

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
April 3, 1980

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. J.L. SOLOMON (Regina North-West): — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this morning to introduce to you and to all members of the legislative Chamber, 37 Grade 8 students from Coronation Park School in my constituency. They are located in the west gallery. They are accompanied by Gordon Forrest and Brenda Markoski. I would like to extend my hope to them that they enjoy the proceedings today and find them educational and interesting. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and ask them to thank their fellow students and teachers and their principal, Don Esh, for the very warm welcome they provided for me when I was at their school to represent them with their Celebrate Saskatchewan pins a few weeks ago. I hope that all members will join with me this morning in welcoming them to the Chamber.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. R. J. GROSS (Morse) — Mr. Speaker, I would like to also introduce some students to the Assembly — 40 Grades 11 and 12 students from Morse who are seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied here today by their teachers, Carl Radbruck and Mary Wedhorn. I understand they are sponsored by the department of co-ops. I'm sure all members of this Assembly will want to wish them a pleasant stay in the legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Price Increases

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in light of the recent price increases announced by your government in such things as licence fees, registration fees, insurance rates, beer and now liquor, will the Premier, first of all, assure this Assembly that these increases are the end of that and there will be no more increases in those items? Secondly, would you advise the Assembly what further surprises you have in store for the people of Saskatchewan in price increases?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, with respect to assurances that there will be no more price increases in beer, wine and insurance rates, the answer is obviously no. I cannot assure the hon. member that there will be no more price increases. Nobody since 1905 has been able to assure people that the price of liquor would not increase some time in the future. That's equally true today. I obviously cannot give him the assurance he requests. If the hon. member opposite can find any merchant selling anything who will agree that his price will not increase any time in the future, then I would be interested if he would indicate who he is.

With respect to what other items in which changes may be made either up or down, I

have nothing to announce. If there are announcements, they will come forward in due course.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. I should have completed my question. I apologize for that. I intended to say for the balance of this fiscal year. These are the increases that have been announced since the budget was announced in this House. I might repeat my question. Are these going to further increase during the fiscal year? Mr. Premier, in light of all of the high interest rates we're faced with in this country today, would you not agree that the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to some lead time to prepare themselves for such increases that you may announce this year? Will you be assuring this Assembly that there will be no further increases in those items in this fiscal year?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to licence fees for licensing automobiles, I think I can say there will be no increases during this fiscal year with respect . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — You better look over there twice.

MR. BLAKENEY: — That's right. This obviously ought to be directed to the minister in question but I will attempt to answer some questions. With respect to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act insurance rates, I do not anticipate any increases in the AAIA rates this year — any additional increases, yes.

With respect to liquor prices, I can give the hon. members no assurances on that. The policy of the liquor board is to pass along, in a timely way, increases charged by the distilleries and if the price of rye whiskey or vodka goes up, then in a relatively short time the price in the liquor stores will go up. We don't change with every possible increase because we would be changing almost weekly as different distilleries change their rates. But every couple of months they revise their figures upwards and it is not the policy of our government, although it may well be the policy of members opposite, to subsidize the liquor prices, notwithstanding the fact that we are paying more, and not passing along to the . . . So obviously I cannot give the assurance that the hon. member requests.

With respect to beer prices, I don't know what the negotiations are with the breweries but I would anticipate that the increase announced recently would be the last increase for at least some period of time. There is also the problem of what happens if the prices which the breweries charge go up and whether or not that should be subsidized. Ordinarily that is not the policy of our government.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you have answered on the liquor and beer very well. Perhaps you will assure the Assembly exactly what your intentions are with respect to utilities. I'm referring to power, to telephones, to natural gas. Will you give us some kind of assurance, or announce some kind of price increase this year, or assurance that you will not be increasing these prices in this fiscal year?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm really unable to give an assurance on that. The boards of directors will be making recommendations from time to time on the prices which are to be. They will be instituting the changes. And I'm not denying the fact that if cabinet urged them not to, they wouldn't because I'm not denying that they are not subject to some measure of control by cabinet. One would expect that would be the case. But we would anticipate that increases in utility rates would reflect increased

costs; I would hope nothing more. Just as other increases in prices come about because of increase of costs of supplies and the amounts paid to our employees, I would anticipate that would be true with respect to natural gas and to power and telephones and to other utilities, as has been the case in the past.

Control of Price Increases

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — A question to the Premier. It is nice to have the admission that it is within the power of cabinet to control these price increases. You indicated that you don't subscribe to the policy of subsidizing liquor prices, but the Premier very pointedly misses reference to the fact that Sask Tel rates increased at the same time that Sask Tel had a profit tabled in this Assembly,

Would the Premier not admit, given the rapid increase in the rate of inflation and the fact that cabinet has the power to control the rates that it is now time for a public utilities price review board, so the public may have input into these rapidly rising utility rates?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I understand there is some resolution on the order paper with respect to something like that, and no doubt all hon. members will have the opportunity to express their views. The views of all members will doubtless have an opportunity to be recorded, and I don't think there is much point in asking each individual member of cabinet where he supports or does not support each individual resolution on the order paper.

MR. LANE: — Meanwhile, as a supplementary, we would hope that the Premier would attend that particular debate and give his inputs into the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: — That's not a question. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

Funds for Separate School French Program

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, it's been brought to my attention that the Regina Separate School Board is likely to drop its type A French program unless it receives further departmental grants. Mr. Minister, why has your department required boards by legislation to set up such programs without providing the necessary funds for the programs?

HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Minister of Education): — Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows. The Education Act makes provision for a variety of types of programs that school boards are requested to provide under certain conditions. The type A designated program that the hon. member refers to is provided for under legislation and regulations — legislation that was considered in this Assembly. It is not true that we have not provided financial help in order to operate these programs. Negotiations have been under way with respect to the Regina Separate School Board on this particular program. Those negotiations are not complete but I can tell the hon. member that I have advanced to the Regina Separate School Board proposals that would quite considerably enhance the financial support over and above that which has been available to date.

MR. TAYLOR: — A supplementary. I understand something in the neighborhood of \$20,000. But board director, Mr. Herle, indicates that the separate school board is

short \$126,000 for the type A program. Mr. Minister, do you expect the board to cut from other programs to finance this? How are they to come up with this \$126,000?

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, it's not possible for me to get into a debate about the figures. I can inform the hon. member that the latest proposal from the department is somewhat higher in terms of additional support than what the hon. member has indicated. I do not think it would be useful at this point for us to try to negotiate the exact level of support that should be advanced by the department for a particular program of this sort.

MR. TAYLOR: — Final supplementary. Mr. Minister, do you expect the separate school board to increase its mill rate to finance this? And if this is necessary, do you realize, Mr. Minister, if the separate school board of Regina is forced to increase its mill rate above that of the public school board many people could choose to opt across to the public school board and thereby erode the financial base of the separate school system in this city?

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, the regulations and the legislation apply equally to separate and public school boards in this province. They are not discriminatory with respect to any particular kind of board. In this case the parents have made an application at this time to the separate school board and the separate school board is acting on that application. I would say to the hon. member that if he would care to take a little time to check the records, he will find (and this will be confirmed, I believe by all separate school boards in this province) that no government in the history of this province has had a better record in terms of helping to support and advance the financial position of separate school boards than this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — I might mention to the hon. member that these negotiations are continuing and I'm confident that this program will proceed to the mutual satisfaction of everyone concerned.

Negotiations with Separate School Boards

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — New question, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask the minister, are you going to settle with the separate school boards the same way you settled with the teachers? Are you going to exclude them from the negotiations or are you going to deal directly with the school board this time?

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, that question almost defies answering. The negotiations that have taken place have taken place with the separate school board. I have met with them on a number of occasions. My officials have met with them on a number of occasions. And I can't possibly see how the program that the board is involved in implementing could be negotiated with the board excluded. The question makes absolutely no sense.

Weight Control Clinics

MRS. J.H. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — A question to the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker. Concerns have been raised recently by various professional groups as to establishing in Saskatchewan weight control and weight reduction clinics. Does your department have any regulatory control or do you plan any regulations pertaining to these clinics?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, I'm personally not concerned about the weight control problem, but looking around this House maybe as Minister of Health I should be, looking opposite at some of the members there. Yes, Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Health I am concerned about people who are overweight because many of them end up with heart attacks in our facilities and take the beds that could be occupied by other individuals.

In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, yes, I am concerned about it. I have had some discussions with my officials on that particular topic. I am concerned about some of the statements that have been coming from organizations which are being established in this province and across this country, whose advertisements seem to indicate that it is healthy for an individuals to lose rather drastically a lot of weight. That, I think, is contrary to the position that would be taken by the physicians of Canada. In that regard I support them and I do have some concerns. As to regulations, no, we have not gone that far in negotiating or considering regulations in this regard but I think it's a valid point the member is making.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, it is my understanding your department was approached over six months ago with a proposal for a pilot project in Saskatoon, to establish a clinic to treat obesity. Has your staff looked into this possibility and whether or not it will be covered under MCIC (medical care insurance commission); and are you going to answer the person who wrote to you?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I will answer the member by saying that we are making attempts. There is a group set up within government to study the whole aspect of changing life styles and preventative services. I did mention this when my estimates were under consideration. We expect to have a proposal before government that will be considered for next year's budget on the whole aspect of changing life styles. We are continuing with our Feeling Good program, trying to make people aware of exercising, trying to make people aware of a balanced diet, of moderate drinking, of cutting out smoking — you know, trying to reduce stress to maintain a healthy kind of atmosphere and attitude of individuals, the responsibility of individuals to themselves. In direct response to your question, that particular topic is under consideration and an answer will come forth in due time.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary to the minister. Will the minister not admit that while we're attempting to change life styles, sometimes exaggerated claims are made as to the weight loss potential of going to different clinics? Then there is the other aspect about the protection of the funds advanced by individuals for joining some of these clinics. Is the minister looking into both of those aspects: one, the claims being made, and two, the financial protection of individuals who do pay funds in advance to these clinics?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I think the member for Qu'Appelle would be the first one to yell foul if we were to restrict the freedom of an individuals to pay funds where that individuals felt it was worthwhile project. He'd be the first open to yell foul and interference with individuals liberties. We hear that constantly over there when we say we want to protect individuals against organizations that may be advertising.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the member we have that particular item under consideration. The group studying that whole aspect of changing life styles and giving

a new emphasis to maintaining healthy individuals is before government and I'm hoping we will have a concrete proposal which I can make to government for the budget of 1981-81.

Purchase of Private Aircraft

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, have you or any of your government ministers or officials had any demonstrations or made representation to any jet aircraft manufacturer in Canada or the United States for the purpose of purchasing a private executive jet aircraft for the Government of Saskatchewan?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would have to take notice of that question. He asks whether all manner of government agencies have talked with all sorts of people. I'll take notice and see whether we can find it.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. New question, Mr. Premier, do you not agree that in this time of astronomical interest rates in Canada and Saskatchewan, with the cost of living and the interest rates interference and the problems it's causing the small businessmen and farmers in Saskatchewan, and the homeowners . . .

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

Union of Qu'Appelle and Regina Social Services Regions

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I would direct a question to the Minister of Social Services. I see he is gazing around the gallery and hasn't heard me. A question to the Minister of Social Services.

It has been brought to my attention that the Qu'Appelle region and the Regina region of the Department of Social Services are being united. A full-time social worker in that particular area, and in particular my own area, will only be there one day a week. The brunt of this overload is falling on the public health office and in particular on the public health officer to the extent that a Jill McGillvary has quit because of the overload.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Social Services is very simply, is it not detrimental in your views to maintain the development of rural Saskatchewan and that particular way of life when you make decisions like this? Would it not be incumbent upon you as the minister responsible to reverse that decision?

HON. J.J. KOSKIE (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, in respect to the member's question, I want to indicate it is my view that in the administrative change that has been made regarding Qu'Appelle and Regina, the overall services that will be provided in the areas which were previously served by the Qu'Appelle region will in fact not be detracted from.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, just a final supplementary, just a point of clarification of the minister's statement. You are saying in effect then that these changes have not in any way been detrimental to that particular region of social services? If that is so, would you be suggesting to this Assembly that in fact those services are going to be improved because of this change?

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to indicate to the hon. member we are constantly attempting to improve services commensurate with the government's view of decentralized

government. And as I indicated, I am advised that the general area of social will be maintained.

Western Power Grid Survey

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister in charge of SPC. Mr. Minister, you recently announced that the grid electrical tie-in with North Dakota was announced for the third time the other day and I appreciate that. You also announced earlier that we are going to tie Poplar River with Montana and we have been tied into Manitoba for quite some time. In this recent news release from the Department of Mineral Resources, you announced that we would be having a survey done with Alberta and Manitoba in order to tie our lines together and our power grid together. Can you tell me, in light of your announcement of the 100 megawatt exchange with North Dakota, is this survey going to include Montana and North Dakota as well?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, the member has made some comments about the present tie-ins with other jurisdictions surrounding the province of Saskatchewan, as well as more specific questions as to what we expect the studies will accomplish in regard to the western grid. The member knows we have three tie-ins with the province of Manitoba and now we have one under way with Basin Electric Power Co-op in North Dakota. We are working towards a tie-in, separate from the western grid or system which he refers to, with the province of Alberta.

There is still optimism there may be benefit for the province of Saskatchewan and the state of Montana with a tie-in to Poplar River at Coronach. It is not expected that the study, which I made reference to and he makes reference to in the news release in respect of a grid or a system servicing Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, will look at the north-south connections into United States. The primary objective of that so-called study which is comprised of a series of studies is to better define the rewards and the probability of achieving a distribution of power between Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

MR. LARTER: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It was announced that Alberta would probably be purchasing something like 1,000 megawatts from Manitoba. Would it not be more feasible for Saskatchewan, being closer to Manitoba, to use this as an out as far as building new power plants? In 1980-81, with the 300 megawatt coming on stream at Poplar River and then the 600 a couple of years later, what is our peak load and the reserve as these units come on stream? What is the lead time for a new power station at Nipawin?

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, Alberta is purchasing power from Manitoba, not so much that they don't want to develop their own power in that province, but the demand for power is increasing faster than their capabilities to produce it. I guess if they made a concerted effort they would be able to but there is other economic activity in the province, as there is in Saskatchewan, and they don't want to get the economy too hot.

The problems which are related to that are costly, as we are all aware. They want to further pursue the possibility of transmitting hydro-electric renewable power from the province of Manitoba. It is not expected that 1,000 megawatts of power will be sold. It is expected that in real terms 500 megawatts, or 50 per cent of the line, is about the best you can assume over a long term. So it would be closer to 500 megawatts. We are hoping we may be able to negotiate some of that power as well because it gives us access to a renewable source of power. A problem is where the placement of line might

be.

As the member knows about 70 per cent of our generation is in southern Saskatchewan now. We do not need more east-west distribution systems in the southern part of the province. We need them in the North where the growth is taking place. The study will tell us whether the line can be placed there.

The member also asks what the lead time was in respect to new power stations. We have something in the neighborhood of 18 months before we have to make a decision as to whether or not we would go ahead with Nipawin. I would hope we would be able to make that decision well in advance of that time frame running out. One factor in respect of that decision would be whether or not the studies which are under way now, which are hoped to be concluded September 30, will tell us that it is economically feasible to have power purchased from Manitoba. If so, we may be able to defer the next power project for the province of Saskatchewan.

Development of Alberta Tar Sands

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — A question to the Minister of Mineral Resources. There is some speculation in the East, Mr. Minister, that the federal government is now reconsidering the importance it has placed on developing the Alberta tar sands. This is in view of the development in Hibernia off the coast of Newfoundland. What effect do you see that having on the development of our heavy oil in Saskatchewan?

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I think the member may be jumping to conclusions in that the tar sands may not now play a key role in providing additional energy to Canadian consumers. They certainly have expressed that the tar sands, with the technology which is now available, should not demand world prices. There should be some means of negotiating a fair return for the exotic techniques of mining oil, I believe that there will be some arrangement made even though there may be some differences of opinion in reaching such an arrangement and that the tar sands development will still play a key role.

I have not had specific discussions with the minister of energy federally, but in the meeting which I had with him several weeks ago we talked encouragingly about heavy oil development in Saskatchewan. I believe that heavy oil development has a very significant place to play in that it should be more economical than any other exotic process of recovery known today.

ROYAL ASSENT

At 10:47 a.m. the Lieutenant-Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne and gave royal assent to the bill presented to him.

Point of Order on Question Period

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, the point of order has to do with the question period. With all due respect to your office, would you please tell me why you sat me down in question period today?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I recall the member asked a question about something to do with the purchase of a jet aircraft by the government. Then the member asked for a supplementary. I granted him the floor on the basis that he was asking for a supplementary. He proceeded to say something which I considered not to be a

supplementary but in fact to be a speech. Therefore it was out of order. According to the rules of the question period, questions must be stated without preamble or speech or be in the nature of a debate, so consequently I asked the member to take his seat. I then took the next question.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, to my recollection I went on a new question.

MR. SPEAKER: — Yes, it is unfortunate that the member assumes that he went for a new question. I accepted him on the basis of a supplementary.

MOTION

Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing

HON. R. J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — I move, seconded by the member for Kindersley-Tisdale (Mr. Messer):

That the name of Mr. Vickar be substituted for that of Mr. Tchorzewski on the list of members of the select standing committee on public accounts and printing.

MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley): — I would make a short comment, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the government for this move, as Chairman of the public accounts committee. As people are aware, Mr. Tchorzewski is the Minister of Finance and the public accounts committees across Canada, in each of the jurisdictions, have succeeded in removing the ministers of finance from those committees. I thought our move this year was somewhat of a regressive step in bringing the Minister of Finance back on to the committee. For that I thank the government, although I would suggest to the government that perhaps there could be other moves by way of procedural changes, etc., to the public accounts committee that could also upgrade that committee a bit. Thank you.

Motion agreed.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN — VOTE 26

Item 1 (continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. We adjourned the committee yesterday dealing with the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, item 1.

Point of Order

HON. J.A. HAMMERSMITH (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Chairman, yesterday, just prior to the committee rising, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley made certain remarks in reference to me. I refer to the Hansard for Wednesday, April 2, page 1422. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley said in reference to me, and I quote:

I say, Mr. Chairman, that this minister is a revolutionist. He is an insurrectionist and an anarchist.

My point of order, Mr. Chairman, is that these remarks are unparliamentary, and I ask the member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw those remarks without qualification or reservation.

MR. ROMANOW: — Point of order, Mr. Chairman. This is related; you might as well deal with them all at the same time. Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise on transcript the words by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley of last day. I will specify the words which I allege are unparliamentary in a moment but they have to be said in context. This is the member for Indian Head-Wolseley:

We are wanting to know what types of ministers the Blakeney government has appointed. I would like this minister to explain the reasons for his writings. I would like him to tell this House because what happened as result of this letter, was that there were \$5 million in police costs to the United States government. There were two people killed and the town was racked and bullet-torn. Many people never returned to their homes. That's the kind of movement this minister supports.

I say on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, that the words in the context of the phrase, "That's the kind of movement this minister supports" are unparliamentary and I would ask the hon. member to also withdraw them without reservation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I think what we have are two points of order. I'll deal with the first point of order raised by the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan.

Order. I have had a chance to look over the transcript now and notice that the member did in fact say the minister is revolutionist, an insurrectionist and an anarchist. I think those words are probably, in fact they are, unparliamentary and I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the remarks. Order, order. I would ask the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw those remarks.

MR. LANE: — Speaking to the point of order. I think that is a debatable point, Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's not a matter of privilege, wake up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would ask the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw those remarks.

AN HON. MEMBER: — On what basis, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — On the basis that they are unparliamentary and I would ask you to sit down. I will ask the hon. member to withdraw the unparliamentary remarks.

It is within my duty as Chairman of the House to rule on whether or not expressions by members are personal, or disorderly, unparliamentary language offending against the proprieties of the House. If you look in Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, I think you will find that and I'd ask the hon. member to withdraw the remarks unqualified. Order, I've asked the hon. member to withdraw the remarks.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Chairman, you can't make an arbitrary ruling. It is a point of order that has been raised and I have asked to speak to the point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I have already made a ruling that the hon. member should withdraw the unparliamentary remarks and I'd ask the hon. member to do so as this time.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Chairman, you can't make arbitrary rulings. I've asked to speak on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I call on the member for Indian Head-Wolseley if you'd care to withdraw those remarks.

MR. LANE: — I'm gong to speak to the point or order. The proper procedure, I think, Mr. Chairman, is a matter of privilege which was not raised by the members opposite . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. In this particular case I think the issue is clear. I don't' need any advice from the House as to whether or not these words are unparliamentary. I've ruled they are unparliamentary; they are in the record; they are clear. I would ask the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw the remarks unqualified at this time.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Chairman, what is not clear is the procedure. The procedure properly and I think Mr. Chairman knows it, is a matter of principle and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would ask you to resume your seat. I call on the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw these remarks . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order. I'll have to warn the hon. member for Qu'Appelle that he's skidding himself on very slippery ground. I'll call on the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I don't think it's very slippery, Mr. Chairman, I' think it's very solid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Yes, I'm going to give the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley one more chance to get up and I'm going to warn the hon. member for Qu'Appelle that he is showing an extreme amount of disrespect for the Chair and the authority of the Chair in this House . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Challenge to Chairman's Ruling

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, during the considerations of the estimates of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, I asked the member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw a certain unparliamentary remark. My ruling was challenged by the member for Qu'Appelle.

Ruling of the Chair sustained on the following recorded division:

Yeas — 32

Pepper	Mostoway	Koskie
Allen	Banda	Matsalla
Romanow	Kaeding	Lusney
Messer	Hammersmith	Prebble
Snyder	Kowalchuk	Johnson
Kramer	Feschuk	Nelson
Robbins	Byers	Thompson
Baker		Lingenfelter

Skoberg
McArthur
Shillington

Vickar
Cowley
Cody

White
Solomon

Nays — 14

Berntson
Birkbeck
Larter
Lane
Taylor

Rousseau
Swan
Pickering
Garner
Muirhead

Katzman
Duncan
Andrew
McLeod

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN — VOTE 26

Item 1 (continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I call on the member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw those remarks.

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the words that are deemed by the Chair to be unparliamentary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Thank you.

MR. ROMANOW: — I read to you earlier, and I don't know if you want to have me read it over again, my point of order on unparliamentary remarks. Perhaps because of the lengthy interruption I should read them for the purposes of the record. In the record the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley is quoted as follows:

We are wanting to know what types of minister the Blakeney government has appointed. I would like this minister to explain the reasons for his writings. I would like him to tell this House because what happened as a result of this letter was that there were \$5 million in police costs to the United States government. There were two people killed and the town was racked and bullet-torn. Many people were returned to their homes. That's the kind of movement this minister supports.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'll make my point very briefly. In reality the whole paragraph . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Point of order, Mr. Chairman. You wouldn't let me comment on it, now you are letting him give a speech on his point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, the words that I find offensive are, "that the kind of movement this minister supports", in the context of police costs, killings, rackings and people returned to their homes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Are there are comments on this point of order?

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — Speaking to this point of order, Mr.

Chairman, I think it is the fuzziest sort of point of order that has ever been raised in this House and it indicates to me that members on that side of the House have selective hearing. Last week or within days, the Minister of Highways referred to the member for Regina South as a dehydrated Frenchman and further referred to the two Independent members as traitors to their country, which may or may not be true, but is very unparliamentary and they chose to ignore it at that time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! You're out of order!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I've had a chance to look over the section referred to by the Attorney General and I think if the question is whether or not there's unparliamentary language — just wait a second.

I've had a chance to consider this and this particular point of order I don't think is as clear cut as the one before. The one before dealt with unparliamentary language; this one I don't think deals with unparliamentary language. What it does do, I believe, is, and I refer hon. members to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fifth Edition, section 319:

In the House of Commons a member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the House itself as a political institution; (and here's to the moot point) or to impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case;

And I think that in my view this does and I would ask the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw those remarks.

MR. LANE: — Speaking to the point of order, the point of order was very specifically raised by the Attorney General and now seems to be changed to another matter. So there's no raising of the point of order on the other matter. The point of order is out of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I don't want to get into an argument with the member. I cited the section under which I made this ruling in Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fifth Edition. You could look it up, but I'd ask the hon. member to withdraw the remarks.

MR. LANE: — Speaking to the point of order, my recollection is that must be raised by the Chair at the time, Mr. Chairman, not at a considerably later period of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'm replying in response to the point or order that was already made. If the hon. member would like to withdraw those remarks as well . . .

MR. LANE: — Well, except the point of order was made on a different topic.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. I am going to ask the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw the remarks.

MR. LANE: — Well, what phrase did you sue though? You thought it was not nice. Was that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. I stated my ruling. I stated the case in which I've set it. I'm asking the member to withdraw.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Well, then would you state your ruling again?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'm going to repeat it one more time. I am going to ask the hon. member then to withdraw. I said the case was not a clear case of unparliamentary language as was the previous case. What I did say further was that having looked over the rules of the House and cited section 319(3):

In the House of Commons a Member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the House itself as a political institution; or to impute to any Member of Members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case;

I call on the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw the remarks.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Mr. Chairman, may I speak to your comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. You may not. I will call on the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley to withdraw.

MR. TAYLOR: — I would like for you to spell out to me what you feel are the unworthy . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. I would like you to withdraw immediately, on page 1423 the paragraph:

We are wanting to know what types of ministers the Blakeney government has appointed. I would like this minister to explain the reason for his writings. I would like him to tell this House because what happened as result of this letter, was that here were \$5 million in police costs to the United States government. There were two people killed and the town was racked and bullet-torn. Many people never returned to their homes. That's the kind of movement this minister supports.

That imputes on the minister that he supports this type of movement. I think that is an unparliamentary way to refer to a fellow member. I would ask you to withdraw.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Chairman, as you well may know, there are a number of things I want to find out about the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I call on the hon. member to withdraw the remarks — unqualifiedly.

AN HON. MEMBER: — It seems to me there is quite a bit of doubt.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well to expedite the proceedings of this House . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order . . . withdraw those remarks, please.

MR. TAYLOR: — . . . I will withdraw the words that are deemed by you to be unworthy,

did you say?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Unparliamentary.

MR. TAYLOR: — Motives.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Thank you.

MR. LANE: — I'd like to direct a question to the minister responsible for DNS. The minister was a rather prolific writer in his youth when he was an employee of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. We've referred to a letter that the member now wishes he hadn't written. I'm going to refer to another letter that got a great deal of press coverage in the Prince Albert Daily Herald. It's an open letter to the Premier from the minister now responsible for DNS dated August 12, 1973. From that I'm going to take some quotes and I'm not taking them out of context. The hon. member knows the letter. He refers to DNS programs.

To turn the responsibility for such programs over to Bowerman and Churchman and their B&B Gang (Bookkeepers and Bureaucrats) is to invite even greater disaster than characterizes DNS presently.

My judgment of the motivation and competence of Mr. Bowerman and Mr. Churchman has been made very clear. Since the actions of your government have depended largely on the judgment and the recommendations of these two men, I withhold any further judgment of you and your government, little as my opinion may be worth, until we see what you do with the information herein contained.

It is also important to me that everyone involved understand the facts, insofar as I know and believe them to be true, of the recent firings by DNS.

Then you go on to your own personal firings and you make other quotes.

It is a fact that Jonas Favel, Roy Fosseneuve and Bernice Jacobson are all very articulate, fluently bilingual, politically aware, de-colonized, half-breeds. DNS apparently cannot tolerate "uppity-Indians." In the eyes of Mr. Bowerman and Mr. Churchman and the frightened collection of programmed "yes-men" they are gathering around them, a "good" and "responsible" Indian is one who keeps his or her mouth shut, blindly and without question carrying out the orders of the department even when it is obvious that such directives are not in the best interests of native people. It is apparent within the department that "white is right," and no Indian employee from the North should ever question the orders of his white superiors from the South. The fact that these three people refused to be token Indians, providing political window dressing for DNS, probably had more to do with their dismissals than any other factor. Certainly your officials, like racists anywhere, will deny this vehemently. Their protestations of innocence may convince you and your government; however, they fall on deaf ears in the North.

I would urge those NDP members who retain some conscience and some understanding to review their northern policy in the New Deal for People and to seriously examine the extent to which Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Churchman and senior DNS officials are making a mockery of the goals so confidently and so

bravely stated two years ago . . .

Lest you feel that the charges of racism and fascism are excessive, I invite you to consider the following:

1. Mr. Bowerman has devoted much time to and takes much more direction from Fred Thompson and white teachers in the North than he does from native people.
2. A petition, signed in one day by 554 native people in five communities on the 'west side; of northern Saskatchewan, asked to have Dennis Poudrier retained as area community development worker. Fred Thompson, a few hysterical whites and a few "white" Indians yelled for our dismissal; Bowerman responded to the latter.
3. Fred Thompson, Bowerman, and Nesdoly's political hack in the North, defends the school system in the North with a passion; however, he sends his own children to school in Prince Albert.
4. Chief Felix Sylvestre of Dillon, who has never met either Dennis Poudrier or myself, asked Chief David Ahenakew of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians to complain to Mr. Bowerman of our activities. Chief Ahenakew did this and it was upon receipt of this complaint that Bowerman finally acted. I have been informed that Felix Sylvestre was told by Fred Thompson that "Hammersmith and Poudrier want to shoot all the priests and run all the teachers out of the North." These are tactics reminiscent of Hitler's rise to power in Germany.

Very familiar I think.

5. Fred Thompson has organized two separate meetings of white school teachers on the "west side" to personally attack and misrepresent the efforts of Poudrier, Favel, Bourgeault and myself. Native people were deliberately excluded from these meetings unless they were known to be in agreement with Mr. Thompson.

The meetings were designed to do nothing more than make vicious personal attacks on us for our efforts in assisting native people to have a greater say in the direction of educational programs offered their children. One of these meetings was attended by Bowerman and Eli Nesdoly, M.P., and neither of these men attempted to get an opinion from the native people involved or from us

6. The priests in Ile-a-la-Crosse told people in the community that "Jerry Hammersmith and Jonas Favel are working for the devil." The people who make such statements and for those who respond to them are political allies of Fred Thompson who is the northern political crutch for Bowerman and Nesdoly.

7. The former principal of the Ile-a-la-Crosse School told Wallis Smith of DNS that, "if Jerry Hammersmith comes back into this community, 'someone' in this community will be shot." The principal is a political ally of Fred Thompson and thereby of Bowerman and Nesdoly.

8. Fred Thompson informed Bowerman and Churchman that new teacherages in La Loche should have priority over sewer and water for native people. Teachers live in modern house trailers while the majority of people in La Loche live in substandard housing and do not have an adequate water supply. Native people had unanimously expressed a priority of sewer and water over new teacherages. Bowerman and Churchman have in this case, and in every other, responded to Fred Thompson and his “white is right” militancy.

9. There is as much money being spent on new jails in northern Saskatchewan as there is on economic development.

And your letter goes on:

11. These recent firings have created an atmosphere of fear and frustration among those DNS staff members who were sincerely committed to carrying out the objective of DNS. Fred Thompson has carried out a systematic harassment, supported by Bowerman, Churchman and Nesdoly, of such staff members and the government now appears to have indicated its official support for such tactics. The tactics of Fred Thompson are based on rumor, misrepresentation fear of political reprisals and the threat of physical violence. This man is fully supported by Bowerman, Churchman and Nesdoly and, by implication, the provincial government.

The type of white backlash led by NDP political hacks like Fred Thompson, the Catholic Church, white teachers and businessmen, the old-line civil servants and the few “white” Indians tied economically and politically to the white power structure is nothing short of being totally racist in motivation and fascist in tactics and content. By taking their direction from this segment of northern society, Bowerman and Churchman assisted by Eli Nesdoly, have tied themselves and your government to the most viciously repressive and reactionary elements in the North. They have repeatedly assured the traditional white, corporate, ecclesiastical and administrative elite that it is “business-as-usual” except for the annoying persistence of a few community development workers who will soon be gone. They have now fulfilled that latter commitment.

And you go on in your letter to the Premier. Now obviously we were raising your past statements for a reason — because we have attempted to get a judicial inquiry. Those statements made by you years ago for your first-hand knowledge and the statements made by Mr. Justice Noble indicate that after nearly 10 years nothing has changed; that in fact we have a bureaucracy run amuck; that you raised that seven years ago and nothing was done. And you want to criticize us for raising this? And you want to criticize us for attempting to get to the bottom of the mess in DNS, when we see that for seven long years nothing’s been done and you’re the minister and you have first-hand knowledge. You were concerned enough then that you are raised it with the Premier. And now we get judgments from the Court of Queen’s Bench that we have been debating for the last week and you won’t do anything about it. I suggest to you that’s a dereliction of duty on your part to stand up in this Assembly and refuse to have a judicial inquiry when you brought matters to the fore seven years ago and are today the minister. You have the facts and the statements of fact from the judge, and you won’t take any action. Let me tell you that’s a pretty shameful position you’re in when after your pseudo-concern

you stand up and want to cover up and your refuse an inquiry.

I don't think the Attorney General or anyone else takes the statements of Mr. Justice Noble lightly. I don't think anyone does but they are damning statements. They are important statements. They are important not just for the facts, the particular case, but they also now tie in to what's been going on for at least seven years and you say that doesn't justify a judicial inquiry.

I think it's a very, very sorry day when you as minister responsible for DNS stand up in this Assembly and refuse a judicial inquiry of a long-standing administrative and bureaucratic mess. I used your words — the situation in northern Saskatchewan — I would hope that you would respond and say that, yes, you now support the judicial inquiry asked by the Conservative.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Minister of Education): — Mr. Chairman, I want to get into this discussion, and I do so with a heavy heart. I have been watching what has been happening in this Assembly and as all hon. members know. I'm a relatively new member to this assembly. I have been all of my life a citizen of this province. I grew up in this province in rural Saskatchewan. As a young boy I used to watch and observe the proceedings of this Assembly.

I used to follow the activities of this Assembly perhaps influenced by my parents, my father, who took a very lively interest in politics and public life in this province and who ran for a party other than the one I stand for and I respect him for that. I took a very, very deep interest throughout my youth in the proceedings of this Assembly and as I became older watched with a greater interest the discussions and the debates about policy. There have been many, many great debates in the tradition of the British parliament in this Assembly. There have been many, many fundamental disagreements about the direction the government of this province should take with respect to new policy initiatives and new activities.

Mr. Speaker, throughout all that time I developed a very great respect for this Assembly. One of the reason I made the decision to enter politics is because I believe this Legislative Assembly has a tradition that stands up to the tradition, the honor and respect of any Legislative Assembly anywhere in the Commonwealth. This Assembly, Mr. Chairman, is an Assembly that treats matters of policy, matters of government, the kinds of directions and policies that this province should pursue as fundamental and serious matters.

I became a civil servant in this province eight or nine years ago and had another perspective in watching this Assembly. I used to, in this very committee, come into this Assembly, sit beside my minister, observe the happenings and advise my minister, much as civil servants in this Assembly are doing now.

I watched members of this Assembly who sat on the side opposite — the likes of Mr. Steuart, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Cameron and many, many others engage in lively, hard debate about what the government was intending to do. They were critical — extremely critical. I used to watch with admiration the way they would mount their arguments in defence of their position and in criticism of the government and the activities they were engaged in. Those members, Mr. Speaker (and it is in the long tradition of this

Assembly), talked about policy. They talked about direction; they talked about matters of substance; they talked about what government should or should not do. They debated it in this House and they debated it in the honorable traditions of this House and in the honorable traditions of parliaments — coming from our mother parliament in Great Britain.

Mr. Speaker, I have sat through this committee of finance. I have sat through the discussions which have been taking place with respect to the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I have been observing what this opposition is doing. It has been passing through my mind, what is happening here? What kind of opposition do we have in this Assembly today? Do we have an opposition, Mr. Speaker?

The hon. member for Regina South asked the question — what kind of government do we have? What kinds of things, I would hope he would be saying, is this government proposing to do? What kinds of programs does this government have? What kinds of policies does this government have? Are they good? Are they bad? What is the matter with them? If they are lousy, what's the matter with them? Get up and debate and say so. Criticize the government; that's your job. Criticize it constructively; come forward with some criticism of what the government is doing, what the programs and policies of this government are. But no, Mr. Chairman, that's not what we are getting from the members opposite.

The members opposite are pursuing a very interesting tactic. They have spent, I don't know how many hours, of this Assembly's time, attempting to defame the character, the motives of the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. This minister, I know, is working long, long hours making a dedicated commitment to further improving the conditions in northern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Now, Mr. Chairman, that's not an easy task and I say that from experience. The North of this province had had long-standing problems and difficulties and grievances. They are grievances which we and all members of this House, not just the government side, should listen to and respect and deal with — but deal with, Mr. Chairman, as matters of substance, as matters which affect the people who are living in northern Saskatchewan.

I know this minister has worked in North for a very long time. I know he has criticisms of what has happened in the past. He has criticisms of what is happening today and he is trying to do an honest job of making things even better. But I point out to the hon. members that if any of them (and I suspect maybe this would be something that many of the hon. members would not have appreciation of) would go back a few years and look at the situation in northern Saskatchewan, the history of that area of our province, look at the needs which that area has had, the needs the people of that area have had and look at what this government, this administration (before I was part of it) undertook to do up there. This administration did nothing less than mount a total program aimed at a social and economic reform and development in northern Saskatchewan.

This administration did it with courage, something the honorable members might want to think about when they are trying (if they ever get around to trying) to develop some real suggestions for what should be done in the North. This administration did that with courage. I was not in this Assembly at that time, but I recall the fact that members of this

administration recognized how difficult that job was going to be. Members of this administration recognized that dealing with the kinds of social economic problems that have existed in northern Saskatchewan for so many, many years would not be easy to deal with. But this administration proceeded with courage, the type of courage no other government in Canada has displayed to address those problems of northern Saskatchewan.

Do we hear anything from the hon. members about the programs, about those kinds of things the government is trying to do? I've listened here with interest through this whole thing. Not once have I heard the hon. members make even one suggestion about the improvement of the particular program I suspect they must be trying to discuss here, though you have to wonder. Not one suggestion, not one suggestion!

What are their tactics, Mr. Speaker? This is interesting because they now have a new leader and that must be very significant. Having given their outgoing leader a standing ovation — who said previously, our tactics as a party are serious; we intend to pursue questions of policy and substance; we don't throw mud — now they have a new leader and you know, since that new leader became leader we have not seen anything else but slinging mud.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what that tells you? I suspect it tells you an awful lot. I suspect it tells you they are deeply embarrassed about the division within their caucus. They are deeply embarrassed about the position they have found themselves in with a disintegrating caucus that has no idea about what it wants to do, what it would do, what it would try to do if it were in government and had the opportunity to do so. That is absolutely clear; there is no evidence whatsoever that they would have any idea what they would want to do. The hon. members use tactics on a continuing, never-ending basis which I say to you and all members of this House are completely out of character with the long-standing tradition of this Assembly which has up until this time stood in the highest regard all across the Commonwealth as a Legislative Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — I say sincerely to all members of the House, both on this side and to the members opposite, a continuation of this kind of tactic not only is going to mean that the hon. members opposite are going to pay and pay dearly for that kind of behaviour (in political terms), but also that this whole Assembly is going to be a lesser Assembly because of that. Mr. Chairman, I as a member of this Assembly with the respect in which I've held this Assembly and with the respect I've held parliaments all across the British Commonwealth, find that a most distressing prospect. I say to all hon. members, let's join in debate; let's play hardball as one member said the other day in terms of debate. That's fair enough. We take our politics seriously; we take what we're doing seriously (I hope) but let's always remember we have a very important responsibility here in this Assembly.

The hon. members opposite make allegations that the minister and the previous minister won't do anything about difficulties as they arise. Now they know that is absolute nonsense and the hon. member for Qu'Appelle just went on about this a few minutes ago. He went on about how ministers won't do anything about problems. I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, I hope that we continue to have ministers such as the previous

ministers and the current minister who continually work long and difficult hours doing something of substance about many things and many problems that they encounter in their job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — I ask the hon. members how they can substantiate this kind of nonsense. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle refused to recognize the very extreme difficulties of talking about some of the specific matters he wants to talk about which are before the courts of this province. And that tells you something of very great significance about the hon. member because I know (he is not an ignorant man) that he knows full well the rules and procedures and traditions of this Assembly and other assemblies. I know he knows that and he recognizes full well the kind of ground he's walking on when he advocates that this Assembly deal with certain kinds of matters the way he has advocated. But there is something else that is very interesting and it shows how empty and shallow this debate has been. He says that the hon. minister will not do anything about this particular case.

And I sat in this Assembly and I heard the minister repeat it more than once, that on the first evidence of any problem, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan took action. They did do something about the problem and the very reason that this particular thing is being dealt with now in the courts is because DNS did take action on the problem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — And that is the highest degree of responsibility and I'm proud to say to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle that I am part of a government which acts and acts quickly, even though difficult situations come up such as that came up. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan takes its responsibility seriously and moves to take action and moves quickly to take action such as they did here.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to close with a few brief remarks about the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and its programs and its activities. I say to the hon. members and I say to them seriously — you have departmental reports from the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; you have a great deal of information about what is happening in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan - what kinds of programs, what kinds of things the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is attempting to do. It is a comprehensive, social and economic program dealing with the situation in northern Saskatchewan. It started in approximately 1972. Now as hon. members you have a responsibility to perhaps just do a little bit of work. You are led by a leader who, based on his background, surely shows some evidence of having the capacity to lead that kind of research work and get a little bit of information so that you as members might participate in debate in some sort of substantive way.

Now, I invite you - -there's lots of data and statistics and information available — to go back and do some research and assess what's happened in northern Saskatchewan, what those programs have done. I invite you to assess the public service in northern Saskatchewan. You have come forward with some absolutely incredible allegations against our public servants. I invite the hon. members to look at the record of the public servants in Saskatchewan; they work under very, very difficult conditions. There's no question about that and no one is going to deny that. I say to the hon. members, from my own personal experience, from my own observations as a public servant and now from my own observations as a member of this Assembly, that the public service

deserves the highest degree of commendation for the work they have done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — That is not to say there won't be mistakes; that is not to say there won't be difficulties. Indeed, if we took the position that we are going to avoid all mistakes and avoid all difficulties we wouldn't have a Department of Northern Saskatchewan and we wouldn't have the kinds of things happening up there that are now happening and which the northern people are proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — These are good people. Mr. Chairman, these public servants, just as all our public servants are in my view, worthy of the highest degree of commendation.

I heard the hon. member for Maple Creek the other day stand up and make an incredible, insulting statement about public servants. It's just a continuation of this tactic that is being pursued. I ask the hon. members where is it leading you? Where do you think you're going with these kinds of tactics? I think I know where you're going; you're going straight into the gutter. You will as a result of that, suffer the full consequences of that kind of approach to opposition. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that in the continuation of these estimates we are going to see some attempt by the hon. members to deal with the North, to deal with the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I say, Mr. Chairman, if the hon. members do not do that, if the hon. members do not take that kind of approach, then the future for this Assembly is not just distressing, it is frightening.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — We know, Mr. Chairman, there were serious problems in DNS. We also know there were serious administrative problems in DNS from the outset. There have been suggestions by members of the opposition since DNS was formed that the proper way to establish that department was to have some experienced civil servants set up the infrastructure so it was efficiently and effectively organized at the outset and we could do the social experimentation around a solid and financially sound infrastructure. That was ignored. In fact when the government opposite set up DNS it brought in a whole hodgepodge of people. I think the hon. member himself, who was deputy minister, knows full well that he was taken up there to try to solve some of that administrative mess.

He wants some positive and constructive suggestions. He says the government has always acted. I have releases here going back to 1973, where every time a problem becomes a public the minister of the day covers up and refuses to bring the problems out so they can be resolved. Don't blame the opposition for the mess in DNS; blame the government!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Let me tell you I am prepared to accept and the opposition is prepared to accept the statements of a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench that there were problems, and serious problems. I think the hon. member accepts it. Then why don't you — why didn't you support an inquiry? Why didn't you? Why did you sit silently . . . (inaudible)

interjection) . . . when the judge is making damning statements? Why did you hide back in your chair when finally a Court of Queen's Bench judge made damning statements about the administration as I say, here's a headline from a 1973 editorial in the P.A. Herald — that's how far back this goes:

Evasiveness won't solve the problems in the North. Rather than defend the issue raised in the report referring to this, to answer previous charges, Mr. Bowerman chose at a press conference Monday to lash out at the Metis society and the newspaper reporters for being critical of his department's operation. It was an ill-advised statement on his part and buck passing at its best.

And that's not from the opposition, that's from the press in northern Saskatchewan which sees daily what is happening. When I see opposition members attempting and the opposition critic has laid out a direction, I'm surprised the hon. member didn't refer to it when he released it to the press a month ago, as to what we want to see done in northern Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You missed it at that time, don't go blaming the opposition for that. When we see back at that time the Liberal opposition making a tour up there — people are pleading for help but he doesn't accept that as being concern, doesn't accept that as being concern — a rather selective defence. What we can't understand is, how long does this have to go on before something is done? I'm going to give you another alternative. This one I know you can support if you're really sincere in what you say, because I'm going to move a motion. The only defence we have had, I might add, that of the Attorney General opposite, is we can't have a judicial inquiry because it's before the courts. That's the only defence the government opposite has to the very serious charges of Judge Noble, a pretty weak one but the only one.

It's not my words that are as follows: "right on your doorstep are some of the most intolerable social and economic and political conditions that exist anywhere. And yet the only response of which your government seems capable is a chorus of political platitudes." Not my words, not the words of the opposition you've tempted to pass the buck on to, not at all — the present minister. Not my words that say the native people have no illusions about the racism of DNS and the government and society it represents, not my words. Not my words, not the opposition's words, that say not only those who supervised your actions in this whole affair. It's almost a case of a bureaucracy run amuck if one can believe all the evidence that was here with respect to this scenario. Not only did they stand by and let you go about your business of ripping off these unfortunate people, in some ways they even actively assisted you. For example, they failed to inspect your work. They authorized the payment of your work despite the obvious shortcomings of it. I suppose they took the view that since the money was being supplied by yet another bureaucracy, namely Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, it didn't matter. But the evidence indicates they went even further than that; they delivered those cheques right into your hands, completely contrary to the instructions they got from CMHC. Referring to Thompson, the judge said you completed the whole scenario yourself by depositing the cheques to your account. Again that was in complete disregard of the fact that each of those homeowners was entitled to endorse that cheque and O.K. or disapprove of your performance.

The irony of all this, I suppose, is that your bank, probably by oversight, but not necessarily so in my view, committed an unforgivable error by cashing those cheques, casually putting them through your account as though the money was yours. There was

one endorsement, but not on the cheques. So a lot of people, a lot of institutions, contributed to this series of events which culminated in your conviction.

You've been convicted of fraud. As I've said, I'm satisfied you could not have perpetrated that fraud without the writing or unwitting co-operation of some of the people in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; those are serious allegations. It's got nothing to do with motives of intent to try and solve severe social and economic problems. It's a lot more than that. Let me repeat: you've been convicted of fraud. As I've said, I'm satisfied you could not have perpetrated that fraud without the witting or unwitting co-operation of some of the people in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. You say an opposition is muckraking when it brings that before this Assembly. You say that's muckraking? That's responsible. The court does not take lightly the conduct of those who take advantage of the poor and unsophisticated and, in this case at least, two very aged people in our society. Because of what occurred here when this fraud was committed, it includes a misappropriation or a rip-off, if you like of public funds. That's muckraking? I have too much respect for the hon. member to know that he didn't support the action. I know he doesn't support the action. I believe the hon. member is sincere about his concerns for northern Saskatchewan. I don't think because an opposition raised concerns about a man who is now in a position of public trust as a member of the Executive Council, it is muckraking. I don't believe an opposition which raises the statements of a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench is muckraking. I don't accept that.

It would be irresponsible for any opposition to ignore statements such as that. It would be irresponsible for an opposition to not question a man who I believe was sincere when he raised his concern back in 1972 and 1973. He took a very gutsy action. You don't do that lightly, to write to the Premier with your concerns. I don't say that's muckraking. I think the man at that time showed guts. The problem came when seemingly nothing was done about it.

I think it's fair for this opposition or any other opposition in this position to now question in DNS estimates, a man who saw those problems first-hand and now has an opportunity to do something about it. I think it's fair for the opposition to challenge that same minister who has lived in the North and who saw first-hand the problems to finally support the opposition, to find a vehicle for bringing these problems into the open so that government can deal with it. I would like nothing better than to spend our time in this Assembly debating the philosophy of government of the policies in departments. But when I see statements by a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench that there are serious problems, those policies and the philosophy are obviously subject to criticism — and I think fairly so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Mr. Chairman, the problems are severe. I think and the opposition feels that it's time to bring the problems into the open and start acting on them. I'm going to give all members an opportunity to take that course of action. As I say, the only defence the government opposite had to judicial inquiry was a very narrow and a very limited one. But I am going to urge, rather than a judicial inquiry:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately appoint a royal commission, to be chaired by Mr. Justice Nobel of the Court of Queen's Bench of Saskatchewan, for the purpose of investigating the operation of and administration of the Department of Northern

Saskatchewan and that this royal commission be instructed to table its report in this Assembly with all convenient speed.

I so move, seconded by the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew).

MR. CHAIRMAN: — State your point of order.

MR. ROMANOW: — My point of order is that this motion is substantially the same as a previous motion which has already been dealt with by the House calling for a public inquiry by Mr. Justice Noble into the operations and administration of Northern Saskatchewan, the only difference being the change of name to royal commission from public inquiry. Since the assumption obviously has to be that a royal commission is also a public inquiry the matter has already been dealt with.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I draw to the attention of all hon. members, Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, sections 148 and 163:

It is a wholesome restraint upon members that they cannot revive a debate already concluded; it would be little use in preventing the same question from being offered twice in the same session if, without being offered, its merits might be discussed again and again.

A mere alteration of the words of a question, without any substantial change in its object, will not be sufficient to evade the rule that no question shall be offered which is substantially the same as one which has already been expressed in the current session.

I rule that the point or order raised by the . . . I'll give you an opportunity to speak.

MR. LANE: — I am sure this Assembly, before you make your ruling, does not want to go on record as assuming that a judicial inquiry and royal commission are one and the same. I am sure the Attorney General does not want to be in the public position of ruling that a royal commission and a judicial inquiry are one and the same.

I think that the judicial inquiries, which the government opposite has had and which have been referred to on numerous occasions in this debate, are fundamentally different in form and import than a royal commission which doesn't start with the facts of the particular case. It deals with the totality of the administration and the operation and can bring back (hopefully) suggestions for improvement and review the philosophy and the goals of the department. It is fundamentally different in concept than a judicial inquiry the narrow issue and the individual.

Before you make your ruling, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the Chair understands the very substantial difference between a royal commission and a judicial inquiry. I

would hope that Mr. Chairman would take that into account before he makes his ruling.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would like to thank both hon. members for the advice which they offered me on this question. I find however that the motion is out of order in that, in my view, it will revive a debate already concluded. It would be little use in preventing the same question from being offered twice in the same session. I rule this motion out of order.

MR. LANE: — I am going to have to challenge your ruling. I believe there is a fundamental difference, Mr. Chairman.

Challenge to Chairman's Ruling

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, during consideration of the estimates of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I ruled that a motion moved by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle was out of order on the grounds that the motion was substantially the same as one which had already been debated and voted on by the committee. The member for Qu'Appelle challenged my rulings.

Ruling of the Chairman sustained on the following recorded division:

Yeas — 35

Blakeney	Shillington	Tchorzewski
Pepper	Mostoway	Cody
Allen	Banda	Koskie
Smishek	Kaeding	Matsalla
Romanow	Hammersmith	Lusney
Snyder	Kowalchuk	Johnson
Kramer	Dyck	Nelson
Robbins	Feschuk	Thompson
Baker	Byers	Lingenfelter
Skoberg	Vickar	White
McArthur	Rolfes	Solomon
Gross	Cowley	

Nays — 14

Berntson	Rousseau	Katzman
Birkbeck	Swan	Duncan
Larter	Pickering	Andrew
Lane	Garner	McLeod
Taylor	Muirhead	

MR. SPEAKER: — I declare the Chairman's ruling sustained.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN—VOTE 26

Item 1 (continued)

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Chairman, it now being near one o'clock I move this committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — It's been moved by the Leader of the Opposition that the committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again. All in favor of the motion say aye. All those opposed say no. I think the no's have it.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Chairman, I call it one o'clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — It's meaningless to me — one o'clock. I don't have any power to deal with that. I can't do that; the House refused.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's already been done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — It's out of order.

MR. ROMANOW: — Why is it out of order?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Well, I'll tell you why it's out of order.

Order. This is section 83, Rules and Procedures, Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan:

A motion that the Chairman leave the Chair shall always be in order, shall take precedence of any other motion and shall not be debatable; such motion if rejected cannot be renewed unless some intermediate proceeding has taken place.

Well, I think we have maybe designed an escape hatch for our problem here if I can put it in that way. We have to have a motion that can be entered in the journals in order for it to show that an intermediate action took place. The way we could do that is if some member moves that some other member be now heard. I think we could handle the problem that way.

MR. BERNTSON: — I move, seconded by the member for Qu'Appelle, that we hear from the member for Estevan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Do you want to write that motion up?

MR. BERNTSON: — It's okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Is the committee ready for the question? Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'll call on the hon. member for Estevan for a few brief words.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, I wish to wish all the members in the House a very happy Easter.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I think that's a very appropriate speech and I would wish you and through you, Mr. Speaker, to all members of the House my apologies for the small conundrum we got into here and a happy Easter, and with that intervening piece of business I move the committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:10 p.m.