

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
April 10, 1980

EVENING SESSION

Debate continues on the motion re Video and Audio Taping of Crown Corporations Committee Proceedings

MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY (Saskatoon Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I want to participate in this debate, but first of all I want to say that I am not getting up on my feet as a member of the rules committee because of any challenge that was thrown out by some old-thinking Tory a little while ago. Prior to 5 o'clock somebody challenged members of the committee to get up. The only reason I'm up is because I want to speak on behalf of the constituents of Saskatoon Centre and I will be reasonably brief.

I had some words I thought I'd be saying but I want to preface my remarks by saying I saw a despicable display on television at approximately 6 o'clock. This has prompted me to say some extra choice words. I believe I saw the member for Qu'Appelle stating that under no circumstances would he ever apologize. Mr. Speaker, that kind of despicable behaviour . . . I'm afraid we would have a lot of that kind of TV coverage if we had TV cameras in this House as much as members opposite want. I'm afraid that would taint the minds of the youth of our province, seeing an elected member openly defying the legislature saying he will not apologize. The implication is that he is wrong, but will not apologize at all, Mr. Speaker, I find that kind of behaviour despicable, and I think the youth of this province should be shielded from that kind of nonsense.

I want to say something about the remarks made by the member for Moosomin, It's a good thing he's not here. I'm not going to get very personal, but that gentleman . . . Well, we can apply it, I think, to most of you, not all of you. There are some good ones. I'm waiting for some defections of the good ones. But I wanted to say this gentleman, the member for Moosomin, always seems to get personal. Yesterday he got very personal. He made some remarks directed to one of our members. Today he became very personal with regard to the member for Pelly.

I want to tell the members opposite, and maybe they can relay this to the member for Moosomin wherever he is hiding (I don't know, it could be under some stone or something like that) — I would be pleased if they would convey this message to the member for Moosomin. Maybe that gentleman for Pelly doesn't speak very much, but when he does there's some substance to what he says. The member for Moosomin seems to be all mouth, lots of quantity but not to much quality. I'll tell you silence is golden and there is quality right there — the member for Pelly. If you think I'm kidding just ask the electorate of Pelly. Ask them what they said in the last provincial election.

The member for Kindersley — where is the gentleman? I was going to say the hon. working member for Kindersley. Maybe you can convey this to him also. He's predicting that outcome. He says, if this whole question is referred to the special committee on rules, I know what the outcome is going to be. Mr. Speaker, I'd venture to say that in so far as predicting, he is not very good. The hon. gentleman comes in. His batting average isn't very good because if I recall correctly, in the last election campaign he predicted there would be a victory for ye auld Tories. So the predictions made by the hon. member for Kindersley must be taken with a pinch of salt because they are not really worth anything at all.

Now, another thing I wanted to say is somebody threw out the challenge and said to members of the rules committee on this side of the House, do you have the courage to stand up? He more or less implied we are in the pocket of the Attorney General. Well, let me tell you that in our caucus and in our party nobody is in the pocket of somebody else. But I'll tell you if you want to talk about people being in the pocket of somebody else. I can't find a better example than 15 people over there. Oh, I shouldn't say 15, I'll maybe take a couple off because there are some good members over there. But I'll tell you if anyone was ever in the pocket of somebody — who is the leader of the ye auld Tory Party — it's you people. You are in the pocket of somebody who doesn't have the confidence of the people of this province.

AN HON. MEMBER: — He doesn't have the courage to run. He doesn't have the guts to run.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — No. O.K., the member for Kindersley is talking about our Crown corporations and public accounts committees. Let me say that having been on the rules committee, and having visited a number of places down East, I want to give the hon. member credit for at least asking some questions. I think they were pertinent questions and good questions but I am saying if we go along with your amendment, or that member's resolution, you are simply saying to heck with the committee.

It's a committee to which you put a lot of input, Mr. Member for Kindersley. It would seem to me contradictory to involve yourself in that committee, and I give you credit for that, and now simply say the committee conclusion is foregone.

I also want to remind the hon. member for Kindersley there have been cases where committees have come up with recommendations to this House and they have been rejected. Even though they had a majority of government members on them they have been rejected by the government. I believe the late Premier Thatcher had a case like that. I, myself, was on a committee and we made a number of recommendations — it was about 1972 or 1973 — and not all of them were followed.

I want to say one thing about the throne speech. Members are howling about the throne speech and how we had TV cameras. (I see the hon. gentleman is about to take off. Will it be to Miami this time?) That business of allowing TV when we had the throne speech is by agreement and by tradition — all parties have agreed to that tradition. It's plain and simple. If you don't have that kind of agreement or tradition, you didn't have TV coverage.

Now, I want to say one thing. I don't know how I am going to be voting or what I am going to be saying in regard to the rules committee because my mind is not closed like the minds of members opposite. After watching that despicable performance by the member for Qu'Appelle tonight. I'm not so sure I want all people to see the kind of despicable performance that can go on in this House thanks to most members opposite.

I just want to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I belong to the Archeological Society of Saskatchewan. There is some obligation on my part to preserve things that are old and things related to old things. Consequently, I might have second thoughts if we were going to think in terms of having TV in here because I tell you one thing, if we ever allow TV in this House, not one of you would be elected if we had a provincial election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MOSTOWAY: — I suppose maybe really the whole idea behind this amendment is to throw up a smoke screen and I think a smoke screen because I hear that they are trying to throw us off the track, trying to throw the news media off the track. I hear there is another defection in the wind, and the hon. gentlemen would not want people watching TV to see the close association between those two members over there and possibly a third one, particularly in light of the fact that the one over there got a standing ovation from all you members only about three or four months ago. Mr. Speaker, I certainly cannot tolerate the amendment but I certainly will be supporting the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can see the reason why the television isn't going to get into this Chamber. Some of the little monkey boys in the back row are just starting to holler now because they know it's going to hurt. They know that the people of Saskatchewan are viewing their performance — the two speeches per year if they are lucky, if the Attorney General will allow them.

Mr. Speaker, this is the prime example when we finally get open-door government in this province and get the television cameras in here, and the constituents see all of these government backbenchers, the ones who get the pay cheque just like everyone else but who should feel guilty every time they cash them because they haven't earned them. Now, Mr. Speaker, the member for Saskatoon got up and started naming who wasn't here on our side of the House tonight. I won't lower myself, Mr. Speaker, to that kind of debate because I look over there . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — It would take you all night.

MR. GARNER: — That's right. It would take me all night. But I won't get into the back alleys of politics like I know some people do in this Chamber. Now the member opposite says — mud slinging, muckraking. This, Mr. Speaker, is what they classify as the comments from a judge — as mud slinging . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, and I'm sure glad I'm not a mouthpiece like you. Mr. Speaker, this side of the House, the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan had the guts to introduce the bill to try to get television in the legislative Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, this is 1980, a year we celebrate Saskatchewan's 75 years as a province. A glorious year but still the government doesn't want television in the Chamber. They don't want television in Crown corporations. Crown corporations that are owned by the people. Yes, they are owned by the people. But why, why do you suppose, Mr. Speaker, that their government doesn't want the television cameras in there? We have nothing to hide. Have they something to hide? Yes, I think they have. A prime example is, Mr. Speaker, we asked for a copy of a contract which SGI has with SaskTel. You know what the minister's reply is? It's not in the public interest. It's another cover-up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to read a few words into the record from a letter we all received on our desks today from CKCK television, which the Attorney General seems to be not getting along with. He's running out of people to touch up. He's got to start getting at the press now. Who's next?

AN HON. MEMBER: — You.

MR. GARNER: — They say you. Well I hear the biggest tundra monkey over there of them

all hollering you, you. Mr. Speaker, in the light of recent events in our Legislative Assembly and in the Crown corporations committee, you may find the attached of some interest.

While I do not totally agree with the manner in which the Ottawa system operates. It does give the voting public the opportunity to be in the public galleries through the medium of television.

Down a little further in the same letter . . . Mr. Speaker, I can be as long as the members opposite want.

There are at most two or three TV stations that would make immediate use of the privilege of locating cameras in the Assembly and/or the committee rooms. Realistically, however, the legislature would have to consider seeing some sort of installation available to all that would eliminate the multiplicity of cameras representing individual TV stations.

Mr. Speaker, also attached to that letter . . . The members opposite are hollering about committees, sending it to a committee. I'll read another little script. 'Every Canadian Should be Proud' by James Jerome, former speaker of the House of Commons, reflects on the wisdom of using TV to bring parliament to the people. Down in a paragraph"

But it was the politicians who proved camera-shy through more than 10 years of committee study that steadily refused to permit television inside the House.

This is what we're concerned about, Mr. Speaker. It could go to committee and be in committee for 10 more years. The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, would still be outside that door for 10 more years. We'd still have this government cover-up.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm seeing is a tired government, an old, boring government, a government which can't keep up with the times and doesn't want to keep up with the times. Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General gets up and always tries to deflect the issues, turn them around. If he can't turn the issue onto the Progressive Conservatives opposite, he turns it onto the press. Pass the buck. Pretty soon he's going to start blaming the federal government for this. But he's starting to run out of people to blame.

Mr. Speaker, I say once more and I really want to get this across. It's the Progressive Conservatives who want television in the Chamber and in the committees. We have nothing to hide. What has that government opposite to hide — especially the Attorney General? Mr. Speaker. I know full well the day we get television cameras in this House, in this Chamber, in the committees . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I hear the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan saying they'll be here. O.K., then, I challenge you. Next Tuesday, let's have second and third reading of the bill I introduced today and let's have the cameras in here for the duration of this session. It's in you ball park now. Let's see it next Tuesday, second and third reading, and open up the doors of this government. It's not quite that easy. No. no, we've passed the buck, keep passing the buck to the side. Oh, now the Attorney General is all upset about the orders for return — once again trying to find out information for the people of Saskatchewan. Yes, you're going to give it to them, but you can do it just as easily with television cameras in here as not. Is that not true? O.K., I'm issuing you the challenge directly — Next Tuesday, second and third reading of that bill, to bring television into this Chamber. O.K. you have to be kidding; the Attorney General says we have to be kidding. Right now he's trying to skate

out of it.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I believe the member must confine himself to the questions before us. He can't begin discussing the technical moves or anything else with relation to a bill that may or may not be read at some time in the future. He has to leave that alone.

MR. GARNER: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I appreciate that. I will not debate with the Attorney General anymore.

Mr. Speaker, we're not trying to twist the issue. We have introduced the amendment. I have no choice but to vote for the amendment; so should all of the members opposite. My concern is not only the people of the Wilke constituency but all the people of Saskatchewan. I have no choice but to vote for the amendment.

MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): —Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into this debate to touch a few areas. I have been interested to watch the posturing of different members as they stand up and give us reasons why they shouldn't have television in the Chamber. Then the odd brave one will get up and say, yes I agree, we should have some television in the Chamber. But before they sit down, they've changed their minds and they back away and say, no we'll let it go to committee and let it be discussed. It's fine to have things discussed in committee, and I want to draw your attention to how long the committee has been discussing. The member for Moose Jaw was saying this afternoon this has been in committee for at least five years and I think perhaps it will go another five years or more.

MR. SKOBERG: — Mr. Speaker, I made no mention of this being in the committee for five years.

MR. SWAN: — What the member said was that it has been in committee since 1975. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said five years. I think if you figure it out it might work out to a little longer than that, but it's a very fine point compared to some of the points that have been made today. I would like to say that I don't have very much faith in the speed with which this would move through the committee. It will go into committee and likely stay there for a long time, and that's the concern this side has. I'm going to vote in favor of the amendment when the amendment comes before the House. I don't need your advice on how I'll vote; I've always voted the way I see fit.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. The decorum of this Chamber leaves something to be desired. It's serious enough when the members are talking about the Chamber, but when members sit behind the rail and shout across the Chamber, that is not good for this Chamber. I think there's no excuse for it, quite frankly. I have been in this House a long time and I have seen this happening for a long time, and there seem to be one or two offenders. I am beginning to be quite offended when members sit behind the rail and intervene in the debates in the House. It's bad enough when they do it when they are down on the floor, but when they are sitting behind the rail intervening in the debates, that is strictly out of order. It is unparliamentary and it's happening far too often. I warn the members that the level of decorum in this House will be established by the members. All I can do is do my best to keep them in order, but the level of decorum will be dragged down when individual members continue to abuse the rules of the House, and I just warn members.

MR. SWAN: — As I look at the operation of the Ottawa House I watch the way the

house carries on business in front of the television cameras, I'm impressed with the decorum that is maintained there in comparison to what is happening here.

I sat in the House in Ottawa, and the Speaker was with me at the time — in Alberta, pardon me — we watched the performance of the Alberta legislature. Television cameras were there at all times. The House operated. I would say, excellently. There was decorum at all times in that House. At no time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, you don't fall asleep. The debate was good . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He doesn't agree with me; that's fine. You can ask the Speaker; he was there. The debate was good. They touched the issues and they debated them as long as they felt was necessary. I believe that was good.

I would like to see television in this Chamber. Perhaps we would see a little different action by some of the members like the party whip from the other side. And when you talk about people speaking from behind the rail, he even speaks from behind the rail on this side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — I would like to see us move rapidly toward bringing television into this Chamber, and into the committees as well. Then this legislature will be open to the general public so your constituents and mine can see what is happening here. I am certain that the decorum in this Chamber will not change. And it will change to the point where people will be up and taking notice of what is happening. They won't be in here sleeping and they won't be sitting with their feet on the desks, but rather they will be taking part in the debate and seeing that things are happening here.

Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to prolong the debate, but I would like to see us vote on the amendment tonight and accept that amendment and let television show us what it can do. Let it prove itself in the operation of at least one committee while it goes to the rules committee for further study on whether or not we should have it in this Chamber. I will be supporting the amendment.

MR. L.E. JOHNSON (Turtleford): — I would like to take part in this debate and go over some of the items which bring this resolution that the Attorney General brought before the Assembly, as well as to comment on some of the remarks that we have heard from across the way.

The resolutions was put forward by the Attorney General because the members opposite refused permission to the Chairman of the Crown corporations committee to bring it forward the first time he had an opportunity following the motion being passed in Crown corporations. What was happening when he was bringing that forward was that he was implementing some of the rules that have been established through precedence over a long period of time in this House.

I would like to point out that if anyone wishes, they can go back to May 1979, when the Chairman of the select standing committee on Crown corporations presented the first report of the said committee. The committee reported that one of the resolutions it had passed was that the Crown corporations committee recommended a verbatim report of the committee's proceedings be provided started with the 1980 meetings. We have now, in Crown corporations, a verbatim report. This is established by bringing back to the House a resolution asking for that report.

What took place is the rules of the committee functioned under were being acted upon and followed. It really makes very little difference whether you start with the supposition that a committee is formed and then it establishes its own rules to operate, or whether the committee follows the rules of this particular Assembly.

If you look back at the Crown corporations committee and the resolutions it has passed, the number of items it has brought forward, you will see over the period of time the Crown corporations committee has been active. What it has done is establish the fact and precedent that it follows the committees of the House. Whatever rules apply to the House in committee of the whole and committee of finance apply to Crown corporations committee, You can follow, through the steps that the committee follows, the internal rules of the House.

So far as I am concerned one of the things which must be established in operating any organization or any meeting is a set of rules, either formal or informal, which are followed. When these rules are not being followed one runs into the position of the total destruction of that organization taking place. I would like to say as far as I am concerned, the implementation of television into the committee will totally change what the committee is there for. If the committee is there to review, look at, do the working operations, then the television cameras will simply destroy that particular function.

I note the individuals opposite have been continually putting forward the position they have nothing to hide, implying then that the government does. I think they should finish the sentence they start out with which says "we have nothing to hide" and no platform to stand on, so we want someone else to provide.

Mr. Speaker, if we are interested in accomplishing some of the work which is necessary in running a province, if we are to get on with doing some of the work rather than just simply grandstanding (as I have indicated, with no platform, with no policies, with no direction), then we are going to have to work, which they haven't been doing.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to be voting against the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R.G. LONG (Cut Knife-Lloydminster): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to say that as a new member I am somewhat shocked by the goings on in this House. I came down here about 20 months ago with the idea I was going to see some decorum, that I was going to have a new kind of experience, an experience that would be beneficial not only to myself but to other new members. We certainly are not experiencing that sort of thing in this House. We just recently have seen a member named. I find that shocking. I sit in the Crown corporations committee. We've seen disgraceful obstructionism in that committee. I find it shocking as new member to experience these kinds of things.

We've had members in the backbenches opposite get up and suggest government backbenchers don't earn their pay. Well, I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, those gentlemen in the backbenches over there couldn't harrow what we plow in a day in the backbenches of the government side.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, there is a lot more to being an MLA than sitting in this House. Certainly it is a very important part but the real politics, the real important part of being an MLA is being out there on the hustings. That's what is wrong over there, Mr. Speaker. They would rather be on a television camera than out on the hustings facing the people on a one to one basis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about television exposure, in the 20 months I have been a member, I have been exposed to the television camera seven times — one-half hour at a shot — 210 minutes of television exposure. The member for Wilkie has been on that program too. I won't comment on his performance. His chief purpose in getting on that show is to slander other members of this House; that's his main reason for being up there. Mr. Speaker, the staff of that particular television station find him to be somewhat of a joke. My constituents find him to be somewhat of a joke. After he had been on television on one occasion for half an hour, my constituents came to me and said, who is this guy, coming up into our constituency and talking about our member that way. That's what television does for members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to record in this House that I do support the idea of cameras in this House. I think it's a good idea. I have some reservation about cameras in committees because I think they will interfere with the operation of the committees. However, I might change my mind about that particular decision. I'm open minded on it but at this time that is how I feel. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear I will be opposing the amendment and supporting the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. G.S. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to analyse what has been happening the last two days in this House. Yesterday we had two and one-half hours of debates and speeches from the backbenchers putting in time. Today we've had the same thing, just speeches. We're not getting any place. We know we're not going to get television in this House. It's not going to happen. The Attorney General will decide that. Anyway I think there's a reason why the stall. I think the Attorney General has been running out of steam this past couple of weeks. He's waiting on the Premier to get back to bail him out of all of his problems on the first of the week. That's why we're having these delays here. This idea of sitting here and debating whether we are going to have television or not — the press must be sick and tired of the situation. You people don't want it. we want it. Why do we want it? Because the press wants it and the people want it. It's up to the people in the province of Saskatchewan as to whether they want this press in here, and it's up to the Attorney General to listen to them.

The Chairman from the Crown corporations took the Hansard from Crown corporations and did some reading from it. So, if I may, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to do the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, I asked in Crown corporations, of Mr. Chairman, is there a ruling that you cannot or can have television now in this legislature? Mr. Chairman, answered after discussing it for awhile, on the basis of a recommendation by a 1976 rules committee, a decision was made not to have television in the House at that time and that decision has not been reversed. I answered, what are you saying? Is it that you can't have

television in the legislature? He said, right.

Then I turned to the member for Biggar who made the motion that we should not have television in Crown corporations. I said this to him, is your reason for this motion that we cannot have television here today because it has to go through rules and procedures. Is that what you're saying? And, oh, did they heckle me! The member for Arm River has caught on now. He knows the reason for the motion. This is what I came back with and I want to repeat it in this House — all right then, I would like to ask someone to answer this question. I would like to know why, and we go back to budget day when we were approached by your people pleading to have television while the pretty people in there listened in the balanced budget, we didn't have to go through any rules and procedures for that day, and you people know that.

Now I'm not saying anything like the member for Saskatoon Centre says that we're down on and saying something against the rules committee; you were just going to by-pass them that day, that's all. We didn't have to through any rules and procedures for that. All we had to say is yes, and it would have been there. And we said yes. We would go for television on budget if it goes every day.

You had no rules and procedures to go through that day. You didn't have to have any rules and procedures committee to go through. If the member for Souris-Cannington had said yes, it would have been in here. Now, someone has to answer that question for me. Why did you not have to go through rules and procedures that day? Why?

No one answered me in crown corporations. No one will answer me here. You didn't have to worry about it. Whenever the Attorney General decides to tell the committee we're going to have television in this House then we're going to get it. That is as sure as I am standing here. This is a serious accusation I am making because, Mr. Minister for Biggar, you know this is right; this is correct. We could have had television in the legislature on budget day without going through rules and procedures if we had agreed to it. We didn't agree to it, but we would have. . . You wanted it that day. You weren't worried in the least about the rules and procedures. It wasn't bothering you at all.

You wanted it when the 500, or whatever it was, pretty people were listening to the balanced budget. The year before you didn't want any television in there when there wasn't a balanced budget. I'm sure with the carrying on going on now there won't be a balanced budget next year and you won't want a television in this legislature. There's no way you will want it in here. And that's why. The carryings on I've seen in this House from the members opposite is why you don't want any television in here. It isn't our members here who are objecting. Why don't you want it? I could care less whether we go on the television, whether we see us or not, but it was brought up for debate. If the people whom I talk to in my constituency say we'd like to see what goes on in the House, then I'm for it. But you people go out and ask your people and see what they have to say. I'm sure they'd like to see their backbenchers for once because the only time they'll ever see them, that they ever appear in this House (because they never make a speech — only once or twice a year) is on television.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, in closing. I'm just saying that I am definitely voting against the amendment and I will . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — No, you're voting for the amendment.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — I'm voting against the motion and voting for the amendment.

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I think this has been debated quite fully and I'd just like to point out a couple of points, a couple of what I think are inconsistencies which come from the lead-off speech of the Attorney General. I can't really see why the Attorney General isn't going for the television because he's a very articulate fellow, very verbal and I think, you know, he'd do very well on television and deep down in his heart I think he'd really like it to be in here. But it's just probably the fact that his government has a few things it wants to hide and that's why he's opposing it. But within this verbosity and this articulate fashion he isn't always consistent and some of our members have pointed this out. I just want to dwell on the inconsistencies a little bit.

The member for Arm River was touching on this. He said, why was it on budget day that we never heard anything about the committee of rules and procedures. It seemed that if we had given the O.K. then the TV would have been in here. Now, though, it has to go before the committee of rules and procedures, the PCs are wanting to circumvent the rules. All of a sudden, the rules are the big thing. It seems to me only consistent, Mr. Attorney General, that if the committee of rules and procedures applies in one situation, it applies in both situations and I think your argument has a fallacy in consistency on these grounds.

Also, to the fellows in the back row there — the ploughmen I guess they've called, isn't that it? The ploughmen, yes, I do think that you fellows should really give some serious (and I mean this) consideration to this motion because it does give you an indication — I'm not going to make fun of you of making two speeches, because I realize there are cabinet ministers in the front row and you do give speeches and you try to give the best speeches you can. I think you deserve this change to show your constituents that you are active in this House. If I were sitting over there, I would certainly be searching my soul and saying, you know, I think maybe there is something to benefit from this. I challenge you fellows over there to give it some thought and really think it out carefully.

I think I have asked every one of your speakers as they got up today, do you approve of the cameras in the House. I will say a couple of them, and one man over in the corner, who is a bit of a freethinker, did indicate that he would go along with it, but then, we always get — with reservation. Many of them, many of the speakers would not even indicate, speaking on a motion, whether they really approved of television in the House or not. I can't see a person doing that. If you're standing up to talk, stand up and say whether you'll be counted on it or not. Don't skate around on the rules committee or try to divert the issue.

This is a milestone — an important issue. It could be a milestone for this legislature. I can't understand why all the other legislatures or many of them in this country of Canada, the federal government, many of the provincial governments (as the member for Kindersley pointed out) have television and why it's such a terrible bogeyman here in Saskatchewan other than I must come to the conclusion that the government opposite has something to hide.

Now, I pointed out that I think that the Attorney General has a few inconsistencies and going back to when he was talking about what would be the danger of television in this House. He said it could take facial expressions, nervous tension, all these sorts of things. The people out there in television land would see these. Then the same Attorney General turns around, in the next breath, defending the action of the television cameras in the Berntson affairs, saying, well they really only scanned the situation. Well if they

were scanning the situation, they were picking up the nervous tensions, the facial twitches, whatever there may be in here. I can't see the difference, Mr. Attorney General.

Also to follow your logic that it is better to scan and not hear the voice, you are the type of fellow who would probably prefer or think that the silent movies give a truer indication of the feelings of the person than the talkies do. That is the type of reasoning you are putting forth in your argument. I can't follow that kind of reasoning at all. I think it would only be right that, as the camera is picking up the facial expressions the sneers, he says, the nervous tension and all these things, the people out there in television land would at the same time have an opportunity to hear the verbal delivery of the person who was making the comments and not just scanning it as the Attorney General seems to think is the proper way to go.

I would like to cite as an instance too, the federal-provincial conferences between the Premier and the Prime Minister which are totally televised in many situations. You know as well as I do that they are watched and watched intently by the people of Canada and appreciated. I think that is proof our deliberations, if they were put on the television, would also be accepted and would be something the people of Saskatchewan, the voters, would truly like to see.

I feel, really and truly, that a bit of observation, being under the gun a bit, is the way people perform better. I go back to my days of teaching and I always found that when the teacher was in the classroom there was better behavior than when he was outside the door. I think if you fellows knew, I knew and the rest of us in here knew, that the people in Saskatchewan were monitoring and scanning our actions, our words and our delivery, it would raise the level of debate and decorum in this House. Therefore, I would urge you to think very carefully and make the kind of decision that will bring this freedom, this not hiding of anything from the people of Saskatchewan. I think we should have the television cameras in this House and in all the committees.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R.N. NELSON (Yorkton): — Mr. Speaker, I am very saddened at the continued level of low debate from many members across the way. I am continually saddened at the thought that this sort of thing should be on television. Maybe it should be, maybe it is a good idea that we should have this type of thing on television so their people could see just what they are doing. They could see the member for Moosomin going through each member here, picking them off by name, trying to pick some characteristic or other that might be a bit of a weakness and trying to show it. Maybe that's the thing that should be shown on television.

We hear the members opposite worry about our members coming forward asking for a special agreement within this Chamber for television during the budget speech and debate. It was a special request. Members opposite don't seem to understand a special request. Nobody forced their way in by agreement or otherwise, by encouragement or otherwise. That's the difference. There is some difference. Maybe the people across Saskatchewan should see the 680 questions on this order paper, buckshot questions that are attempting to prove something evil and sinister as I said last day. Maybe they should see that the Crown corporations has been held up I think since March 27 on Sask Tel by nonsense questions. Something to hide they keep saying, something to hide. It's strange, Mr. Speaker.

I was interested, too, in the comments of the member for Kindersley today, particularly since he has a resolution on page 39 of the blues today:

. . . proposed Resolution No. 18 moved by Mr. Andrew:

That this Assembly establish a select standing committee of the Assembly to deal with the environment . . .

And so on. And do you know what his logic was? His logic was, let's get the people in the backbenches and us people on the other side involved in government. Let's involve these people in government by establishing committees. We need committees said the man. We need all sorts of committees, but what does he do today? He stands up and says, oh man, don't turn it over to a committee. We don't trust the committee system. That's what I call consistency, Mr. Speaker. That's what you call consistency. Give the backbenchers something to do. Strengthen democracy, said the man. But when things are supposed to go through the rules committee, oh, no, we don't do it that way. We shouldn't use the committee system that way. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am one who thinks that maybe we should have television cameras in this House, but again it's not my decision. That's a decision (and the member for Estevan laughs) that is out there in our rules committee. There is a process to go through. And if something is to come in here permanently, let's bring it in through the rules and regulations as it should be done.

The bill we are dealing with talks about bringing cameras into two committees — one is Crown corporations and the other is public accounts. I was highly unimpressed with the way opposition members worked since 1975 in Crown corporations because it was open to the news media. I could not see that there was a thorough study of what was being done within those Crown corporations. I could not see that there was a thorough attempt to really delve into what was going on. What I did see was grandstanding for the news media and it was continuous throughout my term within it. On the other hand, I have been highly impressed with what went on within the public accounts committee. Nobody grandstands. We go into a thorough study of what is going on within the public accounts of the province. To me that is as it should be and that is, to me, what a committee is all about.

You want to hide something. You have something to hide. Again that old sinister notion that evil must lurk in the benches opposite. There must be something wrong over there. There has to be something wrong over there. We sent out buckshot questions. We do everything we can. There has to be something wrong and we have to find it some way. That's the innuendo. But, Mr. Speaker, we have the verbatim report, the verbatim account of the Crown corporations committee. We have the verbatim account of the public accounts committee. How can you hide? It's there. If you as opposition members want to point out something which went on there to the press, there it is, say to them, on such and such a page. Go to it. Look at it. The member laughs. The reason he laughs is because he is because he is too lazy to dig into the thing and find out what the problem is.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we have a process to go through whereby we can bring the television cameras into this House. If that be so, if that committee is in favor of such a thing, I have no objections; but let's go through a procedure which is sensible and is set up to bring them in.

Mr. Speaker, I shall be supporting the motion and opposing the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Amendment negatived on the following record division:

YEAS — 14

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

NAYS — 29

Pepper	MacMurchy	Matsalla
Allen	Mostoway	Lusney
Bowerman	Kaeding	Prebble
Romanow	Hammersmith	Long
Messer	Byers	Johnson
Robbins	Vickar	Nelson
Skoberg	Rolfes	Engel
McArthur	Tchorzewski	White
Gross	Cody	Solomon
Shillington	Koskie	

HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I shall try not to prolong the debate because it certainly has been a lengthy debate, and we are anxious to get another fresh start on estimates which are slated to come up later for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I think all hon. members would agree that I would be remiss if I did not make a few comments in response and rebuttal to the day-long arguments which have been advanced here.

Let me touch briefly, Mr. Speaker, on four or five points which, I think, do require some clarification and in my respectful submission to you require a sharpening of what this issue, in my judgment, is all about.

The first point I'd like to make relates to a development I saw reported in the Leader-Post on Wednesday, April 9, 1980 related to the Weyburn City Council hearings. The headline on the story says, Camera kept out of meeting. I'm not going to mention the names, because I think there was a correction printed today saying the cameraman and the reporter were not the ones as originally described in the story. But the story did say that a CKCK-TV cameraman was not allowed to enter city council chambers to film debate on a petition urging X-rated movies be banned in Weyburn. A CKCK reporter was told by city administrator, John Norman, no filming of city council proceedings was to be permitted. Mayor Isabelle Butters supported Norman's actions. The last council refused coaxial cable TV from broadcasting council, she said. Unless council requests a change in that policy it remains the same.

My point here is that even at this level of government the same principle applies. This is the theme of my argument: the rules must be respected and the rules must be changed by those who are delegated by our democratic system to change the rules. In the case of Weyburn council it was the city council. Whether the decision by Weyburn city council was a good one or a bad one, that is the procedure and the rule, and so far as I know it was respected by the television cameramen at Weyburn. They withdrew.

But this did not happen with the Crown corporations committee. With the Crown corporations committee the camera was present and remained present for two days notwithstanding the request at one point in the proceedings by the chairman. It was only after the resolution which is before the House today that the cameras were withdrawn. I think I'm entitled to ask why the difference? Why did the cameras respect the rule-makers and the procedures of democracy for the Weyburn city council but choose to disregard the lawmakers of this province and the committee members of this province in the blatant setting up of cameras in the Crown corporations committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — And of course, Mr. Speaker, I am entitled to assume that the arguments the member of the Conservative caucus have mounted and hurled at us all day about cover-up and secrecy and trying to refuse information apply equally to the Weyburn city council and to every other elected town council and city council in the province of Saskatchewan who in their wisdom, or lack of wisdom depending on your point of view, have equally decided that televising should not take place. It would be an interesting commentary to know that is also the position of the PC caucus with respect to those areas.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I want to make another point in regard to the matter of the comments made by the member for Kindersley. These are perhaps not in the category of comments but on the implications of his comments which I think are very clear. The implications of his comments are that if we as members of the rules committee get together and discuss the various topics under the rules committee, be it television broadcasting or be it public accounts committee — the implication in his argument simply put is that somehow if a government member or members, even united, disagree with some of all of the issues raised there, that is tantamount to a stonewall or a blockage or some other form of cover-up.

I want to tell the hon. member for Kindersley, through you, Mr. Speaker, that I object to this kind of a categorization or characterization of all members and activities of the committee. I think it's perfectly proper and open to me as it is to him to disagree across party lines on any the given issues before that rules committee. For example, I have up to now disagreed with the argument that public accounts committee should be made open. I think I can find good quotes from political science professors and others who are knowledgeable in the area of rules and procedures. Some have been cited this afternoon by my colleagues, the member for Moose Jaw North in support of that contention. I should be respected for that point of view. He may not agree with it, but he should give that respect and give the committee members that point of view. I may not agree with his position that public accounts business can be properly done under the glare of television lights, but I respect his right to maintain that position. Surely the implication of the remarks behind it that if we don't all agree unanimously with what the PC caucus wants, with what the PC caucus position is in all these areas, somehow we are part of a cover-up or a stonewall or whatever headline is going to be seized by that

operation — surely, Mr. Speaker, that reflects a very immature attitude by the Progressive Conservative caucus.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I note that the amendment was defeated and I very much welcome that decision by the House. There are many reasons why the amendment should have been defeated. First of all, the amendment is absolutely contradictory to the main motion. The main motion says refer it to the rules committee; the amendment says, do it right now and don't refer it to the rules committee. I don't think there can be anything more contradictory than that. If we adopted the amendment, Mr. Speaker, under what rules would the television cameras be set up? At whose expense would the television cameras appear? At whose expense would the lighting be there? How would the matter of control of the material be submitted to the perusal of the House? In the House of Commons by the way, it's all done centrally and all paid for centrally by the taxpayers and a central monitor. There is nothing mentioned about the rules at all. Mr. Speaker, the amendment was a very shallow attempt to try to walk both sides of this issue.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, some comments have been made about the 1976-77 committee. The member for Rosetown-Elrose says, well, we've been studying this for five years or six years; let's get on with the job. Some of my friends in the news media say the same thing: why have we been studying this for five or six years? The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that the committee that studied this last in '76-77 decided against the television coverage. I won't say unanimously but nearly unanimously. There was all-party representation. At that time the objection was taken by the Leader of the Opposition Party, Mr. Ted Malone, and I invite member of the media or otherwise to contradict me on that. I invite them to do that, those who think my information is wrong. And if I am wrong in this, Mr. Speaker, nothing much turns on it of substance, other than to make this point. That was a committee of '75 and '76 with different MLAs and a different House with a decision which was taken. Surely, it is incumbent (and that was the reasoning behind the rules committee being set up several months ago), now, under this House with new members, to look at the issue afresh. Is it fair and logical to say, if that is the sequence in terms of the electoral operations, that this matter has been studied for five years and six years? I think, Mr. Speaker, that is a misleading conclusion again used to dramatize the situation.

The fifth point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is more substantial. I am not going to make my speech in main all over again but I do want to emphasize this to you, Sir, and to the members of the House as strongly as I can. The member for Moosomin said that the Attorney General's remarks were that procedurally this was all wrong, implying somehow it was technically all wrong. Mr. Speaker, he can attach that kind of weight to my argument if he chooses. Obviously, he has the right to do it. But I want to make it absolutely clear to you, Sir, and to the member of the House, my argument this afternoon was not and is not now as I wind up the debate, that the way this was handled is a mere matter of form or a mere matter of procedure. It is procedure and form to be sure, but the way this matter has been handled, Mr. Speaker, by the intrusion of the cameras without the express approval by the rules, I say attacks the fundamental basis of the democratic system which is in place in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — With Mayor Butters and the Weyburn Council the cameramen respected the decision making there; but they chose to ignore the MLAs and the elected members of this House. And the members opposite can sort of dismiss this as game playing or procedural or little technicalities. If that's how they want to hold

parliament in the rules making approach so be it to them. I, for my part, don't. I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the press gallery (for whatever it is worth) that as big as the issue of television is, so is the substantive issue of how, who and when the access of television is decided. Surely to goodness it's not CKCK television; it's the elected members of this House who do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — It may be the position of Mr. Grant Devine and the PC Party but that's a different matter. It may be their position, but they can condone (and I hear, Mr. Speaker, the word used in this debate), that it's a precedent. They may say it is a precedent; I say that is not a precedent; that is something we should now be turning our backs on. That is not a precedent worthy of following in this legislature and in this House.

It may be the Conservative caucus and the member for Rosetown-Elrose take the position. I for one do not. Whether we are right or wrong in our decision, surely there is no higher tribunal than all of us who have stood for election, got elected and got defeated. When they talked about accountability . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, when they say it is the public's right to know; I want to know, what public? I go every four years to my public and I get criticized on my opposition and I get elected. Yet some of my colleagues get defeated. That is the public's right to now; publicly scrutinized — not by some employee of a television station or a newspaper.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — That may be Mr. Devine's approach to parliament, but it is not mine. It may be the approach of the member for Kindersley to parliament and speech-making to the parliamentary galleries, but it is not mine.

I say, Mr. Speaker, the members of this House can view that as procedural and technical and why are you trying to hide up. You can do all you want that way and you can accuse us of being biased or heavy-handed or however you want it, but the truth of the matter in the long-run, will win — CKCK television or PCs notwithstanding.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — The next point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, relates to these references to the budget debate. I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, I never asked you or any of the members opposite at any time about this budget debate nor any of the budget debates since I have been House Leader to be televised. I don't believe the Minister of Finance has either. Maybe somebody else on this side has. But it was not done as a government operation and is not a government operation. I don't know from what they talk. Maybe the situation or the suggestion was made. But I make it absolutely clear the position the government took and I took, as House Leader on behalf of the government with respect to the budget debate, is as I have said — not as the PCs would portray. That has to be absolutely made clear, Mr. Speaker, and I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, there were no approaches taken by any of the members on this side to the members in that regard in this area. I think I stand there without fear of challenge or

contradiction.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I make the last point in my rebuttal remarks, dealing with the main motion and the future of this committee. I tell you quite frankly I am disturbed at the future of this committee. I am disturbed the member for Moose Jaw North, who is a member of the committee (and I say regardless of what the people opposite say), a former member of parliament of some four or five years, former councillor in Moose Jaw (they may not like him but he has been elected by the electorate) tells this House he is opposed to the future activity of the rules committee.

I say, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SWAN: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — What is your point of order?

MR. SWAN: — It is my understanding members must be at their own desk, speaking into their own microphone when they are on their feet. The Attorney General is wandering around the House. We can't hear him over the speaker; he is not going to be recorded. I think it is time he stayed at his own desk.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I notice the Attorney General's mike was on and I would assume he is being picked up by his mike. The reason a member cannot rise at a place other than his own desk is so the recording will accurately be the member who is speaking. The Attorney General may wish to stray from his desk. If it's not picked up by his mike, I guess it isn't on record then.

MR. ROMANOW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, on my final point with respect to the committee . . . I'm sorry, is the camera not trained . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Should I be standing where the camera wants me to stand, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, my final point for the members of the House is to deal with the future of the committee. Before I was interrupted by the member for Rosetown-Elrose, I said I was disturbed at the position taken by the member for Moose Jaw North, a member in whom I have confidence in a number of matters, in particular the matter of rules because he has been through the mill — experience. I personally believe, Mr. Speaker, this is a member by whom a contribution has been made and can continue to be made. I'm very disturbed at the attitude taken by another member of the committee, the member for Kindersley. His speech to me translates itself to one conclusion. He has no confidence in what I say on the committee or what any of my colleagues say on the committee. He has no use for the committee. He hasn't quite come out and said it, but he has in effect said there's no use continuing in the committee because that's the attitude he has taken. Yet the Leader of the Opposition, when he entered the debate seemed to indicate there was hope for the committee. My colleague, the member for Saskatoon Centre, also a member of the committee, expressed grave reservations as did the Deputy Speaker, the member for Regina Rosemont.

I think, Mr. Speaker, this raises very serious doubts about the future of the committee. But I am saying to the members of the House that if they really mean what they say, if the member for Kindersley and the member for Rosetown-Elrose mean what they say about the committee . . . Remember the member for Rosetown-Elrose just said we have no confidence in the committee. It's been shuffled off for five years. Then their obligation, Mr. Speaker, is to vote against this motion. That's the way you do it. Because if there's

no confidence in this motion, Mr. Speaker, and no confidence in the resolution, that's the solution which has to be taken — a resolution defeating the motion by the members of the Conservative caucus.

I invite them to vote against the main motion if that's the way they feel. I don't invite them from a daring sense, or from a challenging sense. I don't invite them because I necessarily want to see the destruction of the committee. But frankly, I have doubts about how productive this committee can or cannot be now, after it's all over. I'm still prepared to go that extra mile. I'm still prepared to say the committee is possibly working. We have to work out the details on this and other matters in the due speed of the committee. But if the members opposite do not agree, do not feel, as they say they don't, then the onus is on them to vote against this motion.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the position I want them to be in. I want them to back up their words with action. If they vote for this motion, Mr. Speaker, I want them to put behind them, as I will urge our members, their personal feelings about the committee's ability to cope with the job and do the job of tackling the rules in the spirit in which the committee was set up. I don't expect them to vote for the motion, then come to the committee and within 48 hours or 72 hours say, the Attorney General is again stonewalling; we haven't looked at the material, or whatever the arguments are. Because if they do that, Mr. Speaker, they might as well be honest with you, this House, the electorate and the press gallery and vote against this motion. Everything I hear from my friends opposite is that they're opposed to the committee. I invite them to vote against this motion.

Mr. Speaker, this has been very important debate. I, for one, have welcomed it very much. Yes, I have welcomed it very much. I've welcomed it because it has exposed to me once and for all the position of the new Devine party on rules and procedures and obstructionism. I welcome it very much. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I will be watching not with interest only the votes, whether they do what they say they are going to do, but if the vote should be positive, how they act in the committee, whether they continue their tactics of obstruction, of negativism, of no respect for the rules, their condemnation of this kind of confrontation approach or whether indeed there will be a turnaround so we can get around to the business of dealing with a responsible, sensible reasoned change to the rules of this House, as I think all the members of this House want.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 33

Pepper	MacMurchy	Matsalla
Allen	Mostoway	Lusney
Bowerman	Kaeding	Prebble
Romanow	Hammersmith	Long
Messer	MacAuley	Johnson
Robbins	Byers	Nelson
Baker	Vickar	Engel
Skoberg	Rolfes	Poniatowski
McArthur	Tchorzewski	Lingenfelter

Gross
Shillington

Cody
Koskie

White
Solomon

NAYS — 00

MR. SPEAKER: — I want to say in connection with this motion that I'll warn all members of the rules committee that I will be calling a rules committee meeting tomorrow afternoon and I would like to have a good attendance at that meeting.

MR. ROMANOW: — I won't be able to be there tomorrow afternoon. I have a government commitment in Saskatoon. I have only found out about this now.

MR. SPEAKER: — I don't think there's a point of order here because it's merely informing the members I intended to do that. Now if the members cannot make the meeting I'll make a judgment. If there is a sufficient number of members we will go ahead. If there is not a sufficient number of members, then I'll have to choose another date. But I warn the members I'm going to be circulating something tomorrow to have the committee meet as soon as possible.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN — VOTE 26

Item 1 (continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We're dealing with item 1. The minister has informed me he has another staff member tonight he would like to introduce to the House before he gets started.

HON. J.A. HAMMERSMITH (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce to the members of the Assembly a gentleman who has just recently joined the Department of Northern Saskatchewan as the executive director of support services. He is seated beside the member for Cumberland. His name is Dick Bailey.

MR. C.O. WHITE (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Chairman, it's with a rather heavy heart that I rise to take part in this debate. A heavy heart, Mr. Chairman, because this debate has arisen out of events which to my mind should not have occurred in this legislature this year or at any other time. The debate has arisen from a vicious personal attack on the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. Since the session opened, Mr. Chairman, I've been carefully observing the actions of the opposition both inside and outside this Chamber. I've been seeking to detect some pattern in what at times appears to be almost irrational behavior, for example, getting yourself thrown out of the Chamber. Another example, tying up a committee for two days on the basis that you want TV and tape-recorders in it and then purposely delaying action which could lead to approval of audio-visual taping of committee proceedings.

As a result of a good deal of thought, Mr. Chairman, I've concluded that three generalizations may be made concerning the opposition in this House. First, for its

purposes, the opposition in the last few days has avoided asking any question of substance concerning the department under examination. They've done that elsewhere and on other occasions. Any clear-sighted individual, clear-sighted observer, can see that they wish to avoid discussions of economic issues or matters relating to the DNS or to other matters as well. Secondly, it's quite clear what their prime purpose is. Their prime purpose is becoming more and more evident and that's to create, in the public mind, the impression that this government seeks to cloak its actions in secrecy. Phrases like closed government, cover-up, are freely batted about. The member for Wilkie leads the pack here. I think he's certainly entitled to the cracked record award. Now nothing could be farther from the truth than his allegations about the government. In line with this type of attempt to brand the government as secret, the members opposite have tried to draw the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan and others into discussion of cases before the courts, something members opposite know full well should not be discussed here.

Thirdly, the opposition has engaged in an attack on the minister which has been classed by some people outside this House as racist. Now, I just want to read a part of the two telegrams read yesterday from native and non-native members of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. And just to quote a line or so from one, "We have heard the racist and personal attack which Conservative MLAs have made against you in this House." The other one bears the phrase "the obviously racist tirade of the opposition." That's not the first time that statement has been made of the members opposite.

I ask the members opposite, do you intend to play this sort of game in the future? Is that your intent? Is this the direction your party is determined to take under your new leader, Grant Devine? If it is, I want to urge all of you — yes, the member for Bengough-Milestone — consider carefully, consider seriously where he's seeking to lead you. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley is there. The member for Meadow Lake is there; you fellows are teachers. The member for Rosetown-Elrose is in education too — he's gone. But I want to know, do you know much about the political history of your party? If there's one lesson the political history of our provinces has for you as members of the Conservative Party, it's that the course you've chosen is a course that leads straight to disaster. It leads you to political oblivion in short order and it leads you as individuals to being viewed in a rather jaundiced eye by future generations, let me assure you of that. The present course, and I want you to consider it carefully . . . I'm going to relate a bit of the political history of your party and see just the parallels that are present today.

Let's go back to the 1905 election. It was fought between the Liberals and the Provincial Rights Party, the predecessor to the Conservative Party. The two parties fought for control and the Provincial Rights Party based its campaign very heavily on the separate schools . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pay attention, it will do you good.

MR. R.H. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — What has this got to do with DNS, the remarks over there?

AN HON. MEMBER: — DNS started in 1970; he's talking about 1905.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would remind the member for Regina Wascana we are dealing with item no. 1 and I think some of the remarks he was making did stray a bit from item no. 1, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Your point is well taken.

MR. WHITE: — I think you will find it highly relevant. The point I want to make for the

benefit of the gentleman opposite is if you look at the attack they are making today on the minister that type of attack has been made before. Various elections were fought on racial, religious and language issues — no less than three of them. The Conservatives finally came to power and when they did they brought in legislation dealing with these various matters.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — A point of order, Mr. Chairman. You have just called the member to order and he is not going to listen to your ruling. Are you going to let him carry on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I was listening carefully to what the member said and as I understood his remarks he was referring to remarks made by the opposition in regard to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. I think that is debate. I call on the member for Wascana.

MR. WHITE: — Yes, in power the party proceeded to restrict language rights, education rights and immigration to try to keep out some people it considered undesirable. But I want to point out to you your party was very short-lived, one term, and then every man was wiped out. The point I want to make to you is this: don't feel it was the depression that did this; that's a comforting illusion. People who have studied your party have this to say. The Conservative Party of early years based its campaign on race, language and religion.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What's your source?

MR. WHITE: — I can give it you any time. I can send it across; there are lots of them. And historians have said when these issues ceased to be relevant to the Saskatchewan people the Tory party also became irrelevant. Now, if you look at what is happening today under your new leader, you are heading in the same direction. If you continue in this direction you can be assured of two things. Your tenure in this House is very insecure, and your moment of glory will also be very short. You may get some headlines by sensational charges, by appealing to the press, by raising racial issues under your new leader — or by crying secret government, closed door and so on as Tories did in 1929, Gardiner's political machine. But it's building castles on sand to try to do that. I want you to seriously consider where you are headed. Consider where your new leader, Mr. Grant Devine, is taking you. If you really are considerate, what I would urge you to do for your own salvation, gentlemen, is put your leader up for election. Make him speak to the people of Saskatchewan on the issues that are coming to the fore under his leadership. Don't front for him. Let him speak for himself. Let him show the people of the province the direction he is taking the party. Now, I honestly think you will be the beneficiaries. You will very quickly have a defeated leader on your hands and then you will have a very good reason to get another one. Maybe you can find one with a little more praiseworthy approach.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I wonder if the member for Regina Wascana would try in some way, if at all possible, to relate his remarks to item 1 — Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

MR. WHITE: — I thought I had, Mr. Chairman. My apologies if I haven't. I think I can close it off. I think I put the message across.

I just want to say that the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan in my view is handling a rather tough job in a very masterly manner. He not only has my support but also has my

admiration for standing up to the attack in the manner in which he did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I think that what we better get back to is the situation in northern Saskatchewan and of course the situation as described by Judge Noble in which he states that it is a department running amuck, where the provincial department has assisted in committing fraud with passive and active co-operation.

I have been listening to the speeches of the ploughmen in the back rows for the last couple of days and watching them applaud in here. I can say that it has been a masterful demonstration of false bravado for a minister who I think is in trouble and a department that is running amuck. I feel certain sympathies for the minister because I do think he inherited a rather messy situation from his colleagues sitting in front of him. However, he is the minister of that department at this time and of course he is the one who has to be answerable for the situations in that department.

I notice there are an awful lot of speakers on the other side. We were in a debate the other day in which our people were cut off in their question, and I would like to remind the Chair and the people on the other side what the purpose of estimates is — that is grievance before supply. And that's what we intend to do on this side of the House — to point our grievances to that department and to that minister to try to get some answers to these problems which we are pointing out.

Now one of the things I remember the fellow from Yorkton . . . He's not in the House right now but the other day he was speaking and he said you always are going back to 1973 in relation to the letters that were brought forward and so on. Tonight, I hear the member for Wascana going back to 1905 and I can't see where that related at all to the current Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

So I'll come right to the point now and come up with some of the things that you members want to hear. On April 7, 1980, which is rather current, this department still is running amuck and still is not satisfying the needs of northern people in Saskatchewan. One of the things the minister talks about is the hiring of northerners in this department. I would like to draw your attention to a few situations here. They were statements by one Mike Durocher who was an employee of that department and I quote:

A former employee of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan has accused the department both of mismanagement and racial bias against natives.

This man, Mr. Durocher, was an employee of the economic development department in DNS.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Oh, an employee.

MR. TAYLOR: — He said that the bureaucratic bureaucracy in DNS was disorganized and I quote:

Management in DNS doesn't know what it's doing. There are people there making decisions who are abusing their authority.

And this is as late as April 7 that Mr. Durocher made these charges. He goes on to tell about job applications, jobs being offered to natives and then the natives not having the opportunity and being refused when they applied for those jobs. He states that the native staff working in DNS is very unhappy. Now, I think those are the situations the judge understands and those are certainly indications there are problems in that department. He goes on here and says for instance, when I first started working in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan in 1975, there were 14 natives in the economic and development department - 14. Now there are three.

Mr. Hammersmith is out of touch with the regular worker at DNS. He also doesn't realize how low the staff morale is there, Mr. Durocher says. Now to me when we hear that on April 7, 1980, from an employee of the department it indicates that certainly things are not all well, that there is something, shall we say, rotten in the state of northern Saskatchewan.

And I would like to indicate from another article of today in the Leader-Post in which we see one Mr. Fred Favel with the Regina Native Race Relations Association. He's a director of that institution, and this is what Mr. Favel says:

Federal, provincial and local governments should be playing a leading role in improving employment changes and career advancement for natives, but they are not.

I find this kind of thing hard to rationalize, especially with respect to the provincial government. Those were statements in today's paper about the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chairman, I think this is an indication this government and this Department of Northern Saskatchewan is not fulfilling its obligation to native people and giving them employment. I know the minister in the article was quoted as saying, oh well, it's the public service commission that hires them. It's not the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; it's the public service commission. Surely, Mr. Minister, you must have some input into hiring natives for these jobs in northern Saskatchewan.

I took the leisure to go through the directory of this government, and I went through the Department of Northern Saskatchewan at random. I know the surname doesn't necessarily indicate the racial origin of a person. I went through some of the top positions in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I'm not sure if these people are native or non-native, but I am wondering and I'm asking the minister, is Mr. Art Towill a native. Is Andrew Horosko a native? Is Shakir Alwarid a native? Is J.E. Morris a native? Is Rose Smith a native? And you can ask anyone. Is William A. Klassen a native? You can go through this book. I found one name in here that I would say — Karen Bear — is probably a native. But where are all the rest of them? Where are the native names in here? Indicate to us how many people in this directory are natives or of native ancestry. These are the kinds of questions that we want answered.

AN HON. MEMBER: — He says it's out of date. That's his answer. He says it's an out-of-date directory.

MR. TAYLOR: — It's out of date. It's the most recent one we have. It's the green one.

And I remember the other day a couple of the fellows who stood in this House to show

up the minister. The Minister of Education was up there for a while, I think they put him in for 11 months, that was his tenure. The new member for Regina North-West said he was in northern Saskatchewan. Perhaps that's the problem, Mr. Minister. Perhaps that is why the people in that area are discontented. Where are the names of the natives in here.

You know, I was very interested in seeing the other day, Mr. Minister, that you did indicate to our member for Arm River that the Premier did reply to your letter of 1973. I think it will be very interesting when the Premier returns to ask him what his reply was.

And of course you must realize that in all this there is the fundamental principle of premises of law and I would like to quote this:

It's a fundamental premise of law that holds that those who counsel or condone impropriety of illegality are as culpable as he who executes the deed.

I think that's something that the administration of northern Saskatchewan should keep in mind.

HON. J.A. HAMMERSMITH (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Well, I listened with interest as my colleague, the member for Regina Wascana, accused the Conservative Party opposite of tending occasionally toward racism. The member uses surnames as a basis of determining whether or not people are of native ancestry. I would like to ask him whether or not he considers the name Hammersmith to be indicative of native ancestry, because my wife who is Cree Indian is named Hammersmith. My three children who are all of native ancestry are named Hammersmith but he says that it doesn't sound native. I wonder if the name MacAuley sounds native enough to him. In response to his request — I don't know whether the names appear in that directory or not but since I have been the minister the following people have been appointed at the director level in the department, all of native ancestry: director of northern housing, Cliff Supernault. If it doesn't sound . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We'll give you his salary. I don't have it off hand. I'll reply to those particular charges, then if you want to ask a question about his salary I'll be glad to give that to you. Director of the northern continuing education branch, responsible for the community colleges and all the new continuing education programs I related to members of this House were underway, Rae McKay. Director of the manpower secretariat, responsible for the negotiation of surface leases with all new mines and for the monitoring of those surface leases and for the manpower and employment programs in relationship to mining in northern Saskatchewan, Brian Dagdick. Assistant manager of the forestry division, responsible for the sawmills and the forestry operations, Gene Kimbley. The regional supervisor of the resources branch on the west side, responsible for all the renewable resource management from Green Lake through La Loche, Angus MacAuley. The person responsible for the Affirmative Action program in the department, the director Affirmative Action, Brian Aubichon.

The member referred to some quotations from one Mike Durocher. I would like to read from a letter in March from the same Mike Durocher to the director of economic development with a copy to myself.

After serious consideration I have decided on attempting to get back into the economic development branch as a field employee. I would, however, wish to upgrade my education in terms of administration and relevant business

management, the latter can be accomplished by applying for educational leave.

During my three-year tenure with the branch, the job was very interesting, regardless of the fact there were ups and downs. I lost a lot of interest with the job during the last three or four months before my resignation due to inter-office misunderstandings and personal marital demands that placed a lot of stress on my person. It is very unfortunate that I had to resign with some bad feelings. However, I feel if I were to return to the economic development branch I would outweigh these bad feelings by honest to goodness hard work.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Who was that, Jerry?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — That was Mike Durocher. I wish also, for the benefit of the member, since he may not have heard it yesterday, read a telegram received from the native staff committee in the department, the committee representing all native employees in the department:

On behalf of the native staff committee, we would like to assure you that we agree in the direction that you have moved the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, in both trying to assure native northerners have first opportunity in working in the department and ensuring that the department moves towards giving more local control to northern communities.

That is signed by the members of the native staff committee.

I would also like to relate to the member (because he may have missed it) that the department has two programs in particular geared toward increasing (by the way it's close to 40 per cent of the staff now) the number of native employees in the department and assisting native people in moving into positions of increasing responsibility. One of the programs is entitled Options North, whereby native employees receive assistance in order to attend universities and technical schools. To date, 20 people have graduated and have moved into positions of increasing responsibility; 25 people are currently enrolled.

The other program to assist native northerners, generally, in acquiring increased educational qualifications is entitled Northern Career plan. It provides assistance for northerners to attend (whether they work for the department or not) universities and technical schools. There are currently 75 people enrolled in that program.

Another program sponsored by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and delivered under the direction of the Northern Lights School Division is the northern teacher education program which began just four years ago. Last spring it had its first eight native teachers graduate with Standard A certificates I think it is three years of training. Over the next three years there will be approximately an additional 90 native teachers graduate, people who are currently enrolled.

Before I take my seat I would, in answer to the question from the member for Qu'Appelle, from his seat, the salary of Cliff Supernault budgeted for 1980-81, providing we get these estimates passed, is \$33,160 per year.

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — The member for Regina Wascana made mention of

the series of telegrams they have received. I believe the minister made reference to the series of telegrams they received. We received the letter in our caucus. I just think we could take the time to read it. The date is April 1, 1980 from Howard Thompson, I-12, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I think it's worth listening to what this man has to say:

Sitting in jail here I have been picking up odds and ends on the radio but am unable to get a clear picture of what's going on so I have decided to write to tell you the situation with regard to myself.

I was fined \$250 on each of four counts of fraud or three months consecutive on each charge which brings me a total of one year and I am sitting in jail because I hope that it will make people think what to hell they've done, mainly the DNS. I had three small charges from Meadow Lake which I had disposed of seeing as I was going to jail on these fraud charges. So the other charges have no bearing on my being in jail as I would have fought them and successfully won. I am in here because of DNS's blunders and if I felt guilty I would have paid the fines. Now I can get solid proof of gross fraud by the DNS, not only to the northern residents but also to CMHC which I am sure are completely unaware of.

What I would need is for you or someone from your party to come and see me as I will not reveal the file name here and have one of your lawyers subpoena this file. It will show that a northern resident had been charged for something he never received. Then DNS, in turn, billed CMHC and CMHC, in turn paid DNS with the home-owner not receiving or even knowing that he had been charged for something he never received.

This letter is not meant to cause a bit of trouble to either party but I do believe the NDP members of the legislature should be made to understand that the people they have working in the department are not telling them the truth.

The DNS is guilty of gross fraud with millions of dollars at their disposal, so they haul a small contractor to jail and cover their ass while the naïve public are made to believe that the private contractor is guilty.

I also worked for the DNS and probably know more of what goes on than the leaders of the NDP or your opposition party.

I feel this should be made public about me not paying the fines and doing the one year because I maintain I am in jail because, as several times before, the DNS has got its own way.

Now perhaps, Mr. Minister, you can make light of muckraking. You can make light of the telegrams and this type of thing. I tell you those are the words of a man in jail.

AN HON. MEMBER: — So what's the point?

MR. ANDREW: — So what's the point he says. The point is, on Monday in the trial (now I don't take this for either Monday or Tuesday of the trial in P.A.) the evidence of a police officer under cross-examination was to the effect — what were the parameters of your investigation? Did you investigate DNS? No, the parameters of our investigation restricted us to investigate the private contractors. So when the Attorney General talks about matters before court, there was no investigation. There was no investigation of

the DNS but it was restricted, as this man is saying, to the private contractors. What these people are saying is that somehow they feel they are the fall-guys and the department is getting off lightly. Now that isn't our accusation, and the accusation that the government was running amuck was not our accusation. That was the accusation of a judge, and you people can sit there and say that doesn't mean anything, you're just muckraking. That's a further commentary on your department, and I say that's a serious commentary.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The member for Kindersley has seen fit to comment on evidence being heard in the trial now in progress, and I suppose that's a decision for him to take. The comment he made was with regard to evidence given on Monday (and that trial is currently in progress; it has not come to a conclusion), and if he chooses to comment on a matter before the courts and jeopardize the rights of those individuals, that's his choice.

I want to say that when the RCMP conducted the investigation leading to the charges presently awaiting a hearing before the courts — two of them underway — they had open access to all of the files, all of the documents, all the information available in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. The investigation was carried out under the supervision of the RCMP, and if the member is implying, if the conclusion he draws is that the RCMP was negligent, then I think it is incumbent upon him to say that. The implication of his remarks is that the RCMP did not do a thorough investigation. He said a restricted investigation, and I would ask, restricted by whom? I think it is incumbent on him to say who restricted that investigation.

The other point he misses is that the individual he says he has a letter from had a fair trial before a judge and jury — not before the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, but before the criminal courts. He is suggesting that this individual alleges there is evidence which was not brought forth in that trial. Why he or his attorney would choose to not bring forward evidence which he says was relevant to the case is a matter I guess he and his lawyer know. I don't know why, if there is such damning evidence, it wasn't brought forward.

If the allegations being made by the member for Kindersley are allegations of criminality, then I suggest it is incumbent upon him to name the criminal, not to us, to the RCMP. I suggest that is your duty — to name the criminal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! I would like to remind hon. members on both side of the House in regard to a sub judice convention, item 335 states in Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, the fifth edition where it states.

Members are expected to refrain from discussing matters that are before the courts or tribunals which are courts of record. The purpose of this sub-judice convention is to protect the parties in a case awaiting or undergoing trial and persons who stand to be affected by the outcome of a judicial inquiry. It is a voluntary restraint imposed by the House upon itself in the interest of justice and fair play.

In other words, it's not a rule of the House I enforce. It's the rule members impose upon themselves. I would just caution members to try to keep their remarks as far away from any court cases that are now taking place or any court cases that are pending. I call on the hon. member . . .

MR. LANE: — I'd like to speak to your ruling, Mr. Chairman. Point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — State your point of order.

MR. LANE: — For approximately a week in this Assembly, the government hid behind the defence that they could not comment on court cases. Tonight the minister started to comment in the court cases and got into comments on the court cases . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order!

MR. LANE: — He has now opened it up and now we want to start questioning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! The hon. member for Kindersley raised a question — I listened very carefully I think the record will show — about a court case that's taking place in Prince Albert. He referred to Monday of this week. I immediately, when he started speaking put my thinking bonnet on to see where we were going here. I found . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order! All I'm saying to the hon. members on both sides of the House is there's a convention here I think that we should follow. I'll call upon the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan and ask him to stay as far away from any court cases pending or in progress as possible.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I felt I was attempting to stay away from that. I simply mentioned the hon. member referred to the court case in progress; that was his choice; I preferred not to discuss that case. What I was discussing, Mr. Chairman, was a letter the member for Kindersley has in his possession that he alleges is evidence of something or other. I think if he has reasons to believe it is evidence of criminality, it's incumbent upon him to bring that alleged criminality to the attention of the appropriate authorities so that it can be dealt with. Just as in the matter of the investigation of the allegations that led to charges of individuals with regard to the RRAP (residential rehabilitation assistance program) and Cumberland House, the officials of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities, the Attorney General, their concern that problems identified and problems raised appeared to warrant a full investigation by the RCMP. The department asked for that investigation, co-operated with the investigation and made available all documents, files, information, the department had.

I think it is important to honor the convention. I think it's important to refrain from discussing cases before the courts. I've consistently taken that position. I continue to take that position.

MR. LANE: — I'd like to give the minister an example of how the department in fact did not act, and the statement which you have just indicated is far from accurate.

In committee of finance, on May 5, 1977, the opposition first raised the matter of the alleged frauds with the RRAP in northern Saskatchewan. At that time, the then minister, Mr. Bowerman, indicated there were no problems and minimized and took the same tack which you have about the opposition — prove your case. You are alleging fraud — in this case we raised the contracts of a Mr. Lafreniere. The response of the minister was to ask him whether or not he has made allegations this afternoon, or has inferred the employee he referred to has or is undertaking fraudulent actions; or are you accusing the employee of theft?

It's amazing how the more things change the more they stay the same. It is exactly the same type of counterattack, the one you are making tonight, that the former minister made. It turns out the opposition was quite correct, by the looks of the decision of Judge Noble.

I am now going to ask the minister at that time — a couple of things happened, one on which you refused to take any action. As a matter of fact, what I am going to tell the minister —and I am going to say it carefully and cautiously because I am going to warn him, and the Attorney General knows full well the impact of the allegation made by an RCMP officer in the present trial — you know the ramifications and so do I. You bet, you and I both know full well . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, we'll get the transcript, we'll get it; I know you will have it, let me tell you.

We saw then exactly the same political defence of the minister which we are seeing tonight. At that time you refused an investigation and you wanted the opposition to prove the fraud charges which were subsequently laid. You then decided there was an internal investigation.

Mr. Lafreniere was told at that time there were no grounds to fire him. It was subsequently turned over, approximately two months later, to the RCMP.

Would the minister now explain to the Assembly why your internal inquiry didn't result in action and why it took a significant period of time after that before it was turned over to the RCMP?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The information which I have is: the concerned employee was dismissed from the department in May, 1977, and in May of 1977 senior management requested a full investigation through the AG's department.

MR. LANE: — Approximately two months later. The time is very important. Why the delay of two months before it was turned over to the RCMP?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I think, Mr. Chairman, that if this House or this government were to begin an investigation on individuals or on people in society each time it was asked for by this opposition, we would have the kind of police state the member for Qu'Appelle would like to see and is headed toward.

MR. LANE: — The difference is that we have a judgment by Mr. Justice Noble that in fact vindicates, I suggest to you, what the opposition raised way back in 1977. If you intend to ignore the allegations against your department, I think we are seeing one of the most disgusting examples from the minister of ministerial irresponsibility. Now I come back — you have been begging the question I asked you and I want an answer from you.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I think that there has been little as disgusting in the history of elected assemblies as the suggestion by the member for Qu'Appelle since in another country people with similar views in the 1930s advanced their views of how the law should be respected. What the member for Qu'Appelle is suggesting is that now because one decision in one case has been handed down, that means in March of 1977 the government should have ignored the criminal investigation process, should have ignored the right of individuals to be brought to trial. They should have then taken action, not action brought about as result of an investigation by police, not action brought about as result of the criminal justice process running its course, but action brought about as result of the frantic and childish gyrations of the member for

Qu'Appelle. I say that is a disgrace to the democratic and parliamentary process we believe in and are here to defend. I say it's a disgraceful attack on our criminal investigation system carried out by the RCMP; it is a disgraceful attack on the judicial system; it is a disgraceful disrespect for the rules of parliament.

The tactics of the member for Qu'Appelle are not tactics new in this world. They are not tactics new in North America although they're rare in North America. Those tactics have been used in other places in other times to attack the very institutions through which free men rule themselves, to attack the institutions of parliament, to attack the Chair, to attack the Speaker and to bring the whole process into disrespect. Then, unlike people in other countries and other times when they had created turmoil and went out into the streets, the member for Qu'Appelle goes out into the hallway and makes the same charges on the electronic media. I say that is not a fit way for parliament or members to conduct themselves. I say that the step-by-step method, slow and painful process that it may be, of carrying out a thorough investigation, going through the trial in a free society, guaranteeing the rights of individuals to be considered innocent until proven guilty is a far superior system to what the member for Qu'Appelle would advocate, which is consider them guilty until they prove themselves innocent. I say that's not fit for a member of the legal profession or for a member of one of the parliaments of the British Commonwealth.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Mr. Chairman, the member for Kindersley read a letter a little while ago and I certainly am not going to make any judgment on the contents of that letter. But I'm wondering if the member would table the letter, and if he would tell us to whom it was addressed and was it sent by mail or was it picked up. I wonder if he would be so kind as to inform all members of this Assembly of those details. As the hon. member says, it is a serious matter and I know he would want to inform all members of the House.

MR. LANE: — A question to the minister. You have begged off answering the question twice. Why better than two months delays before you turned it over to the RCMP?

MR. ROMANOW: — If the hon. member would be kind enough . . . I see the members of the press have copies of the letter. I think they do. Certainly they are reading very avidly. But we don't have the courtesy to receive it on this side of the House. The Minister of northern Saskatchewan doesn't have a copy; I don't have a copy. I wonder if the hon. member for Kindersley would table the letter, and while tabling the letter, answer the questions the member for Saskatoon Centre has raised. Would you be kind enough to do that for us?

MR. LANE: — Will the minister responsible for DNS advise this Assembly why there was over two month's delay before turning over to the RCMP?

MR. MOSTOWAY: — Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if I could ask the hon. member for Kindersley if he would be so kind as to provide me with the information which I requested. I'm wondering, was it sent by mail? To whom was it addressed? If it wasn't sent by mail, was it picked up? Was it received by a member opposite or was it received by somebody on this side of the House? I think it's very pertinent to the discussion tonight, making no judgment on the contents of the letter. I know the hon. member for Kindersley would want to inform the House; being a lawyer he would want to make sure that all are informed. Or would he want us to assume certain things by remaining silent?

MR. LANE: — I'm sure the hon. member responsible for DNS doesn't want us to assume things about why he is refusing to answer the questions on the very lengthy delay from your department (well before it came up in the Assembly, I might add) in turning it over to the RCMP.

Point of Order

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, my point of order is that the rules of this House are, as I understand them, that when a member reads a letter, he has one of two choices: he either tables the letter or in the alternative he accepts and takes the consequences of the contents of the letter. He adopts the contents. I am choosing my words carefully. The contents of the letter are an allegation of fraud — gross fraud. Now that is a criminality. That is what I'm saying. That's the purpose behind the rule. You can't hide behind an anonymous letter. Now look, you're telling us to be fair. You've tabled a letter to the press and you don't even give the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan a copy of the letter. My point of order is that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — You've raised a point of order and I think you've stated the point correctly. The rule is that when quoting a letter in the House a member must be willing either to give the name of the author or to take full responsibility for the contents himself. As I understand it he said it was from Howard Thompson.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming the ruling is that by giving the name of the author there is compliance with the rule. Am I right on that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Yes.

MR. ROMANOW: — O.K., Mr. Chairman, if I'm right on that, then it seems to me that I am reduced to the situation (and I accept your ruling on this obviously) of asking a lawyer, a supposedly responsible member of the opposition, to give the government of the day the contents of the letter — to table the letter. If they do not do this, then I say the opposition is not playing fair with the government or with this institution, or playing fair with the minister. Why in the world are you refusing to produce the letter? I assume you've given it to the press. Why don't you give the letter to us? Why can't we have chance to study the letter?

I accept the ruling. I'm making a comment to the speech. I want to ask the hon. member for Kindersley why is it, since you people are not interested in politics in this matter of course, that you're not giving us a copy of the letter? I have never seen this kind of situation take place where the member does not tender a letter and make it available to the hon. members of the House. Surely the hon. member for Kindersley will give us copy of the letter as presented and will be kind enough to tell the House and the members of the press when the letter was received. How was it obtained? By whom was it obtained? This is relevant information. For example, was this letter solicited by somebody from the opposition? I'm not saying it was. But was it? The letter suggests that somebody from the opposition should go speak to Mr. Thompson. Did they? Who went? When did they go? What was the conversation? I want to know the circumstances surrounding the form in which the letter was taken.

Mr. Chairman, I think those are pertinent questions upon which you base the case. I'd like to know if somebody saw the member and solicited the letter. If they did, when? Where was this done? If all of these are not relevant, if it's a letter that was received in

the mail, tell us. And if it's a copy of the letter, table it to the House so that at least the minister, others of the government, and members on this side of the House who want to take a look at the contents of the letter have a chance to take a look at it. They can study the contents and circumstances of the letter. I make a plea to the hon. member for Kindersley to give us at least a fair chance of taking a look at the letter. Will you do that?

I'm going to resume my place and I'm going to ask you to do this so we can take a look at the letter and as a consequence of seeing the backing of the letter, frame the answers the minister presumably will be asking. He surely has all of that material which is required. I would think (and I don't mean this in any abrasive style, I'm sorry, it's the method by which I speak) the member for Maple Creek says I'm trying hard. I say to the member for Maple Creek — put yourself in the minister's position . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's fine. I know you wouldn't do it and to be quite frank with you I wouldn't want to be in the minister's position either. No, I wouldn't want to be in the minister's position facing the kind of opposition and the level of opposition being faced here. You dispute what I say and yet you won't table the letter. You dispute what I'm saying about your being political and unfair and when I ask you to table the letter you sit on it. You can't have it both ways. You're either going to disprove me and give me a copy of the letter or give the members a copy of the letter or you're not going to do it. If you're not going to do it, am I not entitled to make this conclusion? Am I not entitled to it? Why don't you tell us the full circumstances surrounding the letter if there are any circumstances to be revealed on the letter? I think that is a very logical request to ask of you, a lawyer and a member for Kindersley.

Now, has it been tabled? Somebody says it has been tabled. Has it been tabled or not? I don't believe it has been tabled. I say that the tactics used . . . Well, I'm not going to make that conclusion because I'm going to invite the hon. member — I know the member for Qu'Appelle will jump and take the floor right now. I invite the hon. member for Qu'Appelle and I say this to him again in a non-aggressive sense (as a lawyer, as a president of a responsible political party) to give us a copy of the letter and answer some of the circumstances surrounding the letter as the Government Whip on this side raised it. Surely we are entitled to that as a bare minimum. Surely we're entitled to that because you use the letter as a basis of a general accusation. You say, here is the accuser and here is the substance of the accusation, and yet you will not give us the details of the accusation. How can we respond?

AN HON. MEMBER: — It will be in Hansard tomorrow; it will be in the paper tomorrow.

MR. ROMANOW: — Yes, you see, Mr. Chairman? Read it in the paper tomorrow. It will be in Hansard tomorrow. But the minister has to give me an answer right now; I have to know right now? Why are you refusing the answer?

I say to the hon. member for Regina South that if anybody on our side gets up and uses a letter as a basis of an accusation, probable criminality, or other grievous misconduct and he did not produce a copy of that document for you, you would have every right to condemn him. If I refuse to produce a government policy document of a different category, of a non-accusatory, non-semicriminal basis, surely that is a totally different category, and if you don't see the difference, then I'm afraid to say that we are very much in trouble in this system in this world of ours. The fact of the matter is that this is a situation which involves a . . . Well, we'll see, we'll just see who is; but right now the issue is the letter. The issue is a letter which was read to this House quickly and no details given.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Did we have the full contents?

MR. ROMANOW: — I don't know if it was the full contents of the letter or not. I don't know what passages were in or out. I don't even know if the press had the copy, and I withdraw that insinuation, but it seems to me that they did because they were reading it at the same time. Everybody has a copy, everybody except the minister who is piloting the DNS estimates through. Now, the PC members opposite are pressuring it in a cavalier way - well, you know you'll read in the paper tomorrow; we don't care what kind of a situation operates here. I'm afraid, Mr. Chairman, this is the kind of tactic we have been seeing throughout the whole piece. I got a great big charge out of the speech the other day by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle who argued for a royal commission based on the 1973 letter, an open letter.

AN HON. MEMBER: — This is 1980.

MR. ROMANOW: — Yes, that's right, it is the 1980 one and you won't produce it for us. You should be ashamed of yourself. You should be ashamed of yourself, to make an accusation and not give anybody else a chance to look at it or to respond to it. The member for Rosetown-Elrose should be ashamed of being on that kind of an approach. I'm saying . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well that's fine.

AN HON. MEMBER: — And you'll have him on your back.

MR. ROMANOW: — Fine. That's the way it is.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Do you think that's fair?

MR. ROMANOW: — You think that's fair do you? That's the way it should operate in this House? Not giving us the circumstances. Was this letter searched out by anybody or not? I don't know. Was it a free written letter? How did it get to you? I would like to know that. And you think I'm not entitled to that and the minister is not entitled to that?

AN HON. MEMBER: — But he has to answer the question.

MR. ROMANOW: — Well, I say, Mr. Chairman, that really is sinking to an all-time low. The member says I'll get it. I'm glad to have his assurance I'll get it. As far as I'm concerned one need not be too surprised about the fact the minister would want to see it in order to fully consider the answers which are given in this area. I think the member for Qu'Appelle has done a very wise thing indeed in choosing his words very carefully. I hope that's a course he continues to follow. I commend it highly to him and to the member for Kindersley — very highly commend it to him.

I say, Mr. Chairman, the other day in the committee we saw the spectacle of in effect the reinvention of the wheel, the 1973 letter that the minister wrote on DNS — in 1980, seven full years later, that an individual wrote when he was a private individual. I'm sorry it's not perhaps be kind to the press day this day. It's getting bigger press coverage today, seven years later than the day it was released to 1,000 or more people as an open letter to the province of Saskatchewan.

In 1973, Mr. Chairman, the price for oil was \$3 a barrel. In 1973 Pierre Trudeau was Prime Minister of a minority government. In 1973, the minister of DNS was the hon. Ted Bowerman. In 1973, the hon. member for Qu'Appelle was a Liberal. But I guess, Mr. Chairman, we will be faced with the argument, well some things just don't change. The

1973 allegations of DNS just don't change. The member for Qu'Appelle has got the full right to change totally his political parties and his philosophy. No, but the hon. Minister for Northern Saskatchewan does not have the right to change his views about DNS from 1973 to 1980. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan does not have the right to change in its administrative or other practices from 1973 to 1980.

Oh, the hon. member for Thunder Creek has the right to change political parties but they don't do it. I'm saying, Mr. Chairman, that is very, very slim pickings, to be able to go through a letter which is seven years old, eight years old, and assume everything is constant about it. The minister is constant about it. The views of the minister held in '73 are constant about it. Just like the views from the member from Qu'Appelle are constant in 1980 as they are constant in 1973. And then as I say, to reinvent the wheel — my goodness, it's news all of a sudden. We discovered all of a sudden again the bright sunshine and here we have, all of a sudden, a letter of 1973 and look what's happening in this particular area. Well, Mr. Chairman, I tell you I've seen some bases, some very strong bases, for the request for royal commission inquiries — but I tell you, that's not one of them. Going back seven or eight years (and I'm sure the hon. member for Swift Current would know the point I'm making and probably is happy he's left this caucus for a whole number of reasons not the least of which is this kind of a tactic) I have never seen that as a basis of a royal commission inquiry.

Now the next matter that comes before us is the question of what the hon. member for Qu'Appelle did in 1973, when this damning letter was first tabled — the '73 letter from one Gerry Hammersmith which made these damning indictments against the Premier and Mr. Freddy Thompson and everybody else in DNS, the one that required this tremendous judicial inquiry, this royal commission. What, Mr. Chairman, did this incensed, outraged, hard-fighting defender and former Liberal say about a royal commission at the time when the matter was relevant? Do you know what he said, Mr. Chairman? Zero. Not a word anywhere. Zero. But now, Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order!

MR. ROMANOW: — I knew it was a powerful speech but I didn't think it was that powerful. Well, I don't know what's happening but as long as there is not smoke going up it will be O.K. Mr. Chairman, should I continue? Do we have a major problem?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order! I think we should wait a minute. Maybe some of these remarks are going to be on record if the machine is . . . (inaudible) . . .

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

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:52 pm.