

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Nineteenth Legislature

May 3, 1979.

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley) moved, seconded by Mr. G. McLeod (Meadow Lake):

That the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing be now concurred in.

He said: I wish, Mr. Speaker, just briefly refer to paragraph no. 8 of the report of the committee. I wish to preface this by what I'm about to say are the views of the Chairman and not the views of the committee. The views of the committee are obviously as contained in the report. But I think what we have seen here is a situation where the Government of Saskatchewan, through various agencies (one being a Crown corporation) contracted with consultants to do their computer work (the consultant firm being from Toronto.) They brought the consultant firm in and because of a various number of things, be it the committee involved the net result was that there was a mistake made, costing the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, approximately \$500,000.

The problem that we saw with this particular mistake was the fact that the consulting firm still received its \$278,000 by way of fees, and there was basically no penalty clause. We recommend that that be looked at again.

More importantly, what this demonstrates and points out is that the provincial auditor in the province of Saskatchewan, and again, this is the view of the chairman, has no power to look at economies and efficiencies, has no power to look at value for dollars spent or to look at the department to determine whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan is getting proper value for the dollars they are spending. I think the important thing that we must recognize here is that if we were to take that type of power away from the federal auditor general, we would have no disclosures of the AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) matter that came down last year; we would have no disclosure of the Bonaventure case of five or six years ago.

The province of Saskatchewan does not have the authority in its auditor general to make that type of investigation. The only thing the auditor general in the province of Saskatchewan can do is determine whether or not there was legislative authority to spend the money. They can spend three times, ten times or fifty times more than they received value for and the auditor is not allowed to make comment on that. We are one of the few jurisdictions remaining in Canada that still does not have that power. I think that we, as legislators, if we are genuinely interested in trying to control the expenditures of government, to try to make government be responsible like ourselves, as individuals, must look at bringing this type of legislation in, giving the auditor that type of power so that we in Saskatchewan can develop a system and develop an auditor like J.J. Macdonnell, so that truly we can start controlling the expenditures of the government.

With that, I so move.

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HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — We have been called on to approve the first report of the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing. We have not had a copy of that report. I know that the Clerk read various portions of the report. I would like to have an opportunity to examine that report before the motion is placed. I also listened to the few remarks of the hon. member who has just taken his seat, who was making some observations. And it struck me that certainly in the case of the computer system in the licensing of automobiles, he is not quite interpreting the report of the auditor accurately, nor has he got the grasp of the problem of the loss of close to \$0.5 million — his observations about whether the auditor has an opportunity to assess, or the auditor at the present time does not have the opportunity to assess whether we are getting good value for the dollar that is spent out of the public purse.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge the hon. member to produce any concrete evidence to support his argument. Now it is easy to make that sort of hypothetical statement and try to make a case, but so far the opposition have not demonstrated or proven their case that the public of Saskatchewan is not getting good value for the dollar that's spent. In fact there are many, many evidences that compared with other jurisdictions the people of Saskatchewan are getting good value for their tax dollar. I think it is recognized that whether it be in our Crown corporations or in our government departments, while there might be some problems from time to time, we have an efficient and effective public service who are scrupulous, who are ensuring that the people are getting good value for their tax dollar. More importantly, in the province of Saskatchewan we have more public programs that are administered in a more effective and more efficient way than anywhere else. Mr. Speaker, I would like to examine the report of the select standing committee as well as the observations of the chairman of that committee. For that reason I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. D.F. McARTHUR (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon on behalf of my colleague the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood (Mr. MacMurchy), who is unavoidably absent because of obligations with respect to government business, to introduce to this Assembly this afternoon 12 Grade 9 students from Quinton High School at Quinton, Saskatchewan. They are sitting in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied this afternoon by their teacher, Sister Rosetta and their chaperones, Dorothy Lorenz and Louis Horvath.

I am sure all members join with me in welcoming the students, their teacher and chaperones to the Assembly this afternoon and wish them an educational and enjoyable afternoon here. I might say that I look forward to meeting with them at 2:45 to discuss with them their visit and any questions they might have.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly, 24 Grade 5 students from the A.E. Perry School in Albert Park. They are accompanied by their teacher, Miss JoAnne Friesen. They are seated in the east gallery.

I am sure members on both sides of the House will join with me in welcoming them to

the legislature. I hope you enjoy your afternoon and you find it informative and interesting. I will be meeting with you about 3 o'clock in the rotunda.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PORT AT PRINCE RUPERT

MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). As the Minister of Agriculture is aware in this Assembly, we have repeatedly pointed out that the province of Alberta, in its support for the development of the port at Prince Rupert as a major port for the export of Canadian grain, has indicated that it is prepared to make a loan out of its heritage fund at a very favorable rate of \$100 million to a consortia composed of a number of grain companies, one of which must be the Alberta Wheat Pool. Can the minister tell this Assembly what the province of Saskatchewan is prepared to do in the development of the port at Prince Rupert by way of financial contribution?

HON. E.E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, during the conversation with some of the members of the consortia, we had some discussions as to their need for additional funding. We were advised by them that their need was not for additional funding from the provinces. While Alberta had offered the funding (and they might accept the Alberta funding) it was not a problem for them to get funding for the consortia. We should not be concerned with regard to funding for that particular project. They were able to get funds at the same rate they could get it from Alberta without any difficulty and so we should not be concerned about that.

MR. ANDREW: — Is the minister telling this Assembly that the Government of Saskatchewan is in firm support of the development of the port at Prince Rupert and in favor of developing the terminal there and expanding the terminal there as soon as possible? Is that the position of the province of Saskatchewan?

MR. KAEDING: — Certainly, that's the position of the province of Saskatchewan.

GRAZING LAND — MOOSE MOUNTAIN PARK

MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Are you aware, Mr. Minister, that there are 18 sections of unused Crown land in the Moose Mountain Park? This land is fenced and is suitable for livestock grazing. In view of the improved beef prices and the scarcity of grazing land in this province, why have you not opened this area to grazing for the people in that area?

MR. KAEDING: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what land he is referring to but I presume it's probably in the hands of the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The land is in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park on the east side of No. 9 Highway. For your information, on the west side there's capacity to pasture about 1,600 cattle which are in the park now. Would you not consider opening this other land, which I understand can graze at least 300 head, immediately?

MR. KAEDING: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier I think this is land which is encompassed in the park area and therefore under the jurisdiction of the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. I think your question should be directed there. I do believe they have a policy which allows them to allow limited grazing in those areas and anything different than that would have to be taken up with the Department of Tourism.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Tourism and Renewal Resources (Mr. Matsalla) is not present. Mr. Speaker, 18 sections is a considerable amount of land in a block. Would your department take a check throughout this province, because I'm suspicious that there are other areas that could be brought into grazing? Would you look into that, Mr. Minister, please?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I am sure that any areas which are suitable for grazing in the province are well identified and that we are using them to the maximum that we can. I have had no representation from anyone in that area for additional efforts on our part to provide grazing in that area. If the efforts are required, first of all they should be directed to the Department of Tourism because it is under their jurisdiction and if there is still a problem we might look at it.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. As you are well aware, Mr. Minister, your department and the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources quite often exchange lands depending on the need. There is clearly a need here that we use this land for grazing. Don't ask us to speak to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources (we are not the government but we will be soon); you talk to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources. Mr. Minister, very simply, will you approach the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources to see if you could have a trade-off of land or acquire that land for the Department of Agriculture and make it available for leasing?

MR. KAEDING: — Well, Mr. Speaker, again I want to point out to the hon. member that in that area there are a lot of livestock associations. There are farm organizations there. If they're concerned about the lack of grazing I am sure that they will be saying something to the Department of Tourism about that. If they have, fine; we appreciate that.

STC BUS SERVICE

MR. R. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and in his absence I would appreciate an answer from one of the ministers. A couple of weeks ago I brought to his attention at a Crown Corporations Committee meeting that the STC does not provide bus service to Pangman, Ceylon and Radville. Does any minister over there know whether he has looked into this situation any further?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure if the minister has made a commitment to look into this and to provide the member with an answer, he shall do so. If the House should prorogue I'm sure you'll get a response in writing from the minister within a matter of a few days. I'll undertake to prompt the minister to make sure that that response is forthcoming.

MR. PICKERING: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Attorney General not agree that Radville, a town of 1,500 people or more is one of the largest in the province, if not the largest, that does not receive such service?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know the details of the area the hon. member raises. I'm sure he appreciates that these are corporate decisions which are made by the board of directors of STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company). I personally believe that STC has served Saskatchewan residents, particularly rurally, in outstanding fashion, providing a tremendous amount of service, which might be otherwise if it were not a public corporation, serving as a public utility. There may be limits to that service. I don't know the circumstances for that area. I undertake to the member again that we will direct this to the minister in charge, get you a report from management of STC, and report to the member in due course.

MINE SUPPLIES BOUGHT IN SASKATCHEWAN

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, in absence of the Minister of Industry and Commerce (Mr. Vickar), a question to the minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan (Mr. Messer). About a week or 10 days go, one of the administrators of the IMCC (International Minerals and Chemical Corporation) mine at Esterhazy, in a speech at Yorkton, suggested that very little of the supplies the mines bought during the year — in fact, he mentioned that IMCC buys about \$20 million worth and PCS will buy approximately \$40 million to \$45 million this coming year — are manufactured in Saskatchewan, even though quite a bit is purchased in Saskatchewan. Could you tell this Assembly, Mr. Minister, what the Department of Industry and Commerce or any department of government is doing to work with small industry in Saskatchewan in making such things as gears, which can be made in Saskatchewan, to bring a better income to Saskatchewan manufacturers?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member is directing the question to me I would like to answer on two counts.

One, as it relates to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, we have pursued a purchase-Saskatchewan policy and have been able to buy most of the goods and services within the province of Saskatchewan. Certainly there are some items we find we have to purchase outside of Saskatchewan; in many instances they are smaller items. You may use the Rocanville mine as an example and its closeness to the Manitoba border, where we find ourselves buying goods and services on both sides of the province. But certainly most of the services come from inside the province of Saskatchewan.

The second area I would like to respond to is that the province has, through the Department of Industry and Commerce and, I believe, to a limit at SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation), encouraged businesses to not only recognize the potential of industry in Saskatchewan but to identify the goods and services those industries require, and then if other assistance was needed, steered them to SEDCO if it happened to be of a financial nature. So there is an incentive program to businessmen in the province of Saskatchewan, to make them aware of the potential and then to give them some assistance in taking advantage of that potential.

One closing word, Mr. Speaker, would have to, I think, also be noted. With northern development our surface leases, as part of the condition of lease, stipulate that the goods and services, wherever possible, should come from the province of

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Saskatchewan and only after they have exhausted their endeavors to find the goods and services within the province of Saskatchewan should they be allowed to purchase those goods and services outside of the province.

MR. LARTER: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I appreciate that last remark. I wasn't expecting it. I wonder if the minister realizes that there are many, many semi-loads of goods travelling to the Key Lake mine and other mines in northern Saskatchewan from Alberta? Would you say this was encouraging buy Saskatchewan, when this is taking place?

MR. MESSER: — Yes, I would, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned there is certainly some equipment that cannot be expected to be serviced by business or industry in the province of Saskatchewan. Most of the equipment that is now going into the Key Lake area is mining equipment or components which will be part of the milling and mining operation. They are used rarely in Saskatchewan and they come from firms who supply not only a provincial mining sector, but a Canada-wide or North American, if not global mining sector.

Some of the components that the member makes mention of that do emanate from Alberta have only been dropped in Alberta and then trucked out of Alberta. It is not correct to assume that they have all be manufactured in Alberta. Granted, some have been assembled there and will be ultimately completely assembled at the mine site at Key Lake. But wherever possible the mining companies have co-operated with the province in recognizing the stipulation of surface leases and do actively seek out the goods and services from the province of Saskatchewan, because they believe, as we do, that it is ultimately going to be in their best interests.

MR. LARTER: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you have some pretty good industry people located around the province to help industry get located. Can you tell me if PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan), if these industry people actually work close with you? For instance, this gentleman from IMCC (International Minerals and Chemical Corporation) who mentioned there was 32,000 gears used in their mines and 4,000 are replaced each year and they are not made in Saskatchewan. There are many machinists in Saskatchewan who can make these things.

Can you tell me if these Industry and Commerce people employed by the government actually work and lead these people to the type of things that they can build for them?

MR. MESSER: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is yes. I can recollect when I was Minister of Industry and Commerce, publishing several booklets about the size of this, 8 1/2 x 11, which identified first, industries in Saskatchewan and then tried to (as accurately as possible) predict the kind of parts and repairs that that industry needed.

It also, Mr. Speaker, went further than that by identifying manufacturing industries and identifying the material goods that they needed in order to manufacture the goods that they were involved in — rims, hydraulic cylinders, goods like that, spindles — then acquainting potential suppliers with that publication and encouraging them to make contact with the industry which was utilizing or consuming these goods. I don't know whether we could really do much more than that. I know that that is continuing and I know that there has been some what I believe to be limited success in that regard. I can only rely on the industry and the management of those industries to carry it to some ultimate fruition.

I might also close in saying, Mr. Speaker, that I have, on a number of occasions, introduced private sector businessmen to potash corporation officials, as well as mining company officials, at the executive management level so that they would be able to talk to the people who made the decisions in regard to the supply and services of Saskatchewan goods. I do not know, in every instance, what the outcome of those discussions were, but I hope they were able to communicate their ability to service.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ELECTION SIGNS ON HIGHWAY

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer). Mr. Minister, yesterday morning when driving to my ranch I noticed that the Trans-Canada Highway (both in the ditch and the centre of the four-lane highway) signs of a particular characteristic which were very suspiciously of the colors of the New Democratic Party in the federal election. They were still there as I returned yesterday, prior to coming in. Naturally, I assumed they would be gone this morning. So basically the same instance was repeated. I would point out to the minister that in the process I passed a number of Department of Highway vehicles which were ignoring the signs. Would the minister tell me, since he knows full well the Department of Highways does not allow signs for anyone on their property or highways, why an exception has been made for the New Democratic Party?

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways): — Mr. Speaker, every political party has been notified, every election, that it is illegal to put signs on the right-of-way beyond the shoulder. If they are in an area which is within the right-of-way, on bridges (as I saw last fall — Liberal and Progressive Conservative signs all over the country) . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Even on signs!

MR. KRAMER: — Even on signs, that's right. They are all illegal and if they are reported they will be removed. I want to tell you the department people are certainly not favoring anyone. If a charge is laid, they will be prosecuted.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow).

Mr. Attorney General, upon getting from the ranch to the legislature this morning, when I was walking up the steps towards the doors of this Assembly, I noticed in the cabinet circle a car which may or may not have been in use by the minister involved, but it was parked in the stall of the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Snyder). On that car was a bumper sticker, again with a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I will take a new question. Order, final supplementary, member for Moose Jaw North (Mr. Skoberg).

PRIVATE CONTRACTORS SPORTING CANDIDATES SIGNS

MR. J.L. SKOBERG (Moose Jaw North): — A question to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer). Could the minister say whether or not it's permissible for private contractors, highway contractors, to have the signs of individual candidates, as I noticed last fall, on highway construction tractors running in the Thunder Creek constituency?

POLICY OF GOVERNMENT TOWARD CABINET MINISTERS IN CAMPAIGN

MR. THATCHER: — A question to the Attorney General. Mr. Attorney General, since vehicles used by cabinet ministers are owned by the government, and the gas and the operating expenses are picked up entirely by the taxpayers, could you tell me if there's any policy in effect on the part of the government towards the cabinet ministers in this campaign? In other words, Mr. Attorney General, I am asking you, if cabinet ministers in their capacity of campaigning, are free to use government vehicles, with the use of a government credit card, in other words, are the taxpayers of Saskatchewan paying for cabinet ministers campaigning in this federal election on behalf of the New Democratic Party candidates?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that there is in effect no policy that is specifically applicable to ministers. It may very well be that there's a policy applicable to civil servants under other regulations — civil service or other regulation acts — I think the member will appreciate that in the sense ministers being in the Executive Council can devise policy which effects them. In this area, I don't believe there is any specific policy that has been implemented. This is a matter which is essentially left to every minister.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question. Is the Attorney General prepared to assure this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that cabinet ministers are not presently using their cars, which are owned by the government, for campaign purposes? Are you willing to state categorically that they are not being used in this campaign?

MR. ROMANOW: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I cannot undertake that assurance for the hon. member because, as he knows, under both The Election Act and under the provisions of, I think, Executive Council Act or some other appropriate legislation, a minister's car, assigned to the minister, is used by the minister as he sees fit. The minister uses it not only in his capacity for ministerial functions but, because it is so difficult to very often delineate those functions from what may be broadly described as political functions, the practice long-standing in Saskatchewan, both during the former Liberal administration, in the old CCF days and now, is that that is a prerequisite or perk which is given to the minister for the use. I think it depends on the individual ministers whether they put a bumper sticker or not on the car. The bumper sticker on the car is something which is individually determined by the ministers.

MR. THATCHER: — Final supplementary. Is it fair to interpret the Attorney General as saying that, if a member does deem it acceptable to campaign in a government vehicle, on taxpayers gasoline and taxpayers operating expenses for that vehicle, that that is acceptable as far as his government is concerned?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make two points if I can. Under our legislation, MLA's, including the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) and the member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Swan) and all of you, on this side and that side, receive government or public taxpayers funds for mileage, MLA mileage . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . fine, well, all right. The hon. member is trying to draw a distinction and I'm saying there is no distinction. It is use of public funds. If you are telling me that none of your people use your cars and the gasoline that we pay for them . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — We own our cars.

MR. ROMANOW: — . . . to campaign with the gas, to campaign for any Progressive Conservatives, then I'll undertake that assurance for our side as well. The simple fact of the matter is that that's not the case.

DR. FRANKS

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski). About a month ago, Dr. Chris Franks' position with the government was terminated. Was that at his request or yours?

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, Dr. Franks resigned.

MR. BERNTSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Was Dr. Franks offered or given any severance pay or compensation as a result of his termination?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — That's a matter, Mr. Speaker, that has been under negotiation, I understand, with legal representatives of the Department of Health through a lawyer from the Department of the Attorney General. I assume that out of that there probably has been some severance pay. Whether all those negotiations have been completed, I am not sure at the present time, but I suspect there probably will be some.

INFORMATION FROM MCIC

MR. BERNTSON: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski). About 10 days ago I phoned inquiries of MCIC (Medical Care Insurance Commission) to question them on a policy of the breakdown of their annual statement, at which time they indicated to me that any person over 13 years old came under separate cover. I questioned you in the House on the very same thing. There was some variance between your position and that of MCIC. I left that question period and received a note from MCIC which said the information I had requested would be coming to me from the minister. Do you now have that information?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I have written formally to the Medical Care Insurance Commission (MCIC) as I thought that I should. I have raised the matter with them which the member raised. I have raised it with them. I have asked them to clarify for me what their policy is as a commission, and also to explain their reasoning for that policy. I have not yet received a reply. I think that's fair. The commission has met since the member raised it, and since I communicated to them.

SEVERANCE PAY TO DR. FRANKS

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — A question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski). Can the Minister of Health tell the Assembly why, if he has a resignation from Dr. Franks, that he is paying compensation or severance pay? The only time you make severance pay or compensation on a resignation is if the resignation is forced.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I did not say there had been. I said I thought there might be because there were some discussions taking place which involved some legal people. As long as those kinds of negotiations are taking place I have no further comment to make on it.

MR. LANE: — Why are you negotiating if you have a resignation? You have a person's

resignation; why are you negotiating it? Accept the resignation; there's no need unless it's forced.

COMMUNITY SWITCHBOARD FUNDING

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes). I understand Mr. Minister that you have extended funding to the Community Switchboard and that your department has requested an evaluation or a monitoring of their records by themselves during the next few months so as to make an evaluation on this project and that you are still open to suggestions that you might perhaps carry on with this program. Is this correct?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, do you have some official from your department working with the Community Switchboard at this time in an evaluation type role?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is. I don't know the individual or individuals involved. I know there are discussions going on and an assessment being done which will continue, I believe, over the next two or three months. A decision will be made at that particular time whether or not funding will be continued. I would, however, like to caution the member and the members of this House that the possibility of funding to continue for switchboard is probably very minimal. However, they do have, I believe, a very valuable service which they offer to deaf people. I want to make absolutely certain that that will continue.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, would you not agree that perhaps this very same approach could have been taken with the other special interest group projects that have been axed by budget cuts? It would have left a better feeling within the community had you taken this approach with them as you have with Community Switchboard?

MR. ROLFES: — No, Mr. Speaker.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

BILL NO. 103 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE LIQUOR LICENSING ACT

Section 1

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Just a preliminary question. Did the minister give consideration to extending the licensing provisions to allow discos in places other than dining areas or hotels where your original provision was suggested?

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — Some consideration was given to that, but the decision was that there were some amongst our group who felt that those places were frequented by young people, under the age of 19. We felt this was as far as we could go at this point in time. I guess that's a judgment call. Some thought was given to it, but it was rejected.

MR. LANE: — I'm not sure the hon. member wants to identify the old fogeys in his caucus but I gather there are some. Obviously, it is a judgment call. No one will question that. But surely when we're talking about the licensing of locations where liquor is sold the same rules apply. The same onus is on the operator as in the normal situation. I fail

to accept that as a serious argument because what you're saying is you're satisfied those underage were properly protected under the existing system and can't go anywhere but boy, if we had a discos out there we couldn't handle the situation, couldn't handle the problem and nor could the operators. That's what you are saying.

MR. COWLEY: — I don't think I'm quite saying that. I think as the member says, it's a judgment call. I suppose, these areas are not easy to deal with. I think also the whole impact of a major change in the licensing procedures is one we need to take a look at in terms of the impact on existing operators, etc. as I've been saying for the past two or three months, I hope over the summer and into next fall, to try and have a major review of the whole liquor licensing act. I, frankly, as minister in charge since late last fall, haven't really had a chance to do any more than to deal with some of what I thought were the more pressing areas. I know the member, who probably has had more occasion than myself to deal with the act, knows there are some areas in there that probably are due for a review at this point in time.

MR. LANE: — Only in the province. Well, I think the minister will accept as well that the present system does not, in many cases, keep up with the shifting mores of the public. In many cases, it doesn't recognize, I think, (particularly in the cities, quite frankly) the increasing sophistication of Saskatchewan residents. Perhaps when the minister is reviewing the liquor licensing provisions of Saskatchewan, he should take into account the need for some more flexibility so that, in fact, the commission can make decisions which recognize changes as changes come.

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I certainly have some sympathy for the member's point of view. I think the difficulty is that while we're behind a significant portion of the population in Saskatchewan, we're also a long way ahead of another big part of the population and the difficulty is to get on the tightrope and keep from falling off, or at least falling too far. But I agree with the member. I think the member makes some points that certainly are held by some members on this side of the House. I suspect members on that side of the House are not unanimous in their views either as to which ways we should be going. I think this, more or less, reflects the direction in which the mores are going in Saskatchewan. Whether we are right on the point where they are today or not I don't know, but I certainly will take the member's point of view into account in looking at it over the summer.

Sections 1 to 17 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

BILL NO. 13 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT

Sections 1 and 2 agreed.

Section 3

MR. LANE: — Would the minister give some explanation for the definition of beneficial interest and articles and why the necessity for the change?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, the beneficial interest and the beneficial ownership — the reason for the change is to separate and clarify the division. The division of these two terms is to make clear that beneficial interest is purely a statutory concept and not the embodiment in the statute of related concept and equity, O.K.?

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MR. LANE: — I know what they mean, but my question is, what prompted the department to make the changes? Was there a particular case or a particular problem that arose?

MR. COWLEY: — We're following the changes that have been made or are in the process of being made by the federal government and Manitoba. We have uniform law with the two as I know the member is aware and basically most of our changes arise from changes which have been found necessary with the federal act. Because as the member will appreciate, they have the widest scope of companies under their act as compared with either ourselves or Manitoba. Many of these changes are brought about simply because of problems the federal agencies, the federal authorities have found in their act. When the people from the companies' branches across Canada meet, then these changes are proposed; they're discussed there and frankly, they come back to us and we follow along with the changes proposed by the federal government, basically. I think that's where these arose from.

MR. LANE: — Just before we get off the item, perhaps we could go through the bill a little more rapidly. Would you tell me which amendments in the bill are not based on the exact changes in the federal act? If you can do that, perhaps we can get through it a little more promptly.

MR. COWLEY: — All of the amendments up to section 55 are uniform and the ones from the bottom of page page 17 through 19 are peculiar to Saskatchewan.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Not all of them, just some of them?

MR. COWLEY: — Most of the ones from Section 55 on are Saskatchewan changes, if I can put them that way.

MR. LANE: — Well, until we get to item 55 on the assurance given to the minister, I'm prepared either to take it by page or by number and page is fine.

Section 3 agreed.

Sections 4 to 12 agreed.

Section 13 as amended agreed.

Section 14 as amended agreed.

Section 15 agreed.

Section 16 as amended agreed.

Sections 17 and 18 agreed.

Section 19 as amended agreed.

Section 20 as amended agreed.

Sections 21 to 24 agreed.

Sections 25 and 26 as amended agreed.

Sections 27 to 31 agreed.

Section 32 as amended agreed.

Sections 33 to 39 agreed.

Section 40 as amended agreed.

Sections 41 to 54 agreed.

Section 55

MR. LANE: — On that particular section would the minister advise whether there have been any applications for continuance? I am assuming these are by insurance companies or just under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of insurance wherein the superintendent of insurance has placed restrictions on the articles. If so, would he tell me what those restrictions are and the names of the companies?

MR. COWLEY: — There has been none to date.

MR. LANE: — What is the intent of the provision then? What do you feel you need it for?

MR. COWLEY: — We don't have any Saskatchewan insurance companies. I am told by Mr. Beaudry that the reason is that the way this act is structured, a company registered under the act can in effect go into any avenue of business it wishes to. It would not be desirable, for example, to have an insurance company going into the mining business and therefore if we were to have an insurance company register, we would want to be able to put some restrictions on it.

MR. LANE: — Or a printing company going into government business, or . . . whatever? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . What?

MR. COWLEY: — They are not in the insurance business!

MR. LANE: — Oh, I thought you said you weren't.

You say there are no Saskatchewan insurance companies. What about Co-op Insurance, Pioneer Life, etc? you are saying because they are federally incorporated?

MR. COWLEY: — Federally incorporated.

Section 55 agreed.

Sections 56 to 66 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

BILL NO. 76 — AN ACT RESPECTING NON-PROFIT CORPORATIONS

Section 1 agreed.

Section 2

MR. CHAIRMAN: — There is an amendment to section 2:

Amend subsection 2(1) of the printed Bill:

- (a) by striking out 'officer' in the second line of clause (b) and substituting 'officers';
- (b) by striking out 'or' in the fourth line of subclause (d)(ii) and substituting 'of'; and
- (c) by striking out 'share' wherever it appears in the first line of paragraph (e)(i)(A) and in each case substituting 'shares'.

Amend clause 2(3)(a) of the printed bill by striking out 'directors' in the third line and substituting 'directors'.

MR. LANE: — Well, I would like to direct some general comments and then perhaps we can expedite. Would you mind explaining to me where the heck the continuance comes in here?

MR. COWLEY: — Why we have the continuance or where it is in the bill?

MR. LANE: — I'm assuming that you are bringing it into uniformity with The Corporations Act and where is the continuance?

MR. COWLEY: — I may say that we have five pages of House amendments and I think the member will have a copy of them. The only one that is not a printing error is on page 2, section 33, the second amendment under section 33. All the rest of them are printing errors, for the benefit of the member opposite, because it is a rather lengthy bill, as I know the member appreciated.

MR. LANE: — I'd prefer it goes express, for the benefit of the minister so that there is not a great number of questions on it.

MR. COWLEY: — Section 168.

MR. LANE: — On section 168, first of all, is the bill going to apply to charitable corporations like any of the rec boards that are registered under The Societies Act?

MR. COWLEY: — That's 169 I'm told. It will apply to all corporations registered under The Societies Act.

MR. LANE: — So all these local rec boards or community centres and everything else are going to have to comply with this act?

MR. COWLEY: — If they're incorporated under The Societies Act.

MR. LANE: — You know, this is an example, I think of a good idea gone wild. You know what we should be endeavoring to do with those local non-profit organizations is making things as simple as possible. Not getting into things like trust indentures, you know, beneficial ownership, all the different problems with filing, the receivers,

receiver-managers, financial disclosure, members' associational interests. This thing potentially can do much to destroy local volunteer organizations that are there trying to get themselves a rink, and that's all they're concerned about. Unless the minister can tell me where some of these local community societies have caused any great problems to the government and the people of the province, my own view is that I think you are putting a great deal of pressure on them that is unnecessary. I think as well that you would be well advised if that's the case to pull it back as it applies to these community organizations because you're just going to stifle a lot of them, from my perusal of the bill, and make things a lot more complicated than they need be. Perhaps you should, if you're going to go this route, have a special category which is, you know, file it, give us your objects which everybody gets on a precedent, and let them get on with what they're trying to do.

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I know the bill is very long and complicated, and I must say I have some sympathy with the member's initial reaction. I think . . . the assurance I've had from the people I've had review the bill, is first of all . . . I have my experience with The Corporations Act which we passed two years ago, which is also a very long and involved act, in terms of looking at the act. But when you look at the application of the act for an individual forming a small company, I think the experience has been there that while the act may have looked complicated, the process and procedures which people had to conform to both to incorporate and in terms of recording etc. turned out to be simpler, even though the act was longer and more complicated.

The purpose of this bill, and I'm sure if it's administrated correctly, the result will be that it will actually simplify the procedures for incorporation. It will make them much less complicated for the companies. A lot of the provisions are in the act to deal with circumstances or situations which I think are unlikely to occur for most companies or for most non-profit groups incorporated under this. Manitoba, already in effect, has gone this way and I am told, with no particular problems. It is being reasonably well received there. Now they have gone a little different route. Rather than having two separate acts they have in effect taken the other corporation law and applied it to non-profit companies, in effect, with some modifications.

The federal government had a bill virtually identical to this one before the House of Commons and it died, I believe, on the order paper. They seem to have had some event which got in the way down there with getting them to pass it.

My officials (and my experience in terms of their advice relating to The Corporations Act is what they indicated in terms of simplification and so on, turned out to be the case) believe that this new act will make it easier for non-profit groups to incorporate and to run their particular operations, even though the bill itself in some sections is relatively complicated, in the event that they get into certain kinds of difficulties. As I say, I think my experience with The Corporations Act has proven this to be the case. Certainly whether it is people in the legal profession I talk to or individuals who have incorporated companies, they have found the new act there to be a good piece of legislation. I think this will be the case as well with this act. We intend to put together some simplified explanations of how it will apply and exactly what non-profit companies incorporating under this will have to do, so that they won't have to struggle through the whole act. I can appreciate that as at least for me it is a struggle to get through this act.

I think the net result will be an improvement in terms of non-profit companies.

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MR. LANE: — Will there be a deadline for which the non-profit societies will have to be continued under this particular bill like the companies bill and if so approximately when? We have three years under the . . .

I am wondering as well about the costs of the department and the government notifying every recreation board and community association and charitable organization across the province. It's going to be fairly high I would think.

Can I make the following suggestion to the minister? When you are dealing with the community groups, put a grandfather clause in so that we start doing it now on the new ones which come along — give them time to learn the act and then start with the new ones. But to go through the practice of making literally thousands of community organizations fill out new forms — new organizations when they are not causing a problem — strikes me as perhaps even unfair. I think you're going to cause more problems than you solve. If you put a grandfather clause in, the ones that are operating . . . Just start with the new ones because they don't have the capability of going down to the law office or whatever they have to do or the company's office to comply with the bill. I just think you're causing them problems that don't help anybody.

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Beaudry informs me there are about 3,000 companies in the province that would fall under this as compared to about 24,000 companies which fell under The Companies Act, and had to change.

I appreciate that some of those companies may indeed be better able to deal with the changes than are some of the non-profit organizations, although I think one would find a great many of the people who are involved in their own private companies are also involved in the non-profit corporations as well.

We write to them annually in any event. It would be our intent, when we write requesting their annual returns, to include in that a package of information and a kit explaining what they have to do. Mr. Beaudry informs me that he believes that the vast majority of these organizations will be able to fill out, complete and submit the necessary forms, etc. to transfer over without necessarily engaging any outside counsel. I suspect some of the larger ones will; obviously they probably have counsel on retainer and so on. But the smaller ones will be able, in the form with which we're going to deal with it, to deal with it rather easily.

I think it will be better if we can do it with the ease Mr. Beaudry suggests, to go that route. I think we have the three years there. I would certainly undertake to the members opposite that if, in the next few months, after the act is proclaimed (and they don't intend to proclaim it immediately. The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may proclaim it, etc.), if we find we're having difficulties with some of the non-profit corporations, — some of the members opposite find there are problems — we would, I think, entertain an amendment in the fall either to lengthen the three years or go the route the member suggests. I think we would like to take a try at putting together a package and seeing if indeed it can be dealt with as easily as my officials believe it can in terms of the transport.

I must say, with respect to The Companies Act and I realize there's a difference in whom you're dealing with here, I don't think I've had in my office any complaints, written or otherwise. Now that's not to say Mr. Beaudry may not have received some, but generally if there are very many I hear about it.

So I think that has been going very smoothly in terms of the number of companies and

on that have to be transferred. My proposal would be that we try this way. I don't think there's anything in it to really screw the works up for us, obviously, or for the members opposite. If we're running into difficulties as we get this out there among these groups, then I think we would entertain a change in the fall. They have the three years so that they're not under any pressure in the meantime to do anything.

MR. LANE: — Obviously, we're dealing with two different types of organization. If we're talking The Companies Act and the local recreation boards of the charitable organizations by and large in the province, we're dealing with volunteers under this act. We're not dealing with people that are in it for profit or organizing their affairs or whatever. We're dealing with volunteers. Now, I'll accept your assurance that most of them may be able to handle it. I have no doubt that most of them, when they get the notices from the department, are going to have to go out and maybe talk to the local solicitor or whoever in the area. Now, I'm sure the local solicitor isn't going to mind, but they shouldn't have to. You know, just about every company has gone to legal advice in order to talk about continuance of their status and why, et cetera. So, they've been forced to do that. So taking your argument, I suspect the same thing will happen and I say to you that when we're dealing with volunteers, non-profit, why should they even have to do that? So what I suggest is that you in fact put the grandfather clause in. I don't think we're going through an exercise with 3,000 people, all volunteers, community oriented. They may only be doing it with a rink, or a curling club, or senior citizens centre or something and I just think, you know, it's something that's gone a little haywire and little wild on it. I think you should give them a grandfather clause.

MR. COWLEY: — I just want to make a couple of quick comments. As I say, I give the member the assurance that if we start running into difficulties, we certainly will entertain bringing that in in the fall. I know that doesn't satisfy the member, but I'm told for example, that the process of applying for continuance under this act will be simpler than it is at present to get your by-laws amended. I think there are some positive benefits to being under this act even for existing companies. So I would ask the members to consider that. I certainly could give the member my assurance that over the summer and into next fall, if we run into difficulties, if meeting with some of these groups they feel the act is onerous or they feel that the changes are too difficult for them to make or if it looks like it's going to involve incurring a large cost to them, we'll reconsider it and bring in the grandfather clause that the member suggests. As I say, I would like to try it this way. We've got the three-year period in there and our experience with The Companies Act is that some of them will do it right away, some of them will wait for the last minute and the rest will be somewhere in between. They don't all rush in. I think we'll soon have an idea after the act is proclaimed with the first groups of companies who continue under the new act, will be a good test case for us to see how much difficulty they encountered, whether or not they felt they had to go to a solicitor, whether they are happy or unhappy with having to come under the new act. I would like to try it that way.

I appreciate the member's comment because I certainly don't want 3,000 non-profit societies out there unhappy with the new legislation. We have taken it through several hoops to try and get a feeling as to what their reaction should be. As I say, in Manitoba they are already virtually operating under this kind of a system — a little different, but virtually the same. The federal government was proposing to proceed and as far as I am aware there wasn't any opposition in the House of Commons to the changes that were being proposed there. Again, they deal with a different size of society and I agree with that, too.

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I would like to try it this way. I think if we have problems, I give the member my assurance that we will entertain some amendments to it at the next session.

MR. LANE: — I am going to make the following suggestion.

We don't think that a lot of the problems are going to come to light until we get near the three year deadline, so your assurance only goes so far, in my view. We have no objection to the principle of the bill, but we do object to the failure to put in a grandfather clause for the local charitable organizations, non-profit community associations, recreation boards, senior citizen groups, or whatever, so what we will do is object to the bill in committee for failure to have a grandfather clause and for adding what we believe to be an additional unnecessary expense to the local community organizations.

If we can take it as read except for the sections with the House amendments, which I believe the chairman has to call out, we can proceed that way.

Section 2 as amended agreed.

Sections 3 to 13 agreed.

Section 14 as amended agreed.

Sections 15 to 17 agreed.

Section 18 as amended agreed.

Sections 19 and 20 agreed.

Section 21 as amended agreed.

Section 22 as amended agreed.

Sections 23 to 28 agreed.

Section 29 as amended agreed.

Sections 30 to 32 agreed.

Section 33 as amended agreed.

Section 34 agreed.

Section 35 as amended agreed.

Section 36 agreed.

Section 37 as amended agreed.

Section 38 agreed.

Section 39 as amended agreed.

Section 40 as amended agreed.

Sections 41 to 48 agreed.

Section 49 as amended agreed.

Sections 50 to 58 agreed.

Section 59 as amended agreed.

Sections 60 to 101 agreed.

Section 102 as amended agreed.

Sections 103 and 104 agreed.

Section 105 as amended agreed.

Section 106 as amended agreed.

Section 107 as amended agreed.

Sections 108 to 122 agreed.

Section 123 as amended agreed.

Sections 124 and 125 agreed.

Section 126 as amended agreed.

Sections 127 to 150 agreed.

Section 151 as amended agreed.

Sections 152 to 157 agreed.

Section 158 as amended agreed.

Section 159 to 168 agreed.

Section 169 as amended agreed.

Section 170 to 187 agreed.

Section 188 as amended agreed.

Sections 189 to 196 agreed.

Section 197 as amended agreed.

Section 198 agreed.

Section 199 as amended agreed.

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Sections 200 to 203 agreed.

Section 204 as amended agreed.

Sections 205 to 213 agreed.

Section 214 as amended agreed.

Sections 215 to 218 agreed.

Section 219 as amended agreed.

Sections 220 to 250 agreed.

Section 251 as amended agreed.

Sections 252 to 274 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

BILL NO. 86 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES COMMISSION ACT

Sections 1 and 2 agreed.

Section 3

MR. LANE: — I wonder if I could ask the minister to clarify the point on this that I raised in second reading. Is the boundaries commission now able to use two sources of population, that is, the census plus the update from the federal and provincial voters list? Is that the intent?

MR. COWLEY: — They have one official, if you like, source which would be the voters lists (the provincial voters lists), but they may look at the federal voters lists. The 1979 commission will use as their basis for population, the 1978 provincial voters lists, but they may look at the 1979 federal lists which they can get, I am sure, although they can't get the official return for about another 10 months. That is how long it takes the feds to put out their official return. They can look at their individual results which they will, I am sure, be able to get from the returning officers. We have already made provision with the various federal returning officers to get from them their poll list, how many voters they had, plus in the case of the rural areas, how many will be sworn in. They are going to provide us with that information although it won't be 'official', because there is no report from the federal electoral officer for about 8 or 10 months of the voters lists.

MR. LANE: — But you won't let them use — the commission can't use the updated census that they may have, or the five-year updated census. If not, why not? I'll tell you why. Because those voters lists are not always accurate. You know, you take a look at the federal one right now. I'm sure every one of us has seen a significant number of people who were left off the lists. Perhaps a lot of them don't go through the practice of either declaration or revision. I'm sure the same thing happened provincially and you're going to have a distortion. All I'm saying is why don't you give them the option as we had it before, which is the census as well?

MR. COWLEY: — A census that would be available to them would be the 1976 census. That's the problem. The next census is 1981 and the information isn't available until late 1982. That's the other problem. It's just such a lag time in the census. Frankly, my experience with the census is (at least I haven't examined I must say the federal voters lists for this election) but I think I would bet money if I could that the provincial voters' lists were more accurate than any census information we've had in terms of small areas. It's the lag time with the census that's the problem. The most recent census we'd have available, unless we wait until late 1982, is the 1976 census.

MR. LANE: — Well I'll tell you where there is a possibility. You may be the first government on record to leave off an awful lot of British subjects, who may or may not have been eligible beforehand, and are now no longer eligible federally. They would happen to get left off a voter voters list and left off a provincial one. You're getting into some distortion. I'm not sure that was your intention.

MR. COWLEY: — Well I don't see how we get into any distortion with the provincial voters list because clearly, one wants to have the division of the constituencies reflect who is eligible to vote. So if they aren't eligible to vote, it doesn't make much sense to count them in as part of your electoral population.

MR. LANE: — What about Jehovah Witnesses, for example, who refuse, and it's happened, to be placed on the voters list for religious reasons. Then, of course, if they are not on, there is your population distortion. I just think you are limiting yourself and I think you are going to get some wrong figures. If I knew which way they were going to go, before we got into discussion, I could debate it at great length.

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I'm sure if we all knew what way they were going to go, it would help a lot. I don't know again. I can only use the example of my constituency. We don't have a large number of Jehovah Witnesses but there are some. For the most part, they are on the voters list. They have the right to vote. Whether they exercise that right or not is, of course, up to them. There are a lot of people who have the right to vote and don't exercise that vote. I think there will be some members representing constituencies in this Assembly where the turnout was 90 per cent and some where it was just over 70 per cent. But the question is whether or not they have the right to vote. I think the voters list, for the most part, reflects that fairly clearly. I don't know, there may be isolated cases where people, because of religious beliefs or something, are not on the voters list. But my experience has been, they are on the voters list. There are a lot of people who, for one reason or another, don't exercise their right to vote. They are entitled to vote, and I think that's really what we want to measure. I won't argue with the member that any system is perfect, but I think what we'd need to avoid (and I think the member for Qu'Appelle is the best example in this House) are the difficulties we get into with either late information, or with inadequate information, in terms of designing constituency boundaries. You have a constituency which is twice as large as the average. You should be drawing twice the salary you are for the representation you do. I suppose one could make that argument, but I think what we try to do is define some way in which we could meet the following things.

If we're going to have a redistribution it should be done as early as possible because I think all members know the difficulties you get into when you have a redistribution. Some seats get changed. You have two MLAs in the same seat, sometimes from the same party. You want to have as up-to-date as possible information for the commission to work with. I think the commission worked well last time. We have members on this

side of the House who weren't happy when their seats disappeared — I could think of the member for Kinistino who was not exactly ecstatic when his particular seat no longer existed. I think there were members on the other side of the House who were unhappy with those results. But I think we tried to meet the need to have it done quickly, plus to have as up-to-date information as we could. Therefore, we went with the voters lists, the provincial ones, because waiting for the federal ones means another year delay, virtually, for their official results. We put in the proviso that they could look at them, because we knew we could unofficially get the results for the commission and it would help to show them where the cities are growing — from '78 last year to May of this year to see where the changes had taken place in the fringe area. My riding has about 2,000 voters in Saskatoon in it, and I know how it's growing. There will be a change. Mr. Katzman has a lot. There will be changes from the last provincial election. They'll be able to look at those and see where the population projections are going.

I don't argue that it's perfect, but I do think it's the best system we could come up with that met those criteria.

MR. LANE: — I can give you a better one very quickly. Taking your argument, if the intent is to extend the information that the boundaries commission can use to determine population and get an accurate population, I think that there should be two amendments, and I think you should consider them.

1. That they should be able to take into account any census that may come along. These could be a five-year census; there could be a change which allows them to have access to such up-dated information as they choose. I don't think there's anything wrong with that, taking your argument.

2. I think there's a serious question here as to what's a voters list. Does the voters list include a revised list? — in which case it should be stated. Now the reason I ask is I had raised the matter of the population count after the last provincial election, when a significant number of people were added to the voters list in Qu'Appelle riding on revision. I think that technically you've eliminated that. I'm just going to suggest, would your official, you know, make those two changes because all they do is just bring it in line with what you are saying.

MR. COWLEY: — My officials are just checking on it. We're almost certain that the section it refers to in The Election Act is the revised list.

MR. LANE: — But not for the purposes of elections expenses and that's why it won't make a difference.

MR. COWLEY: — No, but the revised voters list, we're checking on that. With respect to the other ones, I just want to check on that but I don't think the bill restricts what they can look at. They can look at anything and as they did in the last one, perfectly or otherwise, they tried to say, O.K. here's a riding, if I recall correctly, Regina North West. The figures there had a relatively small number of people in it, because they expected it to grow which it indeed did. It grew so much that it grew right out into Qu'Appelle. So they were trying to look at things other than what were in the census. They looked at the city and where it was growing and they tried to take that into account. By saying, here's where the growth is, so we start with a smaller seat, we use the lower side of the 15 per cent and over here we stay on the median, if you like. I think they tried to do some of that.

MR. LANE: — What I am saying to you is that they can't do it by the way you have drafted the provision. The population is determined by reference to copies of the voters list or a copy of the report. In other words, they're restricted by this provision to those two sources. I suggest that if the minister would agree that we proceed to the next section to give your officials time to redraft that, if they wish, with a House amendment, I am sure we can come up with something very rapidly.

MR. COWLEY: — It's the revised voters list I am told. Would this amendment satisfy the member? On page 3, right at the top, section 6(3):

Notwithstanding any other provision of this act, the commission may, in determining population for any purposes under this act, have regard to any voters' lists or reports made under The Election Act or the Canada Elections Act, as amended from time to time, in addition to the voters' lists or the copy of the report sent to the chairman of the commission pursuant to subsection 12(3).

And we would add there, in laymen's language, 'and any census information that may be available.' Something like that?

MR. LANE: — Can we say, 'or any revised voters list and census information available,' just for clarification?

MR. COWLEY: — O.K.

MR. LANE: — We're going to come to that a little later, so on that basis we can agree to section 2.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister. We have talked a lot about population today as criteria for drawing up constituency boundaries. I'd like the minister to comment briefly on whether or not his government has ever considered coming to grips with what is becoming an increasing problem, not only in Canada but in any area where there is a strong rural area that is depopulated. We can all go into flowery rhetoric of how we're going to keep people out in the rural areas, but we all know that they are moving into the populated areas, into the towns and the cities, primarily the cities. Has the minister, because of the nature of Saskatchewan and our basic economic dependence on agriculture and our rural way of life, given any consideration to preserving the number of seats, or a specific number of seats — enshrining them if you want to call it — by legislation in rural Saskatchewan? I think the minister knows the problem I am referring to. We have always clung, since The British North America Act, in this country to a theory of representation by population at all costs. Would the minister concede, or would he acknowledge, that it is perhaps time to modify this thinking in order to ensure that rural Saskatchewan or rural Canada or whatever has its day in the assemblies of the nation, and specifically here?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I recall when this act was first passed, there were some discussions about these particular concerns raised by the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher). I think it's difficult to know how one would do that first of all. I'm not saying it's impossible, but it's difficult to define what is rural and what isn't rural. I can think of places like Yorkton and Moose Jaw which are obviously not rural. They're urban communities. Then you get down to places the size of Rosetown, Kindersley, Biggar, and then up in the area of the province that I know a little better, which are again urban but part of, really, our rural society. I think we'd all agree that their character is basically

rural. How does one separate out 'rural' seats? I think there are two things in the act which try and give the commission some leeway in maintaining rural representation and keeping constituencies from getting too large. I can appreciate the problems, for example, of the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter), who has a very large constituency, and I think the member for Thunder Creek's constituency is large in geographic area as well. The two things are there. The latitude that the commission is allowed is, I believe, 15 per cent in terms of a maximum-minimum. If you assume there's 10,000 voters in the average Saskatchewan riding, then they can have a population from 8,500 to 11,500. So they have some latitude there. Plus the number of seats is 61 in the current Assembly. The provision in the act is unchanged in that the commission may, at its discretion, recommend up to 65 seats. Two of those must be in the North. That's the only special provision, if you like, that we have, and the other 59 currently are in the 'South'. So there is some latitude and I think there is an opportunity there for the commission to design its boundaries in such a way that it maintains a level of rural representation. Obviously, they have the freedom in the present act to go to 50 seats, which would have the opposite effect.

I think the last time around the commission did try and strike a number of seats in a rural-urban balance, that tried to reflect Saskatchewan as it is and as they saw it being in the next while.

I don't disagree with the member's point that it is always difficult when population patterns and so on are changing, to really reflect the situation in the province in terms of boundaries. I don't know though how we could easily put in a guarantee because I wrestled with this in some other areas in terms of what is rural and what is urban. It is not easy to draw the line because some will argue that Melville, for example, is rural and should get whatever benefits you are going to give with respect to rural, and others would argue that is urban.

I think the best we can do is give the commission some leeway and then as MLAs and as constituents out there, to make representation to the commission that they should try and not reduce the number of rural seats; that they should use the 65, for example, or they should use the leeway they have in population to keep the size of the rural constituencies down. I guess that is the best response I can give to the member for Thunder Creek.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, for the North, nobody can dispute that. You are guaranteeing those two seats in the North. I don't think you will get any dispute on that from anyone. Have you given any consideration to saying, all right, we are going to have an X number of seats and we are going to guarantee a 60-40 split or a 50-50 split, or whatever you decide or your commission decides in its wisdom? Have you given any consideration to that?

As far as the question of deciding what is rural and what is urban, with all due respect, Mr. Minister, they are walking on the moon, now, when those choose to. I really think we could decide whether Yorkton or Melville or some of these seats, are rural or urban, without having a great deal of difficulty. I think we are playing with semantics.

Mr. Minister, I believe you would acknowledge there are a great many issues to be solved out in rural Saskatchewan right now — grain-handling, transportation. I don't have to go through them, you know what they are. May I respectfully suggest to the minister, that in the coming years unless rural Saskatchewan has adequate representation in this Assembly, they are going to be submerged by Regina and

Saskatoon. There is no question about it. Saskatoon is going to go through a growth period in the decade of the '80s much more so than Regina. Prince Albert may also.

You represent a rural constituency right now and it is a fairly large one and that many portions of it are sparse, as is Thunder Creek, as is Shaunavon and as is, I think, Morse. I think those of us who do represent large rural ridings know full well in a 28-day campaign to cover that seat, to just basically skim it, to get into every area in 28 days . . . Thunder Creek is not unique. I'm sure you have many members on that side who know what I am talking about . . . it's physically killing.

We know what has happened federally in this province where these huge, rural, federal constituencies have become so large that very few of the people ever actually get to see their federal candidate unless they make a concentrated effort. In other words, what I am saying, in a federal seat it is almost a rarity when the candidate comes into your farmyard or your ranch yard or whatever. I think it would be a tragedy if we got down to that on a provincial basis. Now on a federal basis there may be some argument which is a trifle more valid. But provincially, it would be a tragedy if we got to the point where the people don't get to see their candidate, where it becomes physically impossible for him to come to see them.

Now we may very well be getting to that stage in the urban seats right now. Speaking personally, I just hate campaigning in the urban area. I love going farm to farm — I hate going door to door. There just seems to be nothing colder to me than a set of doors. Give me a set of farms any day and heavens . . .

However, Mr. Minister, I think you know what I am saying. It may have already happened in the urban areas where it is extremely difficult for the urban people . . . they may have already lost touch with their candidates as far as seeing them on a personal basis . . . it is just such a superhuman job. But in the rural areas, difficult though it may be, they are still down and if the candidate of any party really makes that effort, the people do get a pretty good shot at seeing him.

Mr. Minister, I think it would be a tragedy if we lost that contact in Saskatchewan. It may be one of the unique situations which we find in Saskatchewan politics.

Therefore, I would like to make a very concrete suggestion to you, that you do set one of the guidelines of your commission to investigate the possibility of enshrining rural Saskatchewan's rights in this Assembly. I believe it is a problem which we have to come to grips with because it is only going to deteriorate. I think you do a disservice to everyone if 50 per cent of the seats end up in Regina and Saskatoon and possibly another one in Moose Jaw and another one into Prince Albert, etc., over the intervening years I don't think that's good for anybody. I would therefore put this to you as a suggestion, that you consider enshrining rural Saskatchewan's right. Sure, we've got some semantics to deal with. I think they're just semantics and I think they can be dealt with.

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I like campaigning in the same areas as the member for Thunder Creek does. I find that I get more coffee and more cake and I always enjoy that. Sometimes later on in the evening I get something else as well — to drink, I mean.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COWLEY: — One should never speak off the cuff, should he!

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I want to say to the member for Thunder Creek that we had some discussion about this and I think, as the member can appreciate, we have some differences of opinion in our caucus as I'm sure you do in yours in this area.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why don't they come to Biggar?

MR. COWLEY: — I think the member for Thunder Creek was in Biggar last October.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I wonder if we could get back to order here.

MR. COWLEY: — Anyway, Mr. Chairman, I think we looked at that and I think the basic intent of the government is to stick with the representation by population as we originally laid out in the bill.

I recognize the member has a point. If he's suggesting some enshrinement of numbers without regard to population, I think we then probably have some difference of opinion there. The original act allowed the commission some leeway and I think this act does as well. I think that's as far as the government is prepared to go at this time. As I say, I think our experience under the last commission wasn't all that drastic and upsetting; I don't expect it will be this time either, in terms of any rural-urban balances. Obviously it's shifting slowly, but then so are the economics and the population in the province shifting slowly in terms of proportions from rural to urban. I think the best we can do is try and reflect that and bring about that change in an orderly way.

MR. LANE: — One question in that regard. Is there anything which prohibits the commission from making recommendations to the Assembly under the act?

MR. COWLEY: — No, I wouldn't think there would be any but the commission could give us its report in terms of boundaries, etc., and could make such other recommendations as the commission sees fit.

Section 3 agreed.

Section 4 agreed.

Section 5 as amended agreed.

Section 6

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to offer an amendment to section 6 and I will send it down to you.

Amend subclause (6)(2) of the printed bill by amending subsection 13(3) of the act by inserting after 'time' in the fifth line of the subsection the following;

'and to any copies of the compilation of the count of the population of Saskatchewan made in respect of any census taken pursuant to The Statistics Act, Canada, as amended from time-to-time.

I wonder if you could show Mr. Lane a copy of that and then give it to the Clerk please.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Chairman, I understand that some of the towns will

be doing their own census-taking this year. You're giving them some funds to do it. Will they be allowed to use that too, where they're in dispute with the Canadian figures?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, I think we could get into real difficulties if we go into census information which is not necessarily consistent or compiled by Stats Can or on some basis like that. I think obviously if the member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman) felt that, let's say in Martensville, for example, the population being used is wildly out of line because he had a census, then he could certainly present that to the commission in a brief and they could, I suppose, take that into account. That sort of thing. But I think for us to include all of these other kinds of census that might be taken, I think, would destroy some of the consistency in the bill.

MR. LANE: — Your officials are assuring us that the definition voters list includes revised voters list.

MR. COWLEY: — They're assuring me (and I'm assuring you) on that basis.

Section 6 as amended agreed.

Section 7

MR. LANE: — Exactly what does that particular one mean?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, basically what they did before is they took the population and divided by the number of seats. Fifty-nine into the population. Now that we're using voters lists, they take the number of voters and divide by 59. O.K.? So that's to establish their average sized quotient.

Section 7 agreed.

Sections 8 to 10 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Romanow (Attorney General) that Bill No. 87 — **An Act respecting the Independence of the Member of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to take any time of the House in wrapping up of this debate. I want to simply say that we attempted in this legislation to strike a reasonable balance between two competing objectives, the objective on the one hand of a member of the legislative assembly in her or his capacity to carry on his or her affairs privately financially without the necessity of public exposure of every detail, together with a second objective, namely, the objective of the right of the public to be assured that elected officials and members are dealing in the public business openly without any suggestion or possibility of conflict.

If you look at it honestly, Mr. Chairman, there are only two types of bills that could really come before this House. You could have a total revelation bill, net worth asset, where

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you list every dollar, where you set every piece of land, every indebtedness and everything on the table. That would have the advantage of assuring the public beyond a doubt what our financial dealings are, but it would have the disadvantage of dissuading very many able people who would otherwise enter political life from entering political life for fear of that kind of exposure. We've decided to reject that legislation. If you reject that legislation then the only other option legislation is the kind which is generally before the House today. I acknowledge many of the comments made by the member for Qu'Appelle about some of the difficulties with respect to the bill. I do think the bill is a significant improvement over existing law inasmuch as it requires disclosure, albeit limited, and does redefine and, I think, update provisions of prohibitions. Since the bill has been introduced I've received many comments from many people on its provisions. Some claim that it's not adequate, that it goes too far. Some say that it does not go far enough. I want to assure the members that this bill will only come into effect on proclamation. Before proclamation the government will carefully consider all of these suggested comments and review the bill carefully again, and there will be adequate and very sufficient leave time before any future action is taken. Mr. Speaker, with those few words in rebuttal I move second reading of this particular bill.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Attorney General, may I assume that there is some sort of a thinly disguised promise there that this legislation is not going to be proclaimed, and in fact may not be proclaimed? If this is indeed your intention, will the Attorney General tell this Assembly if the government is in fact not going to proclaim the bill as he has indicated, or may not, or is considering not proclaiming it, why the Attorney General will not consider the suggestion that was put forward to him last evening of a committee?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, the intention of the government is to proclaim the legislation. Whenever I am asked what the intention of the government is, I tell them. But I also tell them that before proclamation, we will examine carefully, the words of the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) and others, as to the impact of the bill and assess all of the points of view made, but the intention is to proclaim and for that reason we did not accept the suggestion made the other night.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 30

Pepper	Kowalchuk	Koskie
Dyck	Robbins	Lusney
Bowerman	Whelan	Prebble
Smishek	Kaeding	Gross
Romanow	McArthur	Nelson
Messer	Johnson	Thompson
Byers	Allen	Engel
Kramer	Rolfes	Poniatowski
Baker	Tchorzewski	Lingenfelter
Skoberg	Shillington	White

NAYS — 15

Larter
Berntson
Katzman
Swan
Thatcher

Taylor
Lane
Birkbeck
Ham
Pickering

McLeod
Andrew
Duncan
Muirhead
Rousseau

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
VOTE 3**

HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce members of my officials who will be here to assist me and others as required from time-to-time. First of all, on my right is my Deputy Attorney General Dr. Dick Gosse. Behind me is the Assistant Deputy Minister Mr. Jeff Bugera. Behind me is the Director of Administrative Services Mr. Harvey Murchison and sitting to my left, just in case we get some CPN (Co-operative Programming Network) questions is the Chairman of our Communications Secretariat Don McMillan.

ITEM 1

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, again we go with the annual 11th hour or last minute assessment of the estimates of the Attorney General. It used to be education . . . (inaudible interjection). . . not in recent years it didn't. Mr. Chairman, there are some general areas where I think the department has indicated an inability and where the minister has indicated an inability to deal with significant pressing social problems. I think that the first area I would like to cover is the inability, in my view and I think publicly accepted inability, to deal with the increasing crime rate in the province of Saskatchewan.

We had a rather significant report, Mr. Chairman, prepared by the federal government. I know that there has been some questioning by members opposite as to the statistics. I'm referring to the report which predicts racial turmoil in the province of Saskatchewan. I refer also to such comments as (if I might add it has questionable authority) Toronto's national magazine Maclean's, November 27, 1978, when it refers to wasteland Canada, our urban ghettos, and it refers generally to Winnipeg but it also makes reference in Regina where the per capita crime rate is the highest in the nation and native people are blamed for a disproportionate share. Charges of racism have been prominent recently and they refer to statements made by one of the Regina aldermen, Mr. Iannone. Now, whether one wants to argue with the statistics, the perception is certainly there. The perception is, in at least our major urban centres, that the government is not effectively dealing with the increasing crime rate, or with crimes of violence. I looked, for example, at the major crime trends, 1978, from the Regina city police. It indicates . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm not doing the traffic accidents, I'm doing violent crime. In not all cases are traffic accidents necessarily violent crime. Now, I realize the hon. member is not a city lawyer and is a country lawyer. Perhaps he has not come into this particular situation I'm dealing with. If that's understood by all members, perhaps I can continue.

Now, attempted murder is up 60 per cent; rape, 75 per cent; break and enter, 7.2 per cent. Admittedly there is a decrease in other areas, murder was down from 10 to 4; wounding with intent was down 8. But I don't think that the limited decrease as

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indicated is of much consolation to the people of Regina. I look at the total of criminal code offences reported last year which was over 20,000 in the city of Regina, according to a report from the Regina city police chief.

I think, Mr. Chairman, as we look at the most recent crime and traffic enforcement statistics from Statistics Canada, we look at Regina and Saskatoon (this is a summary and rate of crime per 100,000 population), and of the cities with a population (Group 3) of 100,000 to 250,000 in the most recent statistical volume that we were able to obtain, 23,713 is the total of all offences in Regina and 18,861 in the city of Saskatoon. Regina is significantly higher than any other city in that category. Now, the Attorney General will agree that we can take the statistics and we can interpret them the way that we want. The fact is the one thing that is undeniable is the public perception that the government opposite, other governments as well, is not capable of dealing with the increase in the number of violent crime.

What we are talking about (and I know the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes) disagrees) is that there are senior citizens in Saskatoon and Regina who are afraid to go out, and in other urban centres.

Now, whether that is an unfair statement or whether they are wholly accurate in their belief, their belief is there. Not only do we have to deal with the actual crime rate, I don't think enough action has been taken, nor have we done enough, nor has the government done enough, to deal with the perception of the general public in Saskatchewan, that in fact, not enough has been done and not enough is being done.

As well, I would like to direct some comments to the government opposite. We went through a lengthy criticism last year of what became clear, in this Assembly, that the government opposite, particularly the Premier, will use our court system for his own political purposes and is not above criticizing the courts and bringing the courts into disrepute. He is the only Premier in Canada who doesn't hesitate to criticize a court for political purposes, both as solicitor and as a Premier he probably has done more to bring into disrepute the Supreme Court of Canada than any other individual in this country. I say that to the minister opposite because the minister opposite responsible for the administration of justice has done nothing to make it clear to the public of Saskatchewan that he, in fact, disagrees with the Premier of Saskatchewan.

If I can find the quote of the Premier wherein he refers to perverse decisions and indications of bias and they can be reflected in appointments to the court . . . I am going to be asking the Attorney General . . . One of the strangest statements that was taken at face value as gospel, was the Premier of Saskatchewan's statement that there should be changes in the manner of appointment of the supreme court because Saskatchewan is not being represented and that the West is not properly represented.

So does he make a proposal? No, because any proposal that he makes refutes his total argument, because what happens? If we say that the West should have three members of the Supreme Court of Canada, that they should be consulted on three members. It's still a minority. The only way that the Premier can have his cake and eat it is if the Premier of Saskatchewan appoints a majority of the Court of Appeal of Canada. If he is going to argue, or if the argument is made that there should be regional input by the premiers of Canada (I happen to agree there should be consultation among the premiers), but for the Premier to be critical of the biases of the Supreme Court without making any further comment, indicates in my opinion a straight political charge and attack on the Supreme Court, because there's no way of avoiding the problem.

If we have input from the premiers on a regional basis that means that we have to recognize the regional numbers in the Supreme Court, which means that the West may get three, say four. Then we're still going to have a domination in numbers from other parts of the country, so that in fact the Premier hasn't answered the challenge that he places out.

Secondly, it means, even if the Premier has input as premier into appointments in the western region, he is still able to get up and say, I only had input into four of them, they only consulted on four. The rest are just as biased as they were before, we still can't win a case in this country. We've been before the Supreme Court. It's biased, it's against Saskatchewan, it's picking on Saskatchewan. In fact, the Premier, as I say, has done greater disservice to the administration of justice in this country than any other individual could do by his challenge and his attack.

You know I happen to agree with the Nipawin paper that the decision of the Supreme Court had some influence on the election. I think that the Supreme Court made an error in its timing of its release of its judgement. I think the Supreme Court is aware of what is in the public domain, the fact of an election. In fact the Supreme Court should have awaited its decision. But that wasn't the criticism of the Premier. The Premier took the Supreme Court decision as a clarion call, a battle cry to attack the Supreme Court of Canada. It's biased, it's part of that eastern establishment.

Oh it's true, say some of the hon. members opposite. Some of the hon. members opposite say, in fact, that the supreme court is biased. I can't accept that. I would hope the Attorney General would see fit to make an unequivocal statement, in his position as minister responsible for the administration of justice, on whether he in fact agrees with the Premier as to the bias of the supreme court.

I'm going to ask the Premier, and the Attorney General as well, to perhaps explain to the public how the Premier, before a provincial election on the constitution, attacks decisions, wants constitutional change, and is highly critical of the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, please! Just a minute. I'm sorry, but I know that the gentlemen are finding it difficult to hear because of the meeting that's going on at the back. If they would please confine their words to at least a whisper, we would appreciate it.

MR. LANE: — Thank you Mr. Chairman . . . how our ongoing discussion of constitutional change in Canada was such a bad thing prior to the provincial election, but then immediately after the election when the Premier now has to get back to business, he goes in and is all sweetness and light; he's now optimistic.

Every other province came away from a recent constitutional conference concerned with the fact that the provincial power question is still up in the air after days of discussion and that new constitution is deemed to be far away (at the conference immediately after the election). A headline, Government Leaders See Constitution Far Away should be a matter of concern, a matter of concern to every Premier in Canada but Allan Blakeney. I'm encouraged!

Two weeks before November 2, during the election, you know, there's no way. He's despondent; there's no hope for the West. Immediately thereafter he becomes encouraged. Obviously the Premier on constitutional change has been doing a pretty

healthy snow job, and I congratulate him for a very successful one. He's managed to convince the press he's the only saviour before the election. But immediately after, he's the only one who happens to think anything happened. He's the only one who can go down with his (what's the word he uses?) — his short list for the First Minister's Conference, of what he's going to do. He comes back empty-handed but he's encouraged after the election. The reason he's encouraged, and the reason the Premier doesn't want to disturb the constitutional forum is because he's managed to convince the public of Saskatchewan that he has a good time and he does a good job. The fact is, one of these days the people of Saskatchewan are going to ask Allan Blakeney, you've been going to these conferences for several years. What have you done for us, Allan? Allan will say, well, I look good. I argued with Trudeau or — he's not going to be around — I argued with Joe Clark, but I look good. Isn't that enough? One of these days the people are going to say, no, Allan, it's not good enough. We want to start seeing some production.

I'm going to ask the Attorney General, who was involved and, I believe, chaired the constitutional committee, the Attorney General can correct me on that, chaired the constitutional committee, in what specific areas and constitutional discussion there is agreement for change? I would like to know specifically what position on the constitutional committee the Attorney General took with regard to charter of rights, because from a close reading of the press statements on the Attorney General, he says the charter of rights is admirably worded but its implications have not been thought through. The Premier on the other hand opposes the question of the rights and doesn't believe that it should be in the constitution. I would like the Attorney General's opinion. I would like to start to ask him in some detail to supply us specifically with those areas where agreement has been reached for change and specifically those areas where there is no agreement and then the third area, where the Attorney General can give us some assurance that the problems are, in fact, minor. I would ask the Attorney General in conclusion to give us his comments because the motion has, in fact, been before the Assembly on two occasions and the minister responsible for the administration of justice has made no comment. Would he give us his stand on the abolition of capital punishment?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I'll be as brief as I can, of necessity, today because of conditions beyond my control. I would say first of all, on the question of the constitutional talks — I don't mean this in any confrontation sense — the hon. member might have misconceived the nature of the process when he asks the question, what has been specifically agreed to? The easy proper answer is that nothing has been agreed to. As the hon. member knows himself, only a month or so ago when we met last, that is to say the premiers with the Prime Minister, in front of the television cameras, no specific agreements were arrived at other than the agreement to continue the process; the process being the ministers steering committee and minister committee at large, supported by you will, structurally below that by the committee of officials. But much progress has been made in several areas. I'll try to provide you with some of the details of it.

If you look at it in terms of the historical flow of events, keep in mind that the provincial election was October 18, the first meeting on the constitution was October 31. Certainly since my tenure as Attorney General, it was post-October 31 that the ministerial committee of which I had the pleasure and honor of being co-chairman, was struck. Any statements that the Premier may have made prior to October 18 were fully accurate. Any statements which he has made about good progress after October 18 are also fully accurate. I endorse those remarks. In the three and a half months from

October 18 to January, February, whenever the last first ministers' meeting had been called, the provinces of Canada have made tremendous progress in resolving differences on a new resources section; family law section; communications' sections; questions of spending power; what to do with the declaratory power — one could go down the list and I don't have the list here with me. I'll try to get it over the supper hour and be more specific. I think without being the score keeper there are many areas where as high as eight or nine provinces — eight provinces — would agree on many of those key areas. I invite the hon. member to look back in recent constitutional history, certainly it's the first since the Victoria debates in 1970 and 1971. I think that good progress has been made. I think that the country is trying to respond to challenges which face the nation now, particularly with the election in the province of Quebec with the PQ (Parti Quebecois) government and partly this is the motivation for many of these areas of compromise. It will be possible for me, I tell the member outright because that's not the nature of the process to say we have agreed on (a), (c), (g), (l) and (z); simply because there have been no agreements. There won't be I don't expect for another year or two years perhaps once the federal election is finished and the process goes on and there's a greater definition of the outstanding issues.

On the question of the Supreme Court and the Premier, my only observation there is that I have always taken the view that the Premier has criticized the judgments of some of the constitutional cases. I think there are many who do disagree with the judgments of the constitutional cases as they have come down in the last little while, generally being characterized as too centralist or too provincial, is the nature of the criticism depending on your point of view. The Premier's point of view has been that there has been a strong centralist approach taking over the last series of cases which the supreme court has tendered.

Much is being said and has been said, certainly since October 31 on the composition and the need for input, consent and input, for the appointments of the supreme court. I, myself, have done this on behalf of the province and other ministers on behalf of their provinces have done that as well.

On the question of the charter of rights, the government remains opposed to the entrenchment of a bill of rights which is a part of the charter of rights. One ought not to say that the charter of rights equals only the bill of rights. The charter of rights has a number of other rights. There are democratic rights, there are the fundamental freedoms and there are the language rights and then there is the so-called bill of rights aspect of it. The Premier and the government and I take the position that the entrenchment of the bill of rights portion is wrong. However, in the overall negotiations of communications, resources and charter, if the province of Saskatchewan, in order to put the package together for confederation, can agree on some limited aspects of the charter of rights as proposed, namely, some of the fundamental freedoms and the democratic rights and language rights in limited areas, we would be prepared to go for that. That's the position that I'm taking referring to your quote. I remain opposed to the entrenchment of a bill of rights and the Premier does as well and I think there is no conflict in that regard.

Finally, on the question of the crime rate. If the members will allow me, permit me to take one minute, and then that would wrap up the two areas touched on and the hon. member can come back on me fresh at 7 p.m. I would say about the crime rate that it is a serious matter and Regina is a problem. I don't feel defensive about this, so when I say it I don't want you or the press to interpret that I am somehow defensive when I say that there is a danger in overstating the problem. It is almost a self-fulfilling prophesy which

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takes place.

I have before me the Leader Post article of February 2, 1979. The headline says, 'Chief says, Regina Crime Rate Not as Bad as Some Think.' That is Chief Huget. And I think that's a pretty good headline of the kind of factual position and the kind of position we should be adopting. The quote in the story says:

Pointing to a 5.7 per cent decrease in major crime since he took command, Regina's police chief said Thursday, that with an 8 per cent increase in population since 1972, the city is not really in such a desperate situation as some people suggest.

That's over a five year period since he took command. Speaking of what Chief Al Huget called his last press conference in this rat hole of a building. I don't want to throw that in but he said there was a 1.3 per cent decrease in the overall crime picture. So it is true that in some areas it is up and some areas it's down but I think the overall trend and the overall approach is, in my judgment, the responsible approach as taken by the chief. The crime rate is not as bad as some think. I don't want that to be interpreted to say that Roy Romanow is satisfied with the crime rate. I am not. I think it is serious. It is serious in Regina.

What to do? Mr. Chairman, I close now before the supper break. This is not an easy answer. We do have a problem related with Indian-Metis populations in our urban areas. The Explosive Years report, while I don't adopt it wholeheartedly, has certainly, in a general term, pinpointed that. We do have increased court cases.

We do have a lot of things going for us. We have more police officers than ever before in Regina. Our ratio is probably the lowest in Regina of police officers per population of any urban city, not that police officers alone do the job. We have more magistrates. We have more native court workers. We have more Indian J.P. (Justice of the Peace) programs. We have those kinds of systems. We have more community programs — Neighborhood Watch, the neighborhood police patrol, Block Parent approaches — all of these. There is now a proposal of Indian and Metis people riding with the police officers in Regina. These are not going to solve the problem, I realize that. But I do say that they are good programs of which some good progress is being made.

I simply close on these last words, Mr. Chairman. Edmonton has three times Regina's population and yet has five times its crime rate. It is a problem which can be easily defined, but a problem which cannot be easily resolved. There are no simple solutions to a crime problem.

Mr. Chairman, I think I have indulged the members of the House perhaps too long and maybe we can call it 5 o'clock.

The Assembly recessed from 5 to 7 o'clock.