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EVENING SESSION

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
TOURISM AND RENEWABLE RESOURCES
VOTE 39

Item 1 (continued)

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — I'm wary when I get that start. There is something up.

Mr. Minister, do you have the information regarding the northwest quarter of section 18, township 49, range 10 west of the 3rd that your government did some trading on?

HON. R.J. GROSS (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources): — Mr. Chairman, the quarter section in question follows this way, if I can go through it properly here. There is a mistake in the printing of \$300. We will straighten it out later. What happened is that the southeast quarter of section 7, township 49, range 10, west of the 3rd meridian is the quarter that the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources acquired in trade for the northwest quarter of section 18, township 49, range 10, west of the 3rd. Then it has section 18, township 49, range 10, west of the 3rd plus \$300. It should read \$300 paid to DTRR. That is the only problem here. But it was land (a wildlife development fund quarter) that was traded to a farmer in return for another quarter he had. It was felt it was more suitable property. That is all it was. The money the farmer paid DTRR went back into the wildlife development fund. That was \$300 over and above the trade for the swamp.

MR. GARNER: — So there was the error. DRTT received the \$300 and you took a quarter of wildlife development fund land and traded it for another quarter. Is that correct?

MR. GROSS: — Because it was a better quarter. It was the one they were looking for.

MR. GARNER: — How much money was given in grants to the Saskatchewan Trappers' Association?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that in 1979 we gave \$13,000 to the Saskatchewan Trappers' Association.

MR. GARNER: — So basically what was that grant money used for, do you know?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, it was used for three trapper training schools that were held at Hudson Bay, Ministikwan and at another site. These have not been held. These are being planned for the calendar year 1980.

MR. GARNER: — These schools that this \$13,000 went for, where were these schools held?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised the schools were held at Chitek Lake, Onion Lake, Big River, Duck Mountain Park, Moose Mountain Park, Maple Creek and Swift Current.

MR. GARNER: — How much did the DTRR contribute to the federal-provincial

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committee on human trapping?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the answer is \$10,000.

MR. GARNER: — How many claims were there for livestock shot by hunters in 1979?

MR. GROSS: — I am advised 25 claims are paid for a total amount of \$15,370.66 and there were 31 cattle, 7 horses, 2 sheep and that's the total.

MR. GARNER: — In your annual report you also stated that there is one franchised fishery in operation in the province at Cochin on Murray Lake. It states that there was a harvest of 7,813 pounds of fish. Do you know what types of fish were harvested? My reason for asking you is that I have had some complaints from sport fishermen in the area.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised the majority were tullibee. There were a few whitefish but no sport fish in the fishery.

MR. GARNER: — No sport fish at all? There has been a discovery of a slight increase in mercury levels of parts of the Qu'Appelle system. Where are these levels increased and have you found out where they are coming from?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised the mercury the member makes mention of is in the Fishing Lakes area. It is not known by our department what is causing it. It's under investigation by the Department of the Environment at this time.

MR. GARNER: — You have it under investigation then.

MR. GROSS: — The Department of the Environment has it under investigation.

MR. GARNER: — That concerns me, Mr. Minister. Well, I'll have to wait until we get the Department of the Environment and find out if we can have a copy of that report if it's ever tabled or ever finished. I would also like a copy of a study of the land-use effects and the extent of habitat loss in the aquatic environment affecting fish populations.

MR. GROSS: — Could the member clarify the study he is referring to because we are at a little bit of a loss as to what study he is talking about.

MR. GARNER: — All of this came out of the annual report so one of your officials should know. I couldn't find it right now on short notice, but it came out of the annual report and it was a study on land use and the effects and the extent of habitat loss in the aquatic environment affecting the fish populations. The study must have been done by your department because I found it in your annual report.

MR. GROSS: — I am advised we don't have a copy handy here but we will forward a copy to you.

MR. GARNER: — What centres received funds from your department to produce brochures to advertise tourist attractions in certain areas?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised there were four grants paid out as of March 1, 1980. The total cost was \$3,000 even. They were paid to the Porcupine Plains and District Museum, Outlook and District Chamber of Commerce, Kamsack and District

Chamber of Commerce and the Spiritwood Chamber of Commerce. Respectively, the total of Porcupine Plains was \$500, Outlook was \$750, Kamsack was \$1,000 and Spiritwood was \$750, for a total of \$3,000.

MR. GARNER: — Regional tourist review board composed of industry and government representatives, reviewed all grant applications to make an appropriate recommendation to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources for his approval or rejection. May I have the names and locations of this review board?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the makeup of the committee was: Ken Brown, president of Tourism Saskatchewan and manager of the Regina Inn; Jerry Zabinsky, president of Woodland Park Travel Association; George Knipelberg, president of the Frontier Vista Travel Association; Roger Franklin from our department, and Albert Dube from our department.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, do you allow special permits of some kind for fishing with a net?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised we have a commercial fishing permit for net fishing. We have a domestic fishing permit for net fishing and we have what we call a free Indian net fishing permit.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — What kind of permit is it where a person is allowed to use a dip net of some kind? It is a one-day permit for suckers and carp and that type of fish?

MR. GROSS: — I understand the member is correct. There is a special permit in the early spring for rough fish and it's in the streams only.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — The concern I have is people have spoken to me suggesting that your offices only open for one day in certain areas and they can't buy a permit, say, for two days away. And, if they don't catch their 100 pounds the same day, they can't use the permit the next day. Am I correct?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised that if the people in question wanted a permit for one or two days, they could do that. They have to specify when they take the permit what they want it for; if they ask for only one day, it's dated for one day; if they ask for two days, they can get a permit for two days or whenever they can finish their limit.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — So if they got a four-day permit for 100 pounds, or would they have to get four day permits which would total 400 pounds? Which way would you write it?

MR. GROSS: — I am advised there is just a 100-pound limit and they specify the number of days required for it. They can specify four days, but the maximum is 100 pounds.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I think that would resolve the complaint I received. My second question: what lakes (I'm not sure it's in your annual report) did you stock during the year?

MR. GROSS: — Table 9, page 39: it's in the annual report and shows exactly what lakes were stocked.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — The other question, is Pike Lake still giving you a problem with the

death of fish over the winter, because of icing over and lack of oxygen and so forth?

MR. GROSS: — I'm advised it's very limited. It's not a big problem.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Are there any other lakes which are giving you that problem?

MR. GROSS: — I'm advised we have one lake which is causing problems right now. That is Kenosee Lake in Moose Mountain Provincial Park.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Are you trying any experiments? For example, I know farm people who have fish in their dugouts. They use big windmills to try to keep them open and supply oxygen and so forth. What experiments are working for you?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised there is nothing really practical for a large body of water. For the size of a dugout that is a good system, but for a large body of water it is pretty tough. I guess the only thing you could possibly do is clean all the snow off the ice, and keep it clean so the sun can penetrate. That's about the only thing that could be recommended and it would be a monstrous program to clean all the snow off Kenosee Lake. I consider it impractical.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Is it possible to keep it open in areas? Would that assist? Mr. Minister, many years ago at Pike Lake the gameskeeper or Mr. Hoyt, I'm not sure who it was, made holes through the ice all winter so we wouldn't lose the total fish population. It was during a year of very, very low water.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised we have done some experiments on York Lake as a test to see if keeping the ice open and the surface free, drilling holes, etc. . . . it didn't prove out. There has been a fair amount of study done on it and it has not panned out. It was not proven successful and has been discontinued accordingly.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — One other question — have you tried the pumping method which I am told may work, where you pump water and circulate it?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised the aeration method has been tried at York Lake and it was tried at the Buffalo Causeway as well, because there was a problem there. It didn't prove successful because it was too large a body of water. It was discontinued as well.

MR. GARNER: — Come on now, Gordon, we're just about done. We're getting into the home stretch. Mr. Minister, I have an article here from the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix dated April 8, 1980. I imagine you are aware of it, or some of your officials will be aware of it: 'Thousands of caribou said slaughtered in the province.' I could read the whole thing out to you, but if you are aware of it . . . I'm quite concerned about this issue. I would like some comments from you about it.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised the issue the member is talking about a relative to the DNS area, and officials of DNS will be much more prepared to discuss the issue because it is in their area and concerns their problems.

MR. GARNER: — Are you telling me that this part of the enforcement is controlled by DNS?

MR. GROSS: — Yes, that's correct.

MR. GARNER: — Then it's no wonder we are having problems in DNS; I think they have their fingers in too many pies. O.K., we'll leave it then. We'll have to bring it up in DNS. I do advise you, Mr. Minister, I think it's a very serious concern. Just one or two little quotes from it. He said, while treaty Indians may be legally able to kill all the caribou they want, he hopes they realize the kill cannot continue at its present rate for winter hunting. Elder said that the caribou are followed into the barren grounds during the summer by hunters in aircraft. If this doesn't stop, someday there won't be any left.

As far as I'm concerned, it doesn't matter whether it's the ducks, the geese, the deer, the caribou or anything. I think they should be in your jurisdiction. I think we should be concerned about it because if this practice continues they will be wiped out. I'm very concerned about it. I don't doubt you are as well.

MR. GROSS: — I'm advised the DNS officials are very much aware of it, are as concerned about it as we are, and are taking corrective action.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, rather than just leave it up to DNS, I think maybe your department . . . If you have to step out of your boundary, fine. We have a problem where. I don't care who solves it, but I would like this problem solved and corrected. I think, Mr. Minister, maybe you should work with DNS on this as a joint effort.

While we're on the subject of hunting, how many complaints have you had come into your office regarding night hunting by natives in Saskatchewan, and where have they come from?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised we don't have an active record of the number of complaints with regard to that particular problem. I'm advised it comes in from several areas.

MR. GARNER: — This does surprise me, Mr. Minister, because I think it's something you should be keeping an active record of. I get letters, phone calls and pictures of truckloads of deer in the back of a guy's half-ton from spotlighting at night. We can quite easily pass this problem on to the federal people. But when I get phone calls and letters saying, if this isn't stopped we're going to open a special season on you-know-what, I think we're going to have to bring this to a head, Mr. Minister, whether it be with you or with the federal government.

I think we all have to practise conservation in the province. I think the law is going to have to be upheld. If it says no person (to me a person includes everyone) shall hunt with a jacklight, a spotlight or a match light (it doesn't matter what it is), I think maybe we're going to have to start enforcing this law. If we don't . . . I know one area in particular in the province that did have a good deer population. In fact, I think the department was even recommending going to a two-deer zone in that area and right now it isn't even a good one-deer zone any more. I'm saying everyone in Saskatchewan is going to have to start looking at conservation for these deer, antelope, whatever it may be.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I can only report to the member our officers follow up every complaint in regard to this matter. We'll follow up situations where a land owner is prepared to go to court over an action where it is felt there is a problem. We'll be very happy to accommodate the land owner in that regard if he'll go to court with the situation you mentioned. That's about all we can do.

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MR. GARNER: — Okay. How many convictions have you had regarding this night hunting in the province?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised there is a prosecution report which the department has. It's a public document. It would have a breakdown in there. WE don't have it with us, but we'll make sure you get a copy of it.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, I want to clarify one point in particular. I am not just coming down on the native or non-status Indian people in this province. I am saying we have some white hunters who may be hunting at night too, and I am thinking of all of them. We have a new wildlife act; I believe it's a very good act. I called for it myself, but that's beside the point, Mr. Minister. I think we have a good act and I think it's time that we start enforcing this act and quit having these complaints coming in before we start having a little war between people out there and somebody gets seriously injured or killed.

It has been brought to my attention that there was an individual shot in Manitoba last year regarding this night hunting. The farmer woke up and heard the hunting out in his field, took a rifle, cut loose and dropped somebody. I won't go into the details. This has happened, Mr. Minister, and I don't want it happening here in Saskatchewan. This is why I bring the concern to you, and I think we're going to have to sit down — whether it's over treaty rights or white hunters who are hunting at night — and clamp down very firmly on this in the province.

MR. GROSS: — I can only offer to the member that we have followed up on the wildlife act. I think we have enforced the act as rigidly as we can and looked after it, in that respect we have 700 prosecutions in the year 1979.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, you don't have that information on the convictions with all of your staff here right now?

MR. GROSS: — It's a special publication and we can provide you with the publication. All I have here in front of me is the total prosecutions and that's the only number we dug out. There is a special publication we'd be happy to supply you with. We don't have it here but we'll get it to you. It's on all the prosecutions with all the breakdowns.

MR. GARNER: — How many prosecutions then?

MR. GROSS: — 700.

MR. GARNER: — O.K. You had 700 prosecutions. How many of those were convicted?

MR. GROSS: — The 700 figure is the convictions. There were 700 convictions.

MR. GARNER: — I've got my assistant here. How many were charged?

MR. GROSS: — We don't have that.

MR. GARNER: — We are just about finished here, Mr. Minister. I see you walk in the back and there are guys carrying armfuls of literature and information and you have a flock of staff here. This is important information; it's been brought to your attention before. We should have this information here. I mean it's quite easy, after we let the

estimates go, and I start getting where there was maybe 100 of this or 250 of that. It's gone then; then I can't comment on it any more. I mean surely to goodness, when you have 700 convictions of night hunting there should be a breakdown with you or one of those sharp officials of yours should know the answer.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised that we don't get a copy in the department of the total charges laid because charges are laid not only by our people, our officers out in the field, but also by the RCMP. So we don't have an active list of that. But what we do have is a copy of the total convictions which I gave you — 700. We also have, which is a public document, a breakdown of all the convictions of the 700: who was convicted, where and when and what category. We don't have that document with us but we are happy to supply it.

MR. GARNER: — Listen, we are going to be a few more minute son this, Mr. Minister. You don't need all those officials right now. Surely one of them can slip down to your office and get this public document back here so we can clear it off.

This goes back to the \$2 million. I mean the survey was brought up and you are going to spend \$2 million but you can't tell us what it's for. Now, we're going to start having some of this information. We can wrap up here in 25 or 20 minutes, or be here for the rest of the night. It's entirely in your ball park, Mr. Minister.

MR. GROSS: — I can only advise the member we don't have one that's handy. It's not downstairs in my office. Somebody would have to go back to the department to find one, and bring it over. It's a public document. It's available to everybody. I'm sure there's nothing in it of any particular concern in terms of what you might be looking for, I don't know. But we'd be happy to get one and supply it to you tomorrow. It can be delivered tomorrow, but it's not here.

MR. GARNER: — This is just the point I'm bringing out. It can be delivered tomorrow. When we're talking about 700 convictions under the spotlighting, surely to goodness, Mr. Minister, one of your officials in this department . . . Oh, he's waving his hand, O.K.

MR. GROSS: — One of our officials just ran on your request.

MR. GARNER: — Good. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'll let one of the other members in.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — I kind of thought it was strange, Mr. Minister. I'm used to seeing the government cabinet ministers keep somebody back at the office for just this kind of document, to phone them and say, dig this out. I assume that's what he's gone to do. You do have people back at your office to dig this out. That's what I thought. That's right; they sit there waiting to answer the questions of the opposition. That's what they're supposed to do, member for Redberry, Skidoo hunting; that's developed to be a problem since the price of foxes and coyotes and so forth have gone so high. Could you give us an idea of what's happened on that particular issue?

MR. GROSS: — With what?

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Prosecutions, where they've been caught chasing animals with skidoos.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I have to advise that the breakdown would be in that report that's coming over for the member for Wilkie. We don't have that. It's in that report.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — What you're telling me is all kinds . . .

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we do have it right here, sorry. We have a sheet here that says we had nine prosecutions in the year '78-'79 for snowmobiles chasing wildlife.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I assume these are really a problem to catch, because you've almost got to catch them in the act. Could you give me information on what you're finding to be the most successful method to catch them?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we're finding the helicopter is the most effective way of doing it. Just from normal surveillance done on surveys, etc. we're finding helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft the most effective.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — The minister obviously knows why I asked the question because for several years you used fixed and didn't have the success rate you've had since you've gone to the helicopter. To the former minister I suggested he try that method, I'm glad to see it's working out successfully.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's another saving we made . . .

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Do you want to answer that one for me, Mr. Minister? Birds like pelicans, rare birds that get injured in their flight paths . . . The reason I asked this is last year I had a pelican come into our yard. We had lots of problems with him until we finally got him captured. He is almost as hard to handle as the Conservative opposition. Is there reimbursement or what does the farmer do when he gets one of these monsters?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park is sort of the depository for fixing up animals of that nature. It's been done very successfully there over the years. If you have a problem contact your local conservation officer, and I'm sure somehow he'll get it down to the wild animal park.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, what do you do on a Sunday afternoon when you don't find any of them around? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's what I've done twice.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised he should contact the RCMP and they will contact our people to make sure that something happens.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, I know you are a rookie cabinet minister. The other day, except for your continual hedging on the \$2 million (which I intend to get back to in a minute) you were not doing too bad a job, but tonight, in the period of time this afternoon, I could not believe what I was hearing. I don't know if we should nickname you 'Old Tomorrow' or just what name you should get. You haven't come up with one answer other than saying, I don't think we have these things; I'm sorry, I'll get them to you.

I want to remind you, Mr. Minister, that the purpose of these estimates is for us to ask the questions, so you can give us the answers, so you can get the money to continue your department. You come in here with a whole, shall I say, army of experts. I thin it is high time you started giving some answers right there and then. Because when you come in with this many people, and we don't get a concrete answer on a number of questions (and you have to admit that is correct), I can see why people begin to wonder about the power of bureaucracies and the efficiency of them.

So I would ask you in the remainder of these questions to become precise. You came in with tons of papers; I was just flabbergasted — one poor fellow could hardly make it through the door. Now, surely within all those papers and within the expertise that is sitting around you, there have to be some answers. I don't hold you responsible for being able to answer everything, but that is what your staff is here for. I think it is high time that, rather than saying we'll give it to you somewhere down the trail, which is all very polite and nice . . . As my colleague pointed out here, it is pretty hard to react to something down the trail, isn't it? So, we would like some definite, concise answers to the point right at this time.

I have a few I would like to mention to you. One is the Crown lands. Now, I listened the other day to you, Mr. Minister, and I just wondered when you were asked about the wildlife development fund lands. I remember the member for Wilkie asking you very pointedly, are these Crown lands? To this, Mr. Minister, you said, yes, they are Crown lands. The next question was, are these on the bargaining table for Indian land claim entitlements? You said, no, they are not. The next day I hear the good Minister of Agriculture over here give us a real spiel on Indian land entitlements in which he was saying all Crown lands are on the bargaining table. Now, one of you fellows is not really giving us the correct answer. I don't know which one it is but I think we would like to have that question clarified. I'll ask you again, Mr. Minister, are your wildlife development lands (which are Crown lands) on the bargaining table for the Indian land entitlements?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Which one of you is telling the truth, if either?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the Crown lands in regard to the wildlife development fund habitat lands are a unique situation because they are producing habitat, not only for the white people but for Indians as well. They are there for everybody and they remain, and will remain habitat lands accordingly.

MR. TAYLOR: — The wildlife development lands and the habitat funds are two different things, are they not?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised they are both the same. The wildlife development funds and the wildlife habitat lands are both the same thing.

MR. TAYLOR: — Therefore, they are Crown land. They are not really on the bargaining table because they are there for the habitat for everyone. The Minister of Agriculture is a bit wrong when he says all Crown lands are on the bargaining table then.

MR. GROSS: — That is correct.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I'm glad we got that clarified. It's nice to see the junior minister checking up the more senior one on these situations in getting the common answer

from that side of the House.

The next thing I would like to ask you about is, I remember back in 1975, Mr. Minister, there was a brochure put out by the party you represent promising the people of Saskatchewan an ecological reserves act. They said when we form the government we will bring in an ecological reserves act. That is five years ago and I haven't seen the act yet, although I understand there was a draft kicking around in 1978 that I didn't get my eyes on. Would you explain to me why you haven't brought in this act and when you plan to bring it in?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised we are still obviously studying the possibility of an ecological reserves act. It fits more in the purview of the Department of the Environment (ecological reserves) and that's where it will be forthcoming from. At least that's where it's being studied right now.

MR. TAYLOR: — It was originally under tourism and renewable resources (they were planning to bring it in) was it not? And I know it was studied to the point in 1978 where the draft of the bill . . . I have seen the draft of the bill. I wonder how much more study you are going to need. What's the reason for not bringing in what, I think, would be a very valid type of act to create some ecological reserves in which our flora, fauna, soil types and so on can be preserved?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the ecological reserves act was originally, you are correct, sort of conceived or developed in this department. It was felt that because it's protected lands, because it's a key part of the environment, it should fall in that purview. That's where it is. It's under the Department of the Environment. That's where the study is being done.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well, seeing, Mr. Minister, you have tonight shown up the Minister of Agriculture, will you be so kind as to press the Minister of the Environment along with me to bring this act forward?

MR. GROSS: — I'm sure you can do a good job of that yourself.

MR. TAYLOR: — The next thing I wanted to point out was last year under the preceding minister, we heard a lot about a caravan (I remember it being parked right out here west of the building one morning) in which you were supposed to be training all the people for the hospitality trade because the word was out that in Saskatchewan we don't get quite the reception in the cafes and so on what we do in the States — try to attract people. I think it was a very good idea. What was the outcome of this? How many places did you visit? How many people were trained? Is this program still in existence?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised we stopped at 85 spots in the province and 1,000 people trained under last year's program. The question in regard to whether or not it's going to continue this year — yes, it's going to continue this year with expanded funds. If you look in the estimates you will find there is more money provided for the program. I believe the figure, if I can recall, is \$30,000 more, \$147,000 total, if I remember my figures right for the Accent Hospitality program. It is still going to be continued and even stepped up.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well, that's fine but I think your annual report too points out the number, and I don't know how you rate these motels or hotels as to five star, four star, three star; we won't go into the method of rating. I'm sure you have some criteria. But it

looked to me as though the total number, Mr. Minister, has decreased. It has decreased. It went from (I'm going from memory) 1,032 down to 965, or something. I don't have the figures in front of me. When you look under hotels and motels, your accommodations, you'll see the ratings. The number of five star, four star, three star and others — it's in the back of your annual report. If you look up the figures for the year preceding, there were — going from memory — 1,065; then in the most recent year, 932, I believe. I don't have the figures in front of me.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised the reason there are fewer hotels or accommodation complexes rated is because of the northern district, the northern outfitting area where complications with ice and a late start prevented us from getting up there and doing the rating job before the season opened. That's the reason for the decline in the number of hotels shown on the accommodation slip.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well, that may be well and true but I was a little concerned when you said you had trained 1,000 people, that you had put a program into existence to, in my mind, upgrade the rating of these hotels and so on by the training of staff. You are putting more money into it this year, and the number is decreasing. It seemed like a contradiction to me, but I will accept your reasoning.

The next thing I want to point out, and I want to go back to this for a minute, Mr. Minister, is the point we were on the other night — the \$2 million you plan to spend on accommodation. I've just got to say once more to you. I just don't know how you operate. It would only seem logical to me that to know you need \$2 million you must have conceived of some type of a plan. You must have some idea what you want to build. If I'm going to build a building on my farm, I certainly say I'm going to build this type of building and then I make a cost estimate of what it's going to be. I just don't go out and say I'm going to spend \$50,000 come what may. That's the kind of philosophy you tell me you're using, and I think it's preposterous of you to ask us, on this side, to say O.K. to \$2 million of taxpayers' money (which is a lot of money) without giving us an inkling of how you are going to build it. You're going to come back to me and say accommodation, but my Lord, accommodation is an all-encompassing term which can go from boarding houses to hotels to motels to campsites, teepees to Lord knows what. I think, in all fairness, if you want us to say you can have \$2 million of taxpayers money you should be able to tell us where you are going to put it, Mr. Minister, and in what kind of accommodation. That would be a little easier on you; if you would just tell us what kind of accommodation you are looking at, we would probably be satisfied. Now, there is a pointed question; come forward and tell us.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I think we have explained to the member where we are going to put the money. It will be in overnight accommodation, and it is because of the problem we have in the provincial park system with accommodation. That is the target area the money is being concentrated on. Studies are being prepared and have been in existence for some time. They are not complete, but they are on the way and when complete we will be advising members and the people of the province where it is going with some precision.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That, Mr. Minister, is utter nonsense. Do you deny you are, in fact, planning a lodge at Cypress Hills Park and that's where your \$2 million is going.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we are looking at all the options. As I indicated to members the last time we were in the House with the estimates, we have four

destination points in the province that are critical areas for our park development program. The areas are all being looked at in terms of the costs and studies are being done on them. When we have those studies in and the recommendations made, a decision will be made at that time. The destination points are obviously a high priority with the department because that's where we're under the most severe pressure for accommodation. There's no mistake about that. That's a fact of life.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That is still nonsense. You did not answer my question. Do you deny that you are planning a lodge at the Cypress Hills Park?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, we're looking at a number of locations. Cypress Hills is one of the locations we're looking at along with other locations, obviously. In due course as the studies are completed, we will be advising the public where they are.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You still haven't answered my question and I'm going to stay on that question until I get an answer. Are you planning a lodge at the Cypress Hills Park? Do you deny that you have plans on the drawing board right now for that lodge?

MR. GROSS: — We are looking at, as I said . . . I'll have to repeat it again. If the member wants to keep repeating his question, we'll have to keep repeating our answer. We are looking at a number of locations, as I mentioned to members in the House the other day. We're looking at Duck Mountain; we're looking at Meadow Lake; we're looking at Moose Mountain; we're looking at Cypress; and we're looking at Greenwater for accommodation because it's felt by the department those are our severe spots. Those are the spots which require overnight accommodation and those are the spots which are getting the attention.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Do you have plans on your drawing boards for a lodge at the Cypress Hills Park to the tune of about \$2 million? Do you or do you not have the plans on your drawing board now?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I have to repeat it again. We're looking at all the options. No decisions have been made. We have no blueprints on any spot at this point as you're talking about them.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I take that as meaning you do not have and do not contemplate a \$2 million lodge at the Cypress Hills Park?

MR. GROSS: — No, it doesn't mean that.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Then specify yes or no. Do you or do you not have those plans?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order! I think this is about the fourth or fifth time I've heard the question and answer. I just inform all members of the House that I'm certainly not ruling your question out of order and I'm not ruling the answer out of order. But there is a rule against tedious repetition of both questions and answers. So, after this, whether the answer satisfies you or not, member for Regina South, I suggest you maybe go on to another line of questioning.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, it's not a question of whether or not the answer satisfies me. I did not get an answer. I am asking specifically and I want an answer. He's avoiding the answer. He's evading the issue. My question is specific: are you

contemplating a \$2 million, or in the area, lodge at the Cypress Hills Park? Do you have the plans for it? Are you working on the plans? The other night you indicated to us it was to be announced within the next month or so. If you have that kind of a lodge proposed right now, you know about it. I want to know. Do you or do you not have — right now — plans drawn up or near completion for a lodge?

MR. GROSS: — I have to repeat that no, we do not. We're looking at all the options.

MR. TAYLOR: — The other night, Mr. Minister, you told us very distinctly that within a month or two this would be made public. Are you meaning to tell me you haven't any plans, any blueprints, anything put down on paper yet, and in two months you're going to tell us how you're spending \$2 million? Is that your responsible attitude?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, what I said the other night and I repeat it now (as the Chairman indicated, it's getting a bit repetitive) is that we have looked at the four or five pressure points in the provincial park system. We've identified the areas. We are doing analysis as to which one would be the best spot to launch all kinds of different types of accommodations. As I said before we're looking at cabins; we've looked at the hotel complexes members made mention of across the House. We're looking at all those options. Until we feel we've got the right package or packages depending on which way we feel we'll get the most for our dollar, we can't spell out with any clarity or precision the location and project and show a conception of it.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, am I right? Did I hear you right last night or the other night when you said, within two months we're going to hear the plans of what you're doing?

MR. GROSS: — Yes.

MR. TAYLOR: — Then I'll ask you, do you have any drawings or any plans or any blueprints for construction at Kenosee Lake?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I've repeated as many times as I can now, we haven't got the plans or blueprints he's talking about that we could unveil and say, here's what it's going to look like at a particular park or project. That isn't complete. That's what we're waiting for. When we see the plans the department will no doubt bring forward and make recommendations on, then a decision will be made. Those are not available yet. If we had them available we'd be very happy; we would have gladly shown the public because this is a project that is going to be welcomed by the people of this province. It's not complete. When it's complete we will be unveiling it accordingly, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: — Will you answer this for me then, Mr. Minister? If you have no preliminary sketches, you have no plans, you have no drawings, how in heaven's name do you know that you need \$2 million?

MR. GROSS: — Do you have a question?

MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, I certainly had a question. I say if you have no plans, no drawings, no preliminary sketches, how do you have the gall to come into this Chamber and ask for \$2 million when you don't know what you're going to do with it?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we didn't say that.

MR. TAYLOR: — Well, obviously you won't tell me. You say you have no plans at

Kenosee. I can go through every park and ask you if you have plans there. If you don't have plans, if you have no preliminary ideas as to which way you're going, then how can you say you need \$2 million, Mr. Minister?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I indicated last time in the House we are studying the options. We have not completed the cost benefits of all the various locations. That is not complete and will not be complete, as I said, for a number of months (one or two). When we have that done, and have all the plans completed for the respective projects and where we can spend the money most effectively, we'll make a decision. But that hasn't been done, and will be done in due course when all the information is in.

MR. TAYLOR: — You have the options. You're studying the options. What are those options? What is the option for Kenosee? If you're studying something, Mr. Minister, you have to have something there that you're looking at. That's what I'm asking you. What are you looking at for these various parks? What are you looking at that's costing you \$2 million? I can't see any reason for holding this back.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'll say again for the members opposite. We are looking at all the parks I mentioned (the four or five parks). We're looking at all the options in terms of the different variations of accommodation. As I mentioned for the tenth time now, we're looking at the options of hotels and cabins and what have you by way of accommodation in the area specified as accommodation, and that's where we're at.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, just a short while ago you said you will be unveiling the plans within the next month or 60 days or whatever. I suggest to you that I can unveil your plans for you right now tonight and maybe the press can even announce them. At that point in time you will be announcing a \$2 million lodge at Cypress Hills. Now correct me if I am wrong.

MR. GROSS: — How am I supposed to know that? I have no knowledge of what the member has or what he claims he is going to unveil.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You didn't answer my question. Correct me if I'm wrong.

MR. GROSS: — I don't know what you have.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister, how soon do you expect tenders to be out on this project?

MR. GROSS: — As soon as possible. We'll be tendering when we know exactly what it is we are going to be proposing and ending up with. I can't give a precise date on tendering.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Minister, how did you arrive at your \$2 million requirement for this year if you really didn't know what you were going to build?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I advised members opposite last time we discussed the issue that it's a project the department has reviewed and looked at and has estimated it could complete in a calendar year. It felt the project is of a magnitude that is within hand and it is felt from that estimation that we could handle it in the year under review.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Minister, I have a big son up in the gallery and I'm going to bring

him down here in a minute and he's going to clean up on everybody.

Mr. Minister, I hate to change the subject. It's getting so interesting. Can you give us a specific date tonight when you are going to announce something for the expenditure of this \$2 million?

MR. GROSS: — No, Mr. Chairman, we cannot give a precise date or day.

MR. BERNTSON: — I wonder if you could call the hon. member for Saskatoon Centre to order. He's distracting me.

Mr. Minister, the other day there was some considerable debate in this House in relation to Indian land entitlements. As you know, the White Bear Reserve is adjacent to the Moose Mountain Park and this is one of the most highly utilized, overcrowded parks in the whole province. The member for Estevan and I five years ago started a battle with the Department of Indian Affairs to put a hotel on the White Bear Reserve to be run by the native people. All the feasibility studies were done. Everything was go. It looked good and then ground to a halt because of bureaucratic bungling in Ottawa. I was wondering if your department would give any consideration to helping set up a hotel on White Bear Reserve. It's a beautiful resort area; it's a needed item and since you're considering spending \$2 million in these various areas in any case, perhaps a part of that could go on the bargaining table for Indian land entitlements.

MR. GROSS: — I can't respond to whether or not we could help in a promotion of a project on the White Bear Reserve because it's land owned by the federal government and we have no control over that.

MR. BERNTSON: — What we're talking about there is tourism in Saskatchewan. What's your department? Tourism and Renewable Resources. And White Bear (any way you define it) is still part of Saskatchewan. It's a beautiful place. It could take the overload from Kenosee. People are sleeping on the sidewalks there for lack of other facilities. If there's some reason you can't dump your own provincial dollars there, I accept that, but would you as a minister bring some pressure to bear on your federal counterpart to see that something is done in White Bear? As I say, all the preliminary studies are done. We have people in the private trade in Estevan and Moosomin and surrounding areas who have agreed to train native people to run their own facilities. I think it would be a great asset to the White Bear band and I wonder if you would undertake to put a little heat on your federal counterparts to get this done?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I don't think we would refuse assistance by way of promotion in a project that has tourism qualities to it. The fact that it's on an Indian reserve and out of our jurisdiction offers more problems to us. In terms of the tourism potential and offering some promotion, I'm sure we'd be happy to look at all kinds of proposals put in front of us. Again, we don't know what kinds of proposals you'll be offering or putting forward. If we could see what's being proposed I'm sure we'd have to take a look at it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Would you put heat on the feds?

MR. GROSS: — If we could see what kind of proposal you have and what it looks like, we'd certainly consider it.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, while you're discussing this, has that official of yours

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returned with that report on the convictions yet? I'd like to take a look at it. Do you have that public report back on the convictions yet?

MR. GROSS: — It's not here yet. He's coming.

MR. GARNER: — He must be walking slowly.

MR. BERNTSON: — I'm going to get off the \$2 million for a minute to ask you what the current status of the Grasslands Park is, and when can we expect some definitive statement on it?

MR. GROSS: — The Grasslands Park has been in a state of flux for 15 years now. I think the members opposite are very familiar with it, as well as members on this side of the House. We had a Liberal government during the majority of that period of time which would not commit itself in terms of going forward. The closest we came to the Grasslands, members will recall was February '79 when we had a memorandum of understanding signed by the federal government and the provincial government agreeing to most of the outstanding issues at that time.

A federal election rolled around and came in the way and we had a change of government. Again we had another old-line government, a Tory government, which was committed to the Grasslands project, which spoke very highly of the Grasslands project. I know we've made many, many representations to the federal government to no avail in the end. We had very supportive verbiage but we've seen no action.

Now we're back to a Liberal government. We've opened up those negotiations with the federal government. We've asked them for a decision. The approach we're using is that we have to have a decision, yes or no, in regard to the park because the ranchers in the area cannot stand out there any longer and take the heat of indecision. They have plans; they have families that are in an area right now where a lot of people are in a state of transition. A lot of farmers are wanting to retire and they have young sons and daughters coming on. They have no security in knowing whether or not there'll be a Grasslands Park. All there is, is an if.

MR. BERNTSON: — Have you set any deadline for this definitive yes or no?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we met a week ago Tuesday with the federal minister in charge of Parks Canada, John Roberts and asked him to familiarize himself with the situation. We indicated to him and we took a file down with us and compared with his file and showed how long and detailed and how dragged out this whole affair has been and we must have a decision. He gave us a commitment that he would make a decision; he would not hold up or flutter on it; he would have this decision, he hoped, within two months plus or minus whatever numbers you want to pick. He says he appreciates our concerns. I can understand the frustration that has gone on over the years. There is just no way we should leave those people out there on the hook. He's committed to making a decision on the inside of two months. So we are leaving it with him until that point.

MR. BERNTSON: — Assume that the decision does not come and it just lags on and on as it has for 15 years, as you've said earlier. Are you prepared to make the decision for them and say no in a set time so our farmers and ranchers can in fact make some plans for their families?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, it is very hard to make a decision for the federal

government. I can't see how we could do that. I think we want to deal with the federal government, work out a reasonable settlement with them and let them come to a decision because it is obviously their park. It is a Parks Canada park. They will make the decision if they want a park there or not. So we await their decision.

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Minister, in your total budget, is there any money coming in specifically earmarked to your department from the federal cost sharing programs?

MR. GROSS: — The estimate, not in precise dollars, is \$2.4 million from the federal government.

MR. ANDREW: — What are those programs? Where have you allocated the money? Is it a cost sharing or a matching program?

MR. GROSS: — It is cost sharing at 50-cent dollars. Reforestation, \$1,931 million; the Qu'Appelle agreement, \$275,000; wildlife crop damage, \$300,000.

MR. ANDREW: — So 10 percent of your budget is actually federal money being spent?

MR. GROSS: — What was the member's question again? I just want to clarify the question.

MR. ANDREW: — I'll give you a new question. The \$1.9 million reforestation: are there any conditions attached to the grant from the federal government?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the \$1.9 million from the federal government for reforestation is an agreed program by the federal government for reforestation and tree planting, or reforestation and silvaculture. It's an agreed program; byway of agreement; no real strings attached other than the agreement.

MR. ANDREW: — The contribution by your government is also \$1.9 million?

MR. GROSS: — Correct, 50 cent dollar.

MR. BERNTSON: — Just one brief line of questioning: last year or, perhaps it was last fall, there was a trade show on at the AgriDome. Your department had a booth promoting tourism in Saskatchewan, particularly in northern Saskatchewan. And right next to your booth was a booth set up by the city of Bismarck. The city of Bismarck's staff . . . there was just no comparison; they really drew the folks in. I would venture to say they had 20 times as many people visit their booth as you had visit yours. I know they followed up; I got a letter from them just because I stopped and chatted with them for a minute. I stopped and chatted with your people, and they grudgingly talked to me. I wonder if there isn't something which can be done to enhance that kind of situation. These sweet young girls in the Bismarck booth were aggressively after the trade for Bismarck. This is the city of Bismarck; it's just a little wee town, not as big as Regina. It had a better promotion than did the whole province of Saskatchewan. I think that was something less than our best possible effort.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I note the concerns of the member opposite. The counsellors we have in the booth are trained people, and if they were not courteous to you we suggest you bring it up, give us the name or tell us the problem. As a rule, we have a program of return mail the same as the city of Bismarck. If you fill out a card at our booth, we gladly return information or more detail on whatever you want.

MR. BERNTSON: — I'm not suggesting for a moment they were not courteous. They were in every way, but they certainly weren't promoting, and they certainly weren't aggressive, and they were just plan out-hustled by our counterparts from Bismarck. I think we've just got to turn in a little better effort. You said they are trained. What sort of training do they get and where?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the training is in-office. They are trained by our own staff with regard to promotion. I might also say, I don't know who was at the booth in Regina but I know our guys are not as pretty as the Bismarck ladies, I'm sure of that.

MR. BERNTSON: — I wonder if you would give some consideration to sending them down to Bismarck for a quick two-week course?

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, I noticed one of your employees come gun-booting in with that report. Maybe we could have the breakdown on that now?

MR. GROSS: — If the member would like to refer to page 10 I'll send it over to him. It has the breakdown he's looking for.

MR. GARNER: — O.K., Mr. Minister, according to this, and I notice that your official has circled it and I appreciate that very much, the number of prosecutions was 23 under section 20.1 of The Game Act. Now that's prosecutions. How many charges were laid?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I mentioned earlier there is no record kept of charges laid by our department or in this document. There's no record in this document of charges laid because the RCMP lay charges and our people lay charges. You'd have to correlate the documents from both the RCMP and our department in order to get the total.

MR. GARNER: — Well, then O.K. I'll let you off the hook a bit on this. Would you get that information for me from the RCMP and . . .

MR. GROSS: — We can't get it.

MR. GARNER: — O.K., this was number of prosecutions. How many charges were laid regarding these prosecutions?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, 23 is the number the member is looking for.

MR. ANDREW: — Do you have the statistics as to how many of those 23 charges culminated in convictions?

MR. GROSS: — If there are 23 convictions, there are 23 charges.

MR. ANDREW: — I meant the number of prosecutions.

MR. GROSS: — Prosecutions, convictions, the same thing.

MR. ANDREW: — You mean the prosecution is the same thing as conviction? A prosecution means a conviction or a charge before court?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised it says number of prosecutions on the top whether it's laid out there properly. It means convictions. I guess, in this case. It is 23 convictions.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, this amazes me. I mean, we got talking before and you said 700 but I guess you were meaning total in the whole department. Well, 700 is different from 23. My goodness, I must have at least 20 or 25 letters in my office from people complaining about this. Surely all of them don't send all their information to the Conservative critic. Mind you, maybe if they did, we would be able to clean this act up a little bit more here. But 23 sure isn't very many, Mr. Minister. I'd asked you how many letters and complaints you had on this. It is a large concern out there. It's a really large concern and it's a serious concern. If this doesn't stop, we've got two things. The thing we have happening right now, we've got a depletion of our wildlife, the deer basically, mainly the white-tailed and mule deer. The next thing that's going to happen is that somebody's going to get shot, and rather seriously injured or killed. I want to try to prevent that. I know you do too, Mr. Minister. Surely, you must have a few additional comments regarding this 23 charges or convictions or prosecutions or however this document of yours is.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I advised the member previously we do follow up on the complaints registered by landowners in regard to this problem. We do, I believe, like the member opposite, think it's a serious problem. Wherever we can, within our terms of legal obligations, we follow it up. You can note in the report, we followed it up on 23 occasions and had 23 prosecutions accordingly.

MR. GARNER: — Then you're telling me there were only 23 complaints and there was a prosecution on each complaint?

MR. GROSS: — No, we're not telling you that, no.

MR. GARNER: — Well, then, O.K., I want to know how many complaints from just your department. Leave the RCMP aside. How many complaints right in your department?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we don't have a factual list here we could provide the member with because it's not grouped in that way. It's total complaints registered (if I get that correct). We'd have to separate them out but we do not keep a list accordingly.

MR. GARNER: — O.K. My very learned friend has just told me that of the 700 charges there were 33 cases dismissed or not found guilty. Can you tell me do you have a breakdown of how many of those were pursuant to section 20.1 of the new game act?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised we'll have to go through our records to sort out information of the 33 you're discussing right here.

MR. GARNER: — I'll let you off on that; that information isn't going to curtail night hunting. I'm just wondering if your department shouldn't step up enforcement this upcoming year. Basically where these things seem to happen is getting close toward the big game season starting. I would say about a month, maybe two months previous to the opening of the season. I would say about a month, maybe two months previous to the opening of the season. Maybe your department should step up enforcement. I have to agree with my other learned friend the helicopter is the only way of really catching these people.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we can agree with the member. We do step up our

operations in the more active part of those seasons. We patrol the best we can. We agree stepped up pressure is needed and act accordingly.

MR. GARNER: — In trying to put a positive solution towards this, Mr. Minister, not just to condemn you all the time, maybe you should be working closer with local Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation organizations or even the private landowners and hunters. Concerned sportsmen in the area should be brought into a program somewhere. If there is a complaint it can be zeroed in on faster. Do you have that in place now? And if you don't, I think maybe it's an avenue you should look at it, Mr. Minister.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I think it's no great secret in terms of the wildlife or the sportsmen organizations that our people have contacts with various members through the community. They are very helpful in many locations and supply information to try to assist wherever they can. If they see a problem, they advise our people. Our conservation officers make use of the contacts they have around the country. So, it's in effect really. We have a very good working relationship with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation at the present time in regards to problems out in the field. They keep us very well aware of what's going on.

MR. GARNER: — Well, O.K. problems out in the field, but this seems to be the most specific problem of the biggest concern in this hunting. I'm an avid hunter myself. I don't know whether the minister hunts or not. But I'm concerned because, and it goes back to the caribou, all of a sudden it's in DNS. I'm concerned about it because some day (I've got two little boys) I want them to be able to go out to partake in going on a big game hunt or something with the caribou or the white-tailed deer or the mule deer. In 10 years, Mr. Minister, if we don't start clamping down on this —we're on a draw system right now down in the Sand Hills on our mule deer, we're going to be on a draw system for our white-tailed deer and I don't think that's necessary. That's why I raise that concern. I will move on to something else, Mr. Minister, but I just hope you are aware of it. We're going to have to get tighter and tougher on this night hunting by everyone, bar none, no exceptions.

The survey conducted on the Trans-Canada and Yellowhead Highways on non-resident traffic, on page 30 of your annual report, how was that survey conducted and when?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised it was conducted by a team of students at the border points last summer.

MR. GARNER: — O.K. What were the results of that survey regarding traffic — well, east traffic and traffic coming in from the West? The reason for bringing this point up, Mr. Speaker, is that over the holiday weekend when I was driving back to Regina, coming back to session Sunday afternoon, just between the town of Wilkie and the city of Saskatoon it was unbelievable the number of Alberta cars heading west. The thing this spells to me, Mr. Minister (and it's too bad the Premier and the Attorney General aren't here for this because this isn't directly your fault) is that it just goes to prove (and these were young people with a young family in their car) the kids came home from Alberta to visit the parents over Easter. When we talk about the tourist dollars coming into Saskatchewan, what it is, Mr. Minister, is the kids coming back home.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Only for the weekend?

MR. GARNER: — Only for the weekend. My learned friend tells me he did go to Alberta

for a holiday, not to visit his family because his family is here and he said on Highway No. 14 further along he saw very few Saskatchewan cars in Alberta.

AN HON. MEMBER: — He went to fill up with gas.

MR. GARNER: — He went to fill up with gas in Alberta. No, Mr. Minister, I mean our tourist traffic, and I think you are aware of it and we did visit; both you and I had a very good visit, in the Meadow Lake Park. At this time I would just like to say a thank you, to you and to the park superintendent, Mr. Syd Stubbington. He gave me a very good tour, and you and I had a very good discussion, and I'm very proud of the Meadow Lake Park. But I think it proves to you the number of people from Alberta who were there visiting with their families and friends from Saskatchewan. But anyway, what was the result of that survey? This is what I would like to know — the results of the survey conducted?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised the study that the member makes mention of is a study that's carried out every five years, on a systematic basis, and it's a study to try and establish traffic flows, where the people are coming from on a five-year basis. I am told that the ranking of where the people are coming into Saskatchewan from is number one, Ontario; number two, Alberta, and number three, Manitoba. The majority of the traffic coming into this province ranked one, two and three — Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba.

MR. GARNER: — What was the cost of this survey?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am advised approximately \$18,000.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, I think we have basically one more point and I think you and I have discussed this in detail and it has to do with tourism. We can't pass it off to the Minister of Highways and Transportation. It has to do with our air service in the province, Mr. Minister, I would like to know if you were down on negotiations trying to get Frontier Airlines to service Saskatoon, Regina, Minot and Denver. Were you down on that trip and could you give me a short explanation of why and how and the results of the trip?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I am glad the member raised the question. We went down and established contact with Frontier Airlines officials. It's a very important link to have the north-south connection in terms of our tourist traffic, particularly for northern outfitters and northern Saskatchewan, because of our fishing potential in the North. It's an important contact in terms of tourism to have that link established. I think members across on the other side of the House and members on this side of the House appreciate the importance of Saskatchewan having that link. We are the only province in Canada, other than the province of New Brunswick, that does not have another carrier linking us with another country, and this is the reason why we are trying to establish that very vitally important link so we have the same natural benefits which other provinces take for granted. We are trying to establish our tourism market and that's one excellent area to start building it into because it's a very strong, potential market.

MR. GARNER: — I'm concerned, Mr. Minister. This is why I raised it. We're going to go back to what I call my old stand-by question; it has to do with air service in the province between Saskatoon and Regina. We must be the most backward province in air service between our two major cities, Mr. Minister. I'm not being vindictive towards you in this respect. I'm just saying I'm tired of getting on Norcanair and having a businessman (whether it be from Ontario or anywhere else) say, you know I get into this province, I

come to Regina or I come to Saskatoon, depending on which end I get on, and if I come here on a weekend I have to ride a bus. What kind of mickey mouse operation is this; how do you expect me to establish myself in the province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Minister, I think it's time we put politics aside and started providing air service between these two major cities. There are other places as well. North Battleford needs air service, and I've just noticed P.A. is most likely going to get air service from Winnipeg, which will be good. But once again, we have the transportation problem between Saskatoon and Regina. I know it's not as far as the Calgary-Edmonton route, but Norcanair stands up and hollers, we're going to start an airbus service. So everyone gets excited in the province, we're going to have airbus service. Do you know what they did, Mr. Minister? They added one flight a week on Wednesday. Now that is just not acceptable. Surely to goodness . . . even if they won't, O.K. give them the benefit of the doubt . . . if they don't want to increase the flights during the week, surely to goodness we can have a flight between Saskatoon and Regina, even one flight on Saturday and one on Sunday. Does Norcanair think they can shut down the airways? And we're supposed to shut down our province? Because that's what's going to happen, Mr. Minister.

Let's face it, the money market and the businesses are moving from the East; they're coming to western Canada but they're aborting Saskatchewan and going to Alberta. We've got to have better air service in the province, because if we don't they're not going to come here, Mr. Minister. As I said, I'm not trying to be vindictive. I think it's time we put politics aside and start . . . if Norcanair is not going to provide this service, and they have the running rights between Saskatoon and Regina, I think we'd better get another air carrier in here which will provide this service. We put the politics aside . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well now we hear somebody say Saskair. That's it — Bill 13, Saskoil — just take over everything. How about another private enterpriser?

Mr. Minister, this is it. We've got to bury the politics Let's bury the politics on this one. Let's work together to get this air service between these two major cities. Saskatchewan can go ahead, but this is one step that's stopping it and, as I said, business will abort Saskatchewan and go to Alberta. I want that business here. Mr. Minister, let's bury the politics, let's bury the hatchet on this, and let's get the air service.

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, as the member from Saskatoon says, it's an excellent point; I guess the reason we don't have the service he talked about is because private enterprise in this area has failed. Maybe, if they want to get their act together, they have an ideal opportunity. We certainly wouldn't resist any announcements or any interest with regard to this.

MR. GARNER: — This is just what I mean, Mr. Chairman. We brought the darn politics right into it again. The minister's brought politics into it. I stood up here, Mr. Chairman, and said, let's not have politics in it. But, of course, the minister has to listen to the member from Saskatoon and it's always clack, clack, clack. Let's bury the politics, and let's get the service, Mr. Minister. You are trying. You did go down and try to negotiate. It was blocked by someone else. I compliment you on that. I really do, Mr. Minister, but let's try a little harder. I don't know who owns Norcanair. His name is Lloyd or something. I don't know whether he's any relative to you or any of the members opposite or any past relatives of a former cabinet minister or someone. I don't know. I'm sure not going to make that allegation. But, Mr. Minister, let's try to get air service between the two major cities on the weekend. Let's try, both of us.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, we're talking about air service on the weekend. But maybe the reason we're seeing less and less air service is because the government is developing its own air service. That of course is hurting the private industry. You have many flights coming from La Ronge to Regina and into Saskatoon and vice versa and the executive plane to fly somebody here and somebody there. Maybe that's part of the reason. Maybe you should convince the Premier he needs a few less special aircraft to fly one guy back and forth and put him on 'Tincanair' and maybe then they can afford to run that weekend service. That's the problem, Mr. Minister, if you listen to the people from 'Tincanair'. They tell you that if the government didn't have so many airplanes flying their people all over, they could afford to give better service. But you're cutting them up right you-know-where. The same place the Premier likes to cut Mr. Lougheed, right at the knees. You're doing it right there again in the airplanes.

Items 1 to 4 agreed.

Item 5

MR. GARNER: — On the other expenses there, Mr. Minister, why the drastic increase to \$3 million from \$1.2 million?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the increase in expenditure is to reflect the DREE funding in that regard.

Item 5 agreed.

Item 6

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, is any of this amount spent in the DNS area or is this strictly for southern Saskatchewan?

MR. GROSS: — It's for the South.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — So all fire suppression in the North is DNS, I assume.

MR. GROSS: — That's correct.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — How would you have fire suppression done in the South? Would you contract DNS water bombers or private water bombers, or is this for land work? Where do you use it?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised we contracted DNS water bombers.

Item 6 agreed.

Item 7

MR. GARNER: — Another explanation there, Mr. Minister. Under the other expenses why the increase to the \$957,730 from \$529,320?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the reason for the increase is because of planned expenditures which we're going to embark on in terms of the new management objectives. I think the member, when he was at the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation

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convention in Yorkton, would have heard comments made in regard to the document tabled at that convention about the new management objectives, particularly in terms of fish management and the big game habitat. New initiatives are being planned in those areas in response to some of the concerns of the wildlife federation.

Item 7 agreed.

Items 8 and 9 agreed

Item 10

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, there's a cut here of almost \$300,000. Could you give me a reason why?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the member asked the reason for the decrease in other expenses from the drop in the dollar figure. I'm told it's an accounting procedure recommended by the auditor in terms of the advance account. The advance accounts were normally accounted for within the region; now it's accounted for in the advance account. It's a recommendation of the auditor.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Well, then where would the money be transferred for you? Are you suggesting it's being transferred into item 1?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the recommendation of the auditor is the advance account should be always current with the calendar year under review. What will be happening is next year the difference in the advance account figures will appear in next year's estimates because the commercial advance accounts were always appearing one year old in the estimates. This brings it more current. It gives a more accurate picture for anyone who is examining the estimates as to what the actual expenses are as opposed to having the advance account figures being one year late.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — What you are suggesting to me then is that last year you had two years in one, an advance plus the actual year, and from now on you just have the actual year. Is that correct? Doesn't that show in any of the other departments or is this the only one that had an advance account?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we are the only department that has a commercial advance account for the operation of provincial parks. That's the only reason why.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, we are the only department that has a commercial advance account for the Saskatoon area, which I guess would be Blackstrap and Pike Lake?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, if the member wants to save this question for the capital budget — this is the ordinary expenditures and it'll appear there.

Item 10 agreed.

Items 11 and 12 agreed.

Item 13

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Why the decrease here again?

MR. GROSS: — The same reason as for, Mr. Chairman, the Saskatoon region.

Item 13 agreed.

Item 14

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Is this advance account again?

MR. GROSS: — That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — The difference here is so small. Why? Where the others have been very large differences, this one is very, very small.

MR. GROSS: — The reason is there is only one park within the Hudson Bay region, namely Greenwater. In the Saskatoon region, there are a number of parks.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, you only show a drop of approximately \$50,000. Now, in Saskatoon region you told me the reason it was so large was it had two years in there with a new accounting system. Are you suggesting that for two years in Hudson Bay region you spent \$458,000 and in this upcoming year you are going to spend \$405,000?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the reason for the deficit for the member opposite is because of the fact there is only one park within that region. The other important factor is that Greenwater does not operate on nearly as large a deficit as the parks in the Saskatoon region because it's on more of a break-even basis. So that's the reason why the dollar figures don't sort of jibe.

Items 14 to 19 agreed.

Item 20

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, how many more regional parks are coming on stream?

MR. GROSS: — One planned, Mr. Chairman, at the present time.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — What area is it planned for?

MR. GROSS: — Zero.

Item 20 agreed.

Item 21

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, could you give us a list at your earliest convenience of who gets these grants?

MR. GROSS: — . . . (inaudible) . . .

Item 21 agreed.

Item 22 agreed.

Item 23

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Is this for filling Pike Lake and other lakes? Is this for filling Pike Lake, Blackstrap and other areas like that?

MR. GROSS: — Yes, it is.

Item 23 agreed.

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 39 agreed.

**Tourism and Renewable Resources
Capital Expenditure
Vote 40**

Item 1

MR. GARNER: — What lands and buildings, Mr. Minister? We are going from 99 to 270. That's quite a jump. Could you give me a little explanation on that, Mr. Minister?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we plan to table all the documentation we have for the capital expenditures and so it will be covered in there if he wants to wait for the documents which everyone will receive a copy of.

MR. GARNER: — The thing is, it's tabled. I would like to know right now. We go from 99 to 270 and that is quite a jump, Mr. Minister. As I look down the others there isn't that much of a jump, in fact there is a decline in some. That one is the biggest jump, acquisition of lands and buildings.

MR. GROSS: — I could use some examples from the list. In terms of the Saskatoon area, for example, in the all-terrain vehicle area, acquire a sub-lease for \$8,000; Douglas Park, a quarter section of land added to the provincial park for \$20,000; miscellaneous recreation lands — \$10,000; forest lands adjacent to the provincial forest — \$10,000; Greenwater Provincial Park, one-quarter section of land addition to the provincial part — \$10,000; Meadow Lake Provincial Park — \$10,000; Meadow Lake Provincial Park, acquiring another holding — \$12,000; Candle Lake Road right of way — \$15,000; ATV area for Yorkton acquiring land — \$32,000. If you want we can send it to you.

MR. GARNER: — No, but you'd better let me have all those things pertaining to this, because there are some land deals involved and I want to check them over, Mr. Minister.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — You said all-terrain vehicle something near Saskatoon?

MR. GROSS: — It was for snowmobiles.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — A snowmobile course of some kind?

MR. GROSS: — An area for snowmobiling, Mr. Chairman.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Where is it located please?

MR. GROSS: — Dundurn pasture.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, I think, if I remember correctly, using Mr. Moriyama's

survey, he suggested that was a very fragile area unless you're talking about near the ski hill or something. Could you indicate?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that it's being concentrated in one area. It's going to be controlled and it's within the parameters of the agreement.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — It's in the park there, at Blackstrap?

MR. GROSS: — I'm advised it's in the vicinity of Blackstrap but not in the park.

Item 1 agreed.

Item 2

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Could you give us an idea what this is going to cover?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, we're going to supply the members with a detailed list of what's going to be done. We have a few here. If you want me to read out some of the major items, Douglas Provincial Park, a start on a change house ready for the 1980 season — \$32,000; an otopasso trail started in an area south of Saskatoon for what we were just talking about; Battlefords campground completion — \$55,000; corrections camp, Meadow Lake — \$98,000 for completion; Tobin Lake, continuing to remove the deadheads — \$10,000; Delaronde Lake, the subdivision — \$50,000; Cypress Hills, improvements to the ski area, water slope and T-bar extensions — \$55,000; prefab facilities in all areas of the parks — \$39,300; signs — \$29,000; environmental improvements . . . You'll get a copy of it all anyway.

Item 2 agreed.

Items 3 to 6 agreed.

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Capital Expenditure — Vote 40 agreed.

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Supplementaries — Vote 39 agreed.

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Provincial Development Expenditure — Vote 40

Item 1

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Minister, why the cutback in that? It's kind of a regressive policy. Surely the member for Moose Jaw should be raising this question but since he is not concerned about it, I think maybe I should take care of it.

HON. R.J. GROSS (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources): — Mr. Chairman, it's a completion of phase 3 of the project that's been on for three years now. It's a winding down, a completion of phase 3 of the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park. It won't finish it but it's getting near completion.

Mr. Chairman, I am advised there is till another phase to complete the project. I can't give you the exact cost.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Minister, I assume this is for cages for monkeys and apes and all those things that some members over on your side think are so important.

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Item 1 agreed.

Item 2

MR. R.H. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, in regard to item 2, the \$2 million, each year about April 1 the provincial parks open up an office that you can call to make reservations for cabins and accommodations. Do you have a phone number or an address I can contact to make reservations in this \$2 million motel or whatever you are building?

MR. GROSS: — No, we don't.

MR. GARNER: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, we have questioned this and questioned this. Mr. Minister, \$2 million, that's a lot of bucks. When was this study that is supposed to be under way right now and I am taking your word for it . . . When was this study started?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, it was August, 1979.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, if it started in August of last year, why wasn't there any appropriation of funds in last year's budget for that amount for that department?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, it was an in-house study by the department officials.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You mean in-house studies don't cost money?

MR. GROSS: — It is part of the planning process which is normally budgeted every year.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Is there an outside cost involved in it this year for the study?

MR. GROSS: — No.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, if I remember correctly, the way the opposition should be showing its total disgust with you for not at least now telling the House what this is for, is moving a motion to reduce this to \$1. Now, the only problem with that is, it might be for a good project. But you don't seem to want to tell us if it is good, bad or indifferent.

MR. ROMANOW: — Cover-up, cover-up.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — You know, I would like to quote the Attorney General. That's right, the Attorney General from his seat says, cover-up. And you know, Mr. Chairman that is exactly what the Attorney General likes to do, deflect from the issue, never take his responsibilities seriously, make jokes. He never wants to take his responsibilities — but that minister tries to take his responsibility seriously, not like you, Mr. Attorney General. Everything is a joke. So back to the minister and ignore the minister of jokes and non-responsibility — the Attorney General. Would you like to give me one more time the four parks you are considering doing something with the \$2 million first?

MR. GROSS: — Mr. Chairman, the parks we will be considering are what we classify as the destination points in the system. They are five points. They are (starting from the southwest) Cypress, Moose Mountain, Greenwater, Duck Mountain and Meadow Lake.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, would you be able to indicate if the majority of it will be spent in one park or will it be split up between all five parks?

MR. GROSS: — It is yet to be decided. It is under consideration.

Item 2 agreed to on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 21

Pepper	Mostoway	Tchorzewski
Romanow	Banda	Cody
Messer	Kaeding	Lusney
Baker	Hammersmith	Long
McArthur	MacAuley	Johnson
Gross	Byers	Thompson
MacMurchy	Vickar	Poniatowski

NAYS — 10

Berntson	Pickering	Katzman
Taylor	Garner	Andrew
Rousseau	Muirhead	McLeod
Swan		

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Parks Facilities Development — Vote 40 agreed.

Tourism and Renewable Resources — Votes 39 and 40 agreed.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE **FINANCE** **VOTE 11**

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would ask the minister to introduce his support staff please.

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Finance): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce to the House the staff who are here. Rob Douglas on my right, the deputy minister, Mike Costello, who's the assistant deputy and director of the budget bureau, immediately behind me. Morley Meiklejohn, director of investment and financial services — he was here a minute ago. Keith Mackrill who's the director of administration right over here. Ken Brehm who's with the budget bureau branch at the back. John Wright, taxation and fiscal policy branch, also at the back. Al Curry, administration branch — he's not here either. Larry Fogg, the deputy controller and Allan Palmer, chairman of the public employees' superannuation plan.

Item 1

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I see you've found all of your staff now, have you, Mr. Minister? Mr. Chairman, I will not be talking on this very long but I want to make a few comments.

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At first glance, when you look at the Department of Finance, it appears to be a very insignificant department until you look at the amount of \$22 million; interest is another area which is almost as much as the department, in fact it's probably a lot more, but the minister isn't showing that. I will get into that in a couple of minutes. Then, of course, you look at the heritage fund and that's where the Department of Finance really becomes very obvious when you look at \$387 million. I think it is. In the estimates, Mr. Chairman, the finance is, as I said, in two sections besides the heritage fund, I'd like to just being my opening remarks with a few brief comments on these items.

First, on the subject of the ordinary expenses of the department — and rather than beginning with a litany of philosophical differences of opinion which exist between the ways in which the PCs and the NDP would spend the taxpayers' money, I'd like to look for several minutes at a few of the items which may be of interest concerning the way public money has been misspent by the Department of Finance in particular — and by implication, by the rest of the government in general.

In preparing for these estimates, I spent a few moments reviewing the Report of the Provincial Auditor for the most recent fiscal year. There are many interesting items there relating to a number of departments of this government. There are items of overspending, unauthorized spending, and areas where it is impossible to obtain information on how or why money was spent at all. There are several items I note relating to the Department of Finance, and I would just like to review some of them, Mr. Chairman.

Looking at the Report of the Provincial Auditor, 1979, and I'm quoting from the report:

The schedule of budgetary cash outflow for the consolidated fund indicates that in no instance was an appropriation overexpended. However the schedule does indicate that certain overcommitments have occurred as a result of accounts payable exceeding the unexpended balances of the relevant appropriations.

Overcommitments occurred in five appropriations of the consolidated fund in '78-'79, totalling \$1,834,000. In '77-'78, overcommitments in five appropriations totalled \$1,150,000. The Department of Finance undertook to develop a computerized five-year licence plate system to replace the existing annual licensing system. This system, together with certain staff of the department, was transferred to SGIO between March 13, 1977 and April, 1977 — only one month before the date all vehicles were to be reregistered. From the information I have been provided, the system was not approved by the comptroller of the treasury as required by treasury board regulation R21 1974-75 which, at the time the system was implemented read in part:

The comptroller will be responsible for and have authority to (a) direct the design of all new financial and accounting systems required by government departments, commissions, boards, agencies and Crown corporations which are funded in full or in part by moneys appropriated by the legislature; authorize any changes in the financial and accounting systems in the aforementioned entities prior to detail design and implementation of changes.

System problems and other errors resulted in revenue receivable of approximately \$484,000 which was written off in December of 1977.

Looking at the Report of the Provincial Auditor, 1978, Department of Finance, the following grants were paid by order of treasury board and charged to a subvote of the Department of Finance as described below 'Institute'. I won't bother reading them all, Mr. Chairman, but a total of \$130,000.

The Department of Finance Act does not provide the department with statutory authority to make grants and no moneys were specifically appropriated by the Legislative Assembly to enable the above grant payments to be made. It would appear therefore these grants were made without adequate authority.

And looking at the previous one to that — without getting into all of them, just the Government Finance Office — inability to obtain information to verify stated value of certain assets, and that is a repeated problem in many other departments. These items within the context of the finance department are just the tip of the iceberg. Examples amounting to tens or perhaps hundreds of millions of tax dollars are exposed on page after page of the report. Needless to say, Mr. Chairman, this is one area where the Government of Saskatchewan is obliged to clean up its act. The seemingly cavalier attitude of the government in its spending habits (I needn't remind the government of the inordinately high level — 53 per cent plus 10 per cent surtax of the provincial income tax) is putting a very great strain on the livelihoods of all citizens of Saskatchewan.

But, Mr. Chairman, all of the abuses outlined by the provincial auditor appear quite small when placed beside the ordinary public debt run up by expenditures on government programs and by Crown corporations. For example, Vote No. 12 Mr. Chairman, deals with the interest the people of Saskatchewan must pay on the government's share of the public debt.

I would just like to take a minute on that particular subject, Mr. Chairman, I don't know how the minister has the gall or the nerve or the whatever, to indicate (I'm just looking for it now) 1980-81 estimated expenditure on the interest on public debt at \$16,321,000. Mr. Minister, in 1979-80, the estimate was \$13,562,000. But let's just go back a little more and look at the estimates for 1978-79. They were \$6,750,000 approximately, and then in the 1977-78 estimate budgeted for \$2,306,000. Now, how can you possibly justify . . . I have so many books around here. I don't have as many assistants as he has so I have to keep doing this by myself. Here we are. Now when you look at estimates as outlined of \$2 million in 1977-78, let's look at the actual. The actual that year was \$7.5 million or 323 per cent more than budgeted. I would provide the minister with a calculator if it would help him. I'm really going to deal with the Minister of Finance if the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan doesn't mind.

Now, in 1978-79, as I indicated a minute ago, you estimated \$6,750,000 and the actual cost that year was \$17 million or a 253 per cent increase. Now, that is really not very good budgeting. If you project that calculation, two years in a row you are over 250 per cent in your estimate. We don't know, and I don't know whether you even know, what the cost was in 1979-80, the actual. But using the same projection, it would have to be not \$13 million as you budgeted, but somewhere probably around \$35 million. That would make sense if you use the same logic for the two previous years where you went over 250 per cent over budget. Well, taking that a step further, this year you estimate \$16 million. Again if you project based on the same logic and the same miscalculation and the same misinformation or whatever, we'd have to be looking at somewhere between \$40 million and \$50 million. This means if you're that far out on

your interest in those two particular years, you're going to be that far out again. Your total budget's going to be sadly overexpended with probably the same amount of deficit you have experienced in the past. However the deficit is really there if you consider the hidden transactions you have in the heritage fund. To get an answer, rather than carry on with my remarks much further, I would like you to clarify for me the interest I have just brought up. Then I'll continue with my remarks a little further on.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I'm having difficulty figuring out what the question is, but I'll do the best I can in responding to the member. Sorry about not introducing all of the staff who were not here but I remembered as we started or somebody remembered that the member for Thunder Creek worries very much about some people not having ties in the Assembly. Therefore we had to go and gather some. We're all here now.

I listened to the member and the finance critic talk about the auditor's reports from multiple years in the past. I don't think I am going to comment on that to any great extent. Those reports have all been duly and very extensively considered by the public accounts committee each and every year, as is happening again this year. I think it's sufficient to say that if the finance critic wants to look at the response as to the steps taken to meet the issue raised in the most recent provincial auditor's report, I can certainly send over a press statement I released at that time which outlined step by step all of the things that were happening.

The member speaks of the interest developing for the consolidated fund in the provincial budget. He talked about 1977 and 1978, and the same reason applies for any of those years. First of all in each of those years, because we were in a period of deficit budgeting, in a situation where we had to do more short-term borrowing in order to maintain the expenditures necessary to maintain the programs, interest rates were also increasing, and those were the reasons why there was that kind of a change. The point that also needs to be made is that at the same time, in most cases, the interest earned, and I want the member to note that, was greater than the interest cost. So on the net situation the consolidated fund was further ahead.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That's your answer? Well, that logic doesn't make too much sense to me. I've just sent for The Saskatchewan Loans Act because you have a bill in the House now which I presume is to increase the amount of borrowing. You used the excuse that the past few years was because of deficit budgeting. Well, the interest we were talking about doesn't refer to the deficit incurred in those years. The interest we're talking about is as a result of borrowings throughout the year. Here you're presenting this House with a bill for borrowing powers of \$250 million. I don't think your balanced budget or your deficit budget has anything to do at all with the amount of interest we're talking about. Perhaps the minister would like to indicate to the House about how much money was spent in the 1979-80 year on interest on the public debt?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — We're looking some information up. I'm not sure whether I can give the member for Regina South the information on 1979-80, because for the '79-'80 fiscal year the books have not yet been closed. As the member well knows, the year end was only just a short time ago so we may not be able to give you that precisely.

AN HON. MEMBER: — The books have not been closed yet?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The books have not been closed yet. But I am glad that I can perhaps help the member understand The Loans Act. There is nothing in The Loans Act

amendment which he mentions, which I thought we were going to consider in committee of the whole this afternoon, which increases the amount of the borrowing. All the amendment does is provide a different way in which the borrowing can take place. As a matter of fact one of the things which will likely result out of that is in some of the short-term borrowing the province must do, we will actually be saving money because we will have more flexibility in the ways in which we can make that short-term borrowing in the form of promissory notes. These we can use to borrow for specific periods of time rather than being locked into the treasury bill operation or to the line of credit.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, as I explained to you this afternoon, with the number of portfolios I am carrying as a critic I didn't get around to all of them yet. The reason why we didn't discuss Bill 20 in the house today was because I hadn't even looked at it. I am now looking at it and perhaps you could clear this up for me. You say that it is not increasing in any way but in the act there is no amount specified. So what was the amount before? You are now specifying \$250 million.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly can clarify it for the member. There was no amount specified before this amendment but it would not be fair to say that it was limitless. I think that would not be quite accurate but there was a lot of leeway. With the matter of the interest rate for '79-'80, as I indicated, the books have not been closed and are not until later in the year but I can say to the member that we expect again the interest earned by the consolidated fund will be greater than the amount of interest cost.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, there are two points I want to make here. Now, my colleague tells me that before you didn't have in the act as a specified amount but he tells me it was a fact that you had to come to the legislature to get permission for the amount. Now I don't know whether that's right or not; maybe you can comment on it. However, before you do, the excuse you gave me a minute ago about the fact that you don't have your books closed out for the year is a very lame excuse and I can't accept it. It's a known fact you have a statement monthly as to where the balances are and what the amounts of costs and expenditures are. So if you have it for 11 months then you can project the other month. Perhaps you would like to indicate to me what you were spending last year?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Just let me respond to the first comment on which you received assistance from your seatmate there. There is a difference between long-term borrowing which comes to this legislature, such as we do for the power corporation and others, and short-term borrowing, which The Saskatchewan Loans Act is all about. The short-term borrowing is done by the government for operating purposes because sometimes and often, the revenues coming into the consolidated fund do not come as quickly as the expenditures and there is some time lag; so you have to do that short-term borrowing. That is the difference there. You can take a look at the legislation and I don't think there is any limit specified. In fact I know there isn't.

On the question of the interest for '79-'80, as I indicated, I can't give you an accurate, precise figure because the books have not been closed. So all I can do is indicate to you more or less where it's at now. I think it was budgeted at \$13 million and its going to come in, we anticipate, somewhere around \$17 million. And also, as I indicated, the interest earned will be greater than the amount of interest cost and we anticipate the interest earned will be about \$19 million so we will be ahead by \$2 million.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — What was the estimate for the interest earned prior in that same year? You may be bragging. You keep telling me about the interest earned and not the interest cost but you are still overexpending on the interest spent. You admitted it's somewhere around \$17 million which is better than it was the previous year as far as overexpenditure. However, it is still out from \$13 million to \$17 million, so you are out by \$4 million. I am concerned the same thing will apply again in the coming year. By the way, where is income on interest earned shown in your revenues?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — On page 8 it is shown under budgetary cash inflows. While you are looking that up I want to make a correction. I said the interest earned in 1979-80 was estimated to be about \$19 million. I made a mistake. It's not \$19 million it's going to be \$22.4 million, which is I think fairly significant.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Did you say \$22.4 million?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Yes.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — So that's \$4 million which is the amount you are over on the other side of the balance sheet so it isn't going to make any difference on your balance. The point I was making, Mr. Minister, was the difference in the prior years. I had no way of knowing whether you were on the same track as you had been for the previous two years. Maybe with the new minister we'll have some better accounting.

But getting back to my comments on the public debt, \$16.3 million of interest must be remembered as only the money owed on direct government debt. It does not include that incurred by our provincial Crown corporations and the total debt figure is really much, much higher.

I will refer to the speech I made in this Assembly in reply to the budget, if I can find it. Based on the figures I had at the time our current accumulated debt is almost \$3 billion. Last year the interest on our debt alone (I know I am going to be corrected on this, but I had the figure and I will repeat the figure I had) was \$272 million. I would like to reiterate the point I made at the time. When you put this amount into perspective, in 1966 the interest we paid in this province was \$30 million, equivalent to the budget in 1944. Twenty-two years later the interest we paid equated to the total budget of 1944. In 1979 the interest we paid was \$272 million and as I say, I will be corrected on that, but more than the total budget of 1966. It means that in 12 short years we have moved to the position where the interest on our debt alone now exceeds the entire operating fiscal budget of the province of Saskatchewan 1966-1967.

But what alarms us, Mr. Minister, is when you project that we can look forward somewhere in the next 6 to 10 years to an interest cost of some \$2 billion, if the same projections are used. If the 1966 interest cost equated to the 1944 budget and the 1979 interest cost equated to the 1966 budget, sometime before 1990 interest cost on our debt will equate with this year's budget, and this year's budget is \$2 billion plus what is in the heritage fund. If you consider that as a cost to the taxpayers of our province, it means every taxpayer last year paid \$900, slightly over the \$900 (that will probably be under now) for interest only on the provincial times what the 18 cents per gallon tax proposed by the federal government last December would have cost us. Take our provincial debt. That, Mr. Minister, would not include (and I'm going to get into that) all the other debts the taxpayers have to be concerned about in this province. I refer to the federal debt, the municipal debts, etc.

So, Mr. Minister, the people of Saskatchewan are forced to pay and pay and pay some more for the often careless and more often misguided fiscal habits of this government. Nowhere is this misguidance more apparent than in the government's management of our so-called heritage fund, a time-honored topic of disagreement between our two parties. I will carry on with my comments in a minute. I'd like the minister to reply to those comments.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, let me begin my comments by quoting not from me and not from the province of Saskatchewan, not from the provincial government about the financial situation of this government. I'm going to read to the member something which he may or may not have. It's from McLeod, Young and Weir who report on the budget which was read by myself in this Assembly on March 13. They conclude by saying this, and I'd like the member for Regina South to listen.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I'm having very much difficulty in hearing the minister. Would you please call order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the member opposite. McLeod, Young and Weir say:

The financial position of the province continues to be strong. A combination of prudent fiscal planning and buoyant resource revenues have contributed to this budgetary position. None the less selective stimulation to Saskatchewan's economy has been designated as a budget priority and measures to enhance energy exploration and speed the marketing of agricultural products are contained within the budget.

And it goes on and on and on. Now that's fairly authoritative group of people who are saying that about the situation of the Saskatchewan finances.

The member makes a point that the provincial debt on the operating side is \$16.3 million in interest and that it is greater on the Crown sector. Well it is greater on the Crown sector, Mr. Chairman, and we don't apologize for that. The point that has to be made is the debts of the Crown corporations are paying for themselves. Is it any different for the province to borrow money at cheaper rates, because the province can borrow money at cheaper rates than the Saskatchewan Power Corporation or Saskatchewan Telecommunications, than for Bell Canada to borrow money to do its capital expansion so it can provide the services its customers need. I think not. If the member objects to the capital borrowings made on behalf of the Crown corporations, he is saying therefore those corporations' development should be frozen. We don't take that point of view. WE think the Saskatchewan Power Corporation needs to develop its generating capacity to meet growing demand and growing need.

The debt of the province, the gross debt, is — the member said I would correct him and I will — \$2,295 billion, Mr. Chairman, I want to make some comparisons about the total debt per capita because I think it's important to make those comparisons to show how well this province has been managed. I'll give you the 1978 figures because they are the most up-to-date ones across Canada that I have. Saskatchewan's is \$1,709; in Ontario it's \$2,544; in Newfoundland it's \$3,702; in Manitoba it's \$3,531 (where they have a good old Sterling –government); in British Columbia it's \$2,497; and in Alberta

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it's \$2,222. And that's a pretty wealthy province, Mr. Chairman. The point I am making is that it doesn't matter what comparisons you use, Saskatchewan still stands in a much better situation than anywhere else in this country, whether it's provincially or federally.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, just as we started this debate there was some mention made of Bill 20, the amendment coming in for The Loans Act. Just so I can clarify something; you are going to be able to borrow \$250 million on promissory notes, and you're still unlimited under treasury bills by this act. Am I correct? You have unlimited borrowing under this act, and all you are going to do now is give yourself permission to borrow \$250 million on short-term notes. That's the only thing you are doing. Am I correct?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — There is this kind of limit. We are limited to the extent of the appropriation made in the overall budget — the capital and the ordinary and so on. So to that extent we're limited. We borrow short-term money to pay for those operating costs which we are dealing with in the committee of finance now, under various departments. To that extent, we're limited, yes.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Let's not carry it too far, but 2(a) to (g) under the bill allows you to borrow for highways . . . everybody else, what is in their statutory amounts as well as everything else. And this is just giving you access to another \$250 million at 90-day term or so forth, which sometimes is a better way to borrow than long-term. That's basically what this is doing. So you still get unlimited borrowing powers except for (a) to (g).

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, if you look at the amendment, it clearly states that 3(e) is as follows: 'for ordinary expenditures by way of temporary loans where it appears to the Minister of Finance that the consolidated fund will be insufficient to meet the disbursements authorized' and that's the key operative word, 'to be made from it in any amounts that the minister considers necessary . . . ' and so on.

MR. R. KATZMAN: — Yes, Mr. Minister, if you look at no. 17 which you are going to amend — section 17 — that just ties so it's unlimited again. In other words, it tells you everything else you can borrow with, and actually this just becomes an additional \$250 million you get to borrow on the short-term if you refer to section 17 of the present act.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, as the Acting House Leader points out, I don't know what we should have been doing in committee of the whole this afternoon, but I'll try to explain to the member so he knows what the situation is. He has a copy of the act: he will see under 17 what it reads. Now, the amendment to section 17 says:

Is amended by striking out 'and treasury bills' in the third line and substituting 'treasury bills and promissory notes'.

And that is all that is changed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The point the Minister makes was one I was going to make a while back, but the hon. member for Regina South (Mr. Rousseau) got off it and I didn't pursue it. I think bills before the House should be dealt with then.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:57 p.m.