know, we have a small treaty Indian liaison and we've added a staff member and three clerical people to that unit to work in northern Saskatchewan at the request of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. That area plus the people working in the property improvement grant section are the increased staff that will be required to provide for the new programs.

MR. SWAN: — It seems like a very large increase for the number of times you've listed. When you look at \$60,000 against \$1.4 million a year ago, you're looking at a very sizeable increase — not half, but approaching. I think there must be more explanation than what we've heard.

MR. MacMURCHY: — There are two pages, Mr. Chairman. I asked about the staff. There's also \$96,000 for computer services. Perhaps the best thing for me to do would be to forward to the hon. member copies of those two pages and he will be able to get the information that he requires.

Item 2 agreed.

Items 3 to 5 agreed.

ITEM 6

MR. SWAN: — We see a drop in staff, in permanent staff and yet a very large increase in other expenses, as a matter of fact about a 200 per cent and then some increase. Could you explain that one?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Yes, the staff is down, but the increase under other expenses involves the second year of the federal-provincial agreement on regional studies, and that's 50-50 and is the reason for the increased costs under other services.

Item 6 agreed.

ITEM 7

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Seeing it is such a large figure, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to get just a little run down on the \$907,710. It's quite a large figure just to go through that quickly.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Total increase is directly due to computerization and there is \$398,500 involved in the computerization of municipal assessment.

Items 7 and 8 agreed.

ITEM 9

MR. SWAN: — I understood that the Department of Municipal Affairs was intending to do the assessing for all of the towns and villages and perhaps, even the cities. I am surprised at the figure that you have here, because it's low. It's not usual that we question a low figure, but could you tell us if that's true, that you're going into the assessing business?

MR. MacMURCHY: — The subvote we are dealing with now is the assessment commission, the last appeal body on assessment. That's why it's a relatively low figure. It's by statute, a three member commission to hear the appeals.

Item 9 agreed.

Items 10 and 11 agreed.

ITEM 12

MR. SWAN: — Maybe I'm in the wrong place again, but I'm going to keep asking until I find the right place. In this area, will this cover the provision of water to the small towns?

MR. MacMURCHY: — This is the program that does provide a 50 per cent grant to villages and towns. It also provides a one-third on sewage. That's the program.

MR. SWAN: — I asked a question in question period and I guess you were tied up somewhere, Mr. Minister. I'll ask it again now. The town of Conquest has been having difficulty with its water supply and it's mainly because of the canal not pumping water on the west side of Gardiner Dam. The town of Conquest was depending on that water supply to supply its town needs. Now, you assisted them to get into the program.

They're still short of water. They're at the point this year of actually having to truck water from the town of Outlook. I've been in contact with your department to try and get some assistance for them, and I'm advised that there is no assistance. I'm wonder if we have to increase this figure in order to get some assistance for them?

MR. MacMURCHY: — I think that the hon. member is asking whether the town of Conquest is eligible for assistance to secure a water supply. I think the answer is yes. I think that at a recent municipal water assistance board meeting, funds were approved for the village of Conquest. I know that staff in the Municipal Water Assistance Board are in contact with the village to require a supply. The hon. member is asking whether under this program, municipal water assistance, we can provide assistance for the town to haul water. The answer is no, because there isn't any regulation under that particular program which will allow the board to do so. To secure a permanent supply that assistance is available and I'm sure there has been contact between staff members of the board and the village to do just that.

MR. SWAN: — There has been contact between your staff and the town but the town is very dissatisfied with the type of contact they've had. They say they are really being provided with nothing and that's why I am raising it again. I hope you will answer me directly on that question, perhaps not today but at another time.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I'll take note.

Item 12 agreed.

Items 13 to 23 agreed.

ITEM 24

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I would like to know the reason for the increase on this particular one?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, \$100,000 to Moose Jaw for their Moose Jaw River Study.

Items 24 to 32 agreed.

Saskatchewan Housing Corporation

Item 33

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, is this for Sask Housing Corporation or is it for joint housing where the government is involved, such as Saskatoon, with the big apartment housing?

MR. MacMURCHY: — The next subvotes are for the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation.

MR. KATZMAN: — I'm questioning here Saskatchewan Housing Corporation which is, I believe, under Mr. Cody. Am I correct? Yes, it's under your vote.

MR. MacMURCHY: — The normal procedure when we come to the grants to the housing corporation is to direct the question to the chairman of the housing

corporation or the vice-chairman. In this case the chairman is Mr. Cody and I think questions relating to these subvotes would be normally directed to the hon. member for Kinistino (Mr. Cody).

MR. SWAN: — The Attorney General made a comment a moment ago and he said, that points out his remarks from yesterday that it didn't matter who and so on and so on and if that's the case then why are we going through this process? You're going to ask us to vote and agree on this one and yesterday you wouldn't let us talk about anything because you said there was no vote. Now make up your mind whether you really are going to give us a vote or whether you aren't.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I will explain it in a nice friendly way to the member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Swan) because up until now I always felt he was rather a nice and friendly guy — unlike most of the men in the PC caucus. Do you have your estimates book? See page 74, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, Vote 33. Grant to Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Operating. Do you see anywhere, Statutory Appropriation? No.

MR. SWAN: — That's why I asked you. You said this brought out what you were talking about yesterday.

MR. ROMANOW: — Yes, what I was talking about yesterday was that a Crown corporation does not necessarily . . . For example, I was saying to the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) that the Minister of Industry, Norm Vickar, was not qua minister in charge of SEDCO, was my position. He was here qua minister in charge of industry and as Minister of Municipal Affairs is here, he is here qua his position as municipal affairs. The member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman) was surprised that the Minister of Municipal Affairs would have the housing vote. It doesn't necessarily follow that he's the minister in charge of the housing corporation. It could be, for example, that I could be the minister in charge of SEDCO as well as Attorney General and those grants are there.

AN HON. MEMBER: — God help us all!

MR. ROMANOW: — Maybe you're right about God helping us. That was the point I'm saying about proving my point in the sense of a provision. But there is a difference. I grant that there is a difference because there is no statutory appropriation and as the minister has indicated to whom the questions are directed.

Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 o'clock p.m.