

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Nineteenth Legislature

May 6, 1980

EVENING SESSION

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

Adjourned Debates

Return No. 4

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. R.L. Andrew (Kindersley) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 4 showing:

A detailed statement of all the moneys paid to Raymond Moriyama regarding the preparation of the plan for the Meewasin Valley project.

Motion agreed.

Return No. 5

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. R.L. Andrew (Kindersley) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 5 showing:

Details of all costs incurred in the promotion of the Meewasin Valley Project, including the cost of the wine and cheese party at the Legislative Building round the time the bill was introduced in 1979.

HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I have a small amendment. I move, seconded by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman), with respect to proposed Return No. 5 that all the words after the words “Details of” be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

The costs of producing the film and brochures to promote the Meewasin Valley Project together with the costs incurred in the three major promotional presentations at the Mendel Art Gallery, the public library in Saskatoon and the Legislative Building in Regina, including the cost of the coffee party at the Legislative Building around the time the bill was introduced in 1979.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Return No. 7

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. R.L. Andrew (Kindersley) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 7 showing:

A detailed statement of all moneys paid to the firm Long, Mayell and Associates regarding their participation in the study for the Meewasin Valley Project.

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Motion agreed.

Resolution No. 1 — Incentives for Energy Resource Development

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Long (Cut Knife-Lloydminster):

That this Assembly encourage the Government of Canada to give priority to establishing incentive programs to ensure the accelerated development of heavy oil resources and other potential energy resources which are not now economically feasible but on which our future energy stability will rely.

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, in this motion the member is suggesting the federal government assist the Government of Saskatchewan in the development of heavy oil, and in the enhancement and improvement of getting heavy oil out of the ground. I think it's hypocritical for the Government of Saskatchewan in this motion to suggest they would like assistance from the federal government to better enhance the development of heavy oil, on the one hand, while on the other hand they have suggested through the Premier of Saskatchewan at premiers' conferences both in 1976 and 1978 that they should be giving 50 per cent of future oil revenues to the Government of Canada. I believe that Saskatchewan through an energy fund of its own, has the expertise to spend our own money, so for this reason I think it is, as I say, very hypocritical for us on the one hand to be asking the federal government to assist us in developing our heavy oil and on the other hand to offer to give them 50 per cent of future oil revenues.

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, we cannot support this motion.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 24

Pepper	MacMurchy	Koskie
Allen	Mostoway	Matsalla
Bowerman	Kaeding	Lusney
Romanow	Hammersmith	Johnson
Skoberg	Feschuk	Thompson
McArthur	Vickar	Poniatowski
Gross	Rolfes	White
Shillington	Tchorzewski	Collver

NAYS — 6

Berntson	Lane	Rousseau
Larter	Taylor	Andrew

Resolution No. 3 — Purchase of Hopper Cars

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Banda (Redberry):

That this Assembly commend the Government of Saskatchewan for its initiative in responding to the needs of the Canadian Wheat Board and western farmers through the placement of orders for 1,000 steel hopper cars to be delivered in 1980 for dedication to the grain fleet for the movement of prairie grain.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 25

Pepper	Allen	Bowerman
Romanow	Skoberg	McArthur
Gross	Shillington	MacMurchy
Mostoway	Kaeding	Hammersmith
Feschuk	Vickar	Rolfes
Tchorzewski	Matsalla	Lusney
Johnson	White	Berntson
Larter	Lane	Taylor
Andrew		

NAYS — 00

Resolution No. 18 — Select Standing Committee on Environment

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Andrew (Kindersley):

That this Assembly establish a select standing committee of the Assembly to deal with the environment, and further that the committee be allowed to investigate all environmental concerns.

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, we will be moving an amendment to Resolution No. 18, but before proposing the amendment I want to briefly outline some of the legislation which is appearing today and others which will come on the agenda later in this session with regard to the environmental issues concerning the province and those policies and programs of the government relating to them.

The legislation, Mr. Speaker, recognizes the need as Saskatchewan moves into a promising era of industrial and resource development for new measures to protect the environment. New legislation will be put before the House which will amply illustrate the determination of this government to protect the environment. The legislation will

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establish tight controls for reporting and clearing up the spills of hazardous substances. That legislation is to come before the House and still to be tabled in the House. It will clarify the responsibility for mines pollution control in the uranium industry. There will be a formal requirement that the proponent of a development submit his proposal for environmental impact assessment, Mr. Speaker.

In the area of water management there will be measures directed at drainage control. Members in the opposition have raised this on other occasions; we're proposing as well to bring that legislation before the House. Lastly, I am sure the Assembly will welcome legislation to set aside reserves which will be created so that the unique parts of our environment will be preserved against the inroads of modern technology and new developments. In short, Mr. Speaker, this government is taking important steps, timely steps, to further protect our environment. I will be pleased to elaborate on the details of each of these pieces of legislation as they come before the House.

I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that there are many organizations, both those which are formally constituted and those which are created around the issues which provide me and the staff of the Department of the Environment with a great deal of advice. All of it is valued, even if not all of it is taken or implemented. Let me name a few sources of the advice which the Department of the Environment draws upon as I do. Members will recall that the Churchill River Development did not perceive the proposed damming of the Churchill River. There was an environmental impact assessment taken. There was an environmental impact statement prepared and a public hearing held in that respect. And we listened, Mr. Speaker, to that as well as other representations made at the Churchill River Board of Inquiry.

This government is adopting many of the recommendations of the Bayda report. There is no need for me to go into detail on the Bayda report. But that report was filed with respect to developments of uranium in northern Saskatchewan. Many of the provisions in the Bayda report have already been implemented and many others are in the process of being implemented. This government is adopting many of the recommendations, as I say, of that report. It will listen carefully to what may be said by the Key Lake Board of Inquiry which is now under way, Mr. Speaker.

Provisions for an environmental impact assessment have been made in this area. The environmental statement has been prepared. It's available to the public for them to peruse or for any members of the opposition to review. Presently the public hearing process is under way and members of the public may take advantage of the opportunity to present themselves to the Key Lake Board of Inquiry.

In the Qu'Appelle Valley I take operational advice from the Qu'Appelle River operations board. There is a public advisory committee to the Qu'Appelle management board. The amended resolution makes particular reference to the environmental advisory committee, established under The Department of the Environment Act which provides me with advice on many issues.

The most recent study the environmental advisory committee has taken on is environmental issues for the '80s. That report has just been tabled in my office and is a very valuable report in terms of what is foreseen in the 1980s by the advisory committee in regard to environmental issues coming before Saskatchewan.

The committee has demonstrated it can be an effective vehicle for providing input into the development of policy and legislation. It took a major responsibility in organizing

regional hearings on land use policy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And it provided valuable help in devising spill-control regulations. Additionally, this committee's excellent input into the development of environmental assessment policy has been most welcome by me and our government.

I want to note also that it undertook to examine the project, environmental issues in the 1980s, as I have already pointed out. And it has helped in developing the proposed legislation for ecological reserves. I want to point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that under the new environmental assessment act we've been doing this for some time now as part of an assessment process. All impact studies and associated documents are made available for public review in various information centres.

In addition, studies and reports such as the National Research Council reports on the spill of PCBs by Federal Pioneer Limited in Regina are provided to two major libraries, including the Legislative Library.

I want to make the point that I and the staff of the department receive assistance and a great deal of help in dealing with environmental issues through advisory bodies, public inquiries, and the environmental assessment process. I value the idea behind the original resolution. But I believe we need not add a further burden to the already busy schedule of this House.

I do not believe it would serve any purpose for the environmental department to respond to yet another committee. I believe the vehicles I have described provide more adequate opportunities to advise me on environmental issues and to advise our government on environmental issues. Ample opportunity exists for all interested parties that review the studies make from time to time and the documents related to the proposed developments which have been printed and published for public use.

I know members of the House are aware of these vehicles and the various opportunities available to them and their constituents. I certainly welcome advice from members here in the House if they care to make those kinds of representations to those public hearing bodies and those policy input groups. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I, as well as the department official, will be prepared to review any proposals members would care to make in this regard.

With those few words, I think it's unnecessary for me to elaborate further on why it should be unnecessary for us to go through the process of establishing a legislative committee as proposed by the members opposite. It is because of the number of public advisory bodies and public advisory groups we have not. So I want to move an amendment to the resolution, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) that Resolution No. 18 be amended by striking out all the words after the word 'Assembly' in the first line and substituting therefor:

approves of the government's intention to introduce new legislation that will further protect the environment and commends the government for seeking advice on environmental matters from public organizations, boards of inquiry and for the ongoing funded activities of the environmental advisory council.

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — Point of order, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the amendment. My understanding of an amendment of a motion or order is that it has to deal with the subject matter of the motion. I suggest that the hon. minister's

amendment completely destroys the whole concept of the motion advanced.

MR. SPEAKER: — The member for Kindersley raises a point of order with regard to the orderliness of the amendment offered by the Minister of the Environment. There are a number of qualifications to which amendments have to be submitted and one of them is in Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, citation 425:

The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original which must, however, be relevant to the subject of the questions.

I've examined the amendment which has been offered and the original motion deals with the select standing committee of the Assembly to deal with the investigation of environmental matters, if I can use that interpretation. The amendment offers an alternative manner of seeking advice on environmental matters and participation of members of the Assembly which both seek to do via legislation and public organization boards of inquiry and environmental advisory council and so forth. So I find that the amendment is an alternative to the motion that's before us and is in order.

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to rise in this debate until the Minister of the Environment raised the issue during his remarks on the Key Lake inquiry. Knowing the minister's natural reluctance to answer questions during this part and this kind of debate, I thought I might just make a few remarks that the minister might be interested to hear.

The minister admitted while he was on his feet, although it was to a question I raised while in my seat, that there were a considerable number of grants given to organizations with whom the Government of Saskatchewan does not agree. But in presenting briefs to the Key Lake inquiry, the major part of it to be held in La Ronge, I wonder if the minister is aware that the commission and the company have booked every room in La Ronge during the time the committee hearings are going to be held? I wonder where the people who oppose this action of the uranium business in the northern part of Saskatchewan are going to sleep? I wonder where they are going to stay?

The minister has booked this inquiry, this commission, into La Ronge, certainly the media centre of Saskatchewan. He certainly plans in La Ronge to have the media pick up all the objections that might occur, both from northerners and others that he is funding, to present to the Key Lake inquiry. And yet he's not aware that all the rooms, or at least if not all of them, the vast majority of hotel rooms in La Ronge, have already been booked for the summer. I ask the minister to attempt through his department, to book some more rooms in La Ronge.

Is the minister planning to spend further moneys by the Government of Saskatchewan to obtain some trailers to move up to La Ronge to have the objectors whom they are funding, with whom they don't agree, come to live in so they can oppose the procedure at the Key Lake inquiry? Or, Mr. Speaker, is what the minister doing with his department precisely what this amendment is attempting to overcome? That is to use the Department of the Environment to deceive the people of Saskatchewan into believing the environment is being protected while at the same time government corporations, in partnership with huge multinational corporations, are raping the ground for the

people; are raping the northern part of Saskatchewan; are raping the environment; are not complying with environmental protection rules. I wonder if this amendment the minister has put forward is just window dressing.

I don't believe what I'm saying, said one member sitting right at the back from the northern seat. I ask this member how much media coverage does he get if he calls the media in Buffalo Narrows? How many members of the press corps attend? How many people, how much national coverage do you get in Buffalo Narrows, if you call a meeting there, which is where that member is from?

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that by holding this meeting in La Ronge and not ensuring that opposition groups have places to live and places to stay while the hearings are on, the minister knows those opposition groups won't be able to present their case. They won't be able to present their case while the local people in La Ronge can certainly make a presentation. That's a fact; that's their purpose. The member for Moose Jaw North has really touched on an important matter. He said the only purpose for the Key Lake inquiry is to protect the interests of the local people. He's saying the people of Saskatchewan have no right to public input. Therefore I ask the Minister of the Environment, why are you funding organizations outside of the North to make submissions to the Key Lake inquiry. Why are you using the people's money to fund submissions which they're not going to be able to provide anyway and for which they're not going to be able to get any coverage? They're not going to be able to raise public support because in fact La Ronge is going to be booked solid.

The minister knows that's why he called that meeting and those hearings for La Ronge. He called them to hide the fact that he and his government are in bed with multinational companies. I suggest that many of the multinational companies are as big as or bigger than the Minister of the Environment and boy that would be quite a shaking bed they are going to occupy. It is going to move the world.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, the minister is just covering up the inaction of his own department and is not prepared to accept a legitimate amendment that would clear the air and allow some outside people in on those kinds of investigations and the decision making in terms of the environment.

MR. ANDREW: — I have a couple of point with regard to the amendment. I took the resolution advanced here as a serious resolution in the sense that I think the function of legislators is to go beyond simply sitting in the House for the two, three or four months, whatever we do, and get into investigative committees. Legislators (be they six, seven, or eight, however many) who choose to sit on this committee, do have time and are prepared to make a concerted effort into environment studies. That doesn't necessarily mean they are going to investigate every situation, clearly they are not. But clearly, a standing committee of this legislature should have the right to go out there and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I have to take this opportunity to caution the member for Kindersley that he has to confine himself solely to the amendment because he's a mover of the motion. He has to direct his discussions solely to the amendment because his opportunity to discuss this in the committee will come later if he wants to close debate. But I can't allow him to speak twice on it. I'll read the amendment if the member wishes. It says, delete all the words after Assembly in the first line and substitute therefor:

approves of the government's intention to introduce new legislation that will

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further protect the environment and commends the government for seeking advice on environmental matters from public organizations, boards of inquiry and the ongoing funding activities of the environmental advisory council.

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, the only remark I raise on this is simply the fact that I interpreted the resolution as being fairly broad as far as seeking advice from the public. The vehicle I suggested for seeking some of that advice and some of that investigation from the public was a standing committee of this legislature, which I would see being able to fit into the broad resolution of the minister. That is clearly the basis of the whole proposition I have advanced. Now, if Mr. Speaker would rule that it is out of order, then I would have nothing further to say. This was the basis of my suggestion with regard to expanding on the committee process of the legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the member has stated what I was putting forward, to talk about the select standing committee would be quite in order if the member is closing the debate because this particular member is the one who moved the motion. The member must now confined himself to why he likes or dislikes the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed on division.

Return No. 27

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. D.G. Taylor (Indian Head-Wolseley), that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 27 showing:

(1) The number of square feet of building space that was: (a) owned, (b) rented, by all department and Crown corporations of the Government of Saskatchewan, as of March 10, 1980; (2) the amount of space owned that is not occupied; (3) the monthly rental rate and location of the rented space not occupied.

and the proposed amendment there to by the Hon. Mr. Romanow:

That all the words after the word 'showing' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1) the number of square metres of building space that was (a) owned, (b) rented, by all departments and Crown corporations of the Government of Saskatchewan, as of March 1, 1980; (2) the amount of space owned by location that is not occupied, the date of last occupancy, the reason for the vacancy and the expected future use; (3) the amount of space leased by location that is not occupied, date of last occupancy, the reason for the vacancy and the expected future use.

and the proposed subamendment thereto by Mr. Katzman:

That the following words be added to the amendment:

The monthly rental rate of such.

Subamendment defeated.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Return No. 203

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. E.A. Berntson (Leader of the Opposition), that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 203 showing:

Whether, since March 1, 1979 an consultants or consulting firms have been awarded a contract with Department of Saskatchewan Minerals: (1) if so, the nature of the contract or contracts; the name and address of each consultant or consulting firm, the value of the contract, and the purpose of the contract; (2) in each instance, whether the contract was advertised, or awarded without advertising.

HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, a brief amendment. I would like to move, seconded by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman) that all the words after the word 'showing' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1) the number of consultants or consulting firms that have been awarded contracts by the Saskatchewan Minerals Corporation in the period from March 1, 1979 to March 25, 1980; (2) the total value of these contracts; (3) the number of these consultants who are (a) in the province (b) out of the province.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Return No. 171

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. G.S. Muirhead (Arm River) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 171 showing:

The name, department and position of every person who was not covered under the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association contract who received remuneration from the Government of Saskatchewan for services rendered to the Government of Saskatchewan during the period beginning midnight November 15, 1979 and ending at midnight December 4, 1979.

HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I have made a speech on this. I am urging the members of the Assembly to defeat the motion for the reasons I advocated some time ago, namely the operative dates seem to coincide with the labour dispute with the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association dispute, and would be a method of providing some forms of information, which in the judgment I hope of most members of the House, would be undesirable to provide.

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MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I know the member who put this motion on the order paper would want to close debate on it. He is unable to be here this evening so I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 234

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mrs. J.H. Duncan (Maple Creek) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 234 showing:

The departments, Crown corporations, boards, commissions, or any other Government of Saskatchewan entity that have placed contracts with JAC Struthers and Associates, Ltd., since March 1, 1979: (1) in each instance, the nature of the contract, and the value of each contract, (2) the total value of all contracts by all departments, Crown corporations, boards, commissions, or any other Government of Saskatchewan entity with JAC Struthers and Associates Ltd.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman) that all the words after the word 'placed' in the second line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

advertising through JAC Struthers and Associates Ltd. from March 1, 1979 to March 31, 1980: (1) in each instance, the purpose of the advertising and the amount paid, (2) the total amount paid to JAC Struthers and Associates Ltd.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Return No. 411

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. R.J. Andrew (Kindersley) that an order of the assembly do issue for Return No. 411 showing:

(1) Since March 1, 1979 the amount of money the Department of Industry and Commerce has spent on advertising in the form of television advertisements, newspaper advertisements, radio advertisements, indoor and outdoor display advertisements, and promotional literature; (2) in each instance, when the advertising took place, the nature of the advertising, the person who authorized it, and the person who designed and planned the advertising; (3) the names and addresses of any advertising agencies that were commissioned or contracted to purchase or design advertising mentioned in parts (1) and (2), the date, and the cost.

And the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Berntson:

That all the words after the word 'showing' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1) From March 1, 1979 to March 31, 1980 the total amount of money spent by all government departments and agencies, boards, commissions and Crown corporations of the province of Saskatchewan except the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and the Department of Labour, on advertising in the form of (a) television advertisement, (b) newspaper advertisement, (c) radio advertisement and (d) indoor and outdoor display advertisement and (e) informational and promotional literature; (2) for each category a general description of the purpose of the advertising and the approximate time period for the advertising; (3) the title of the official who authorized the advertising; (4) where the advertising was designed in house, the section of the department that did the design, and (5) the names and addresses of any advertising agencies that purchased or designed advertising and the amount paid to each agency.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Return No. 429

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. G.M. McLeod (Meadow Lake) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 429 showing:

As of March 1, 1980, the total number of employees in the board of revenue commissioners: (1) the number of permanent employees, (2) the number of casual or seasonal employees, (3) the number that are on contract, who they are, and the nature of their contract, (4) the number that are out-of-scope employees, who they are, and the nature of their job.

and the proposed amendment thereto by the Hon. Mr. Romanow: That all the words after the word 'employees' in the first line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

employed by the board of revenue commissioners who were: (1) permanent, (2) casual or seasonal, (3) on contract and the nature of the contract, (4) permanent and out-of-scope and their names and positions.

MR. SPEAKER: — Notice of motion for Return No. 429 to which an amendment has been offered. Oh, pardon me. The amendment was carried previously and the question before the House is now on the motion as amended. O.K. We've checked the record and it appears from the record of debates that the amendment was not carried or not dealt with, let me put it that way. So the question before the House now is on the amendment. Will the Assembly take the amendment as read?

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

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The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. G.M. McLeod (Meadow Lake) that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 438 showing:

As of March 1, 1980, the total number of employees in the Department of Education: (1) the number of permanent employees, (2) the number of casual or seasonal employees, (3) the number that are on contract, who they are, and the nature of their contract, (4) the number that are out-of-scope employees, who they are, and the nature of their job.

and the proposed amendment thereto by the Hon. Mr. Romanow:

That all the words after the word 'employees' in the first line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

employed by the Department of Education who were: (a) permanent, (b) casual or seasonal, (c) on contract and the nature of the contract, (d) permanent out-of-scope and their names and positions.

Amendment agreed.

Motion as amended agreed.

Resolution No. 10 — Waterfowl Crop Depredation Program

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Matsalla (Canora):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Canada to assume its responsibilities under the Migratory Birds Convention Act and implement a permanent Waterfowl Crop Depredation Program which fully compensates farmers for crop losses from migratory bird damage.

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, since I've been elected to this Legislative Assembly there seems to be an ongoing fight about the ducks and geese of Saskatchewan. The NDP government insists on blaming the federal government. The federal government says, they're Carter's ducks. Nobody's willing to assume responsibility for them. It's the farmers of Saskatchewan who suffer, Mr. Speaker. They're the ones who put their hard work into raising a crop, and then have the ducks and geese come along and eat it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Shoot them all.

MR. GARNER: — I hear a little voice saying shoot them all. I don't believe in guns in public. I believe in guns for hunting. But, Mr. Speaker, there are many lame ducks in Saskatchewan. Some may even be in the Chamber. Mr. Speaker, I see a government which doesn't want to accept its responsibility. I hear ducks quacking all over the Chamber . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not on my side. Mr. Speaker, the federal government doesn't want to assume the responsibility . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We hear some of the intellectual giants who were kicked out of the cabinet addressing this motion now . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . One of my hon. members says they don't like Indians, and I can believe that. I believe there are a lot of things they don't like. They also don't believe in some of the handicapped people in Saskatchewan, many

other things.

Mr. Speaker, sooner or later the government is going to have to assume its responsibility for the migratory birds in Saskatchewan.

MRS. DUNCAN: — They should just ban them, Jimmy. They've banned everything else.

MR. GARNER: — Well, they've banned everything else. They want state control for everything else, maybe they want the ducks state controlled. I'll tell you one thing, the ducks do have some flying space in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend that this government could implement a waterfowl crop depredation agreement by putting it into their crop insurance program which the federal government already does fund — not just have them administer it, put it into the crop insurance program.

I will commend the government opposite, the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Program is a good program for the farmers of Saskatchewan. Why could this not be implemented right in? Maybe Alberta doesn't do it and maybe Manitoba doesn't do it, but maybe it's time to start doing our own thing in Saskatchewan. Put it into the crop insurance program, the farmers would be happy and the federal government could do whatever it wanted to do and somebody would start assuming responsibility around here instead of passing the ducks to the feds, to Carter, to everyone else.

Mr. Speaker, this government is going to have to accept the responsibility for the ducks and the geese. My hon. colleague, I guess before speaking to this motion, had done a count on all the ducks and geese. Well counting them isn't going to solve the problem, Mr. Speaker. They say we have to count the ducks to know how much they are going to eat. I guess that's socialist logic. Pretty soon a duck is going to have to be licensed to fly in Saskatchewan and that's about the only tourist business we'll have. They already have to report at customs.

Mr. Speaker, I have a little more to add to this but at this time I would like to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 21 — Utilities Price Review Board

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. Rousseau (Regina South):

That this Assembly recommends the establishment of a public utilities price review board with adequate powers to regulate Saskatchewan Power and Sask Tel in such a manner as to prevent both Crown corporations from overcharging for basic requirements, thus reducing utility rates.

MR. C.O. WHITE (Regina Wascana): — I will try to keep my comments brief on this, Mr. Speaker. I do want to say a few words about it and encourage members to consider the resolution rather carefully because I see more than meets the eye in sort of the logical extension of this resolution. I could go into the proposals in the early years for public utility boards and the like where a need, it was felt, was seen for them, promoted largely by private electric and utility companies owned in the United States. The object of

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course was to eliminate the power commission as a competitor.

The power commission itself, the forerunner to the power corporation, was both a regulatory and an operating body until 1949 when the power corporation was set up. The power corporation became the operating body and the power commission the regulatory body. Mr. Johnson mentioned this briefly the other night.

The power commission operated until about 1960 when it was seen there was no more need for it. It was kept on to protect the interests of consumers in places not yet served by the power corporation. As the area served by the power corporation expanded, less and less need was seen for it.

You can see why it was phased out if you look at what was happening in the field of power. The SPC was serving the province very well. I think you would have to say, throughout the 1950s and into the '60s. It was expanding and serving more and more customers. It finally served all the farms. It was increasing security of supply by bringing power from more than one place, more than one source, into various communities and its rates were falling. If one look at what happened one can see how well the customers were served. In the late '40s in a period, as I recall, of about 18 months there were four rate reductions under the power commission. There were rate reductions in the '50s. Finally in the 1960s we got to the one cent run-off rate which was a very good rate. The SPC then was serving the province well.

Meanwhile, if you look at what was happening in the field of private power, you can see a need. In 1960, approximately, National Light and Power was proposing to install a natural gas fuelled turbine, 10,000 kilowatts at Moose Jaw. Now that would use a fuel which was of more value than for generating electricity. It would also produce high cost power. At the very same time, the SPC was installing 66,000 kilowatt units at Estevan capable of producing power for under a quarter of a mill.

It was simply not in the interest of the public for that generating unit to be installed at Moose Jaw and the power commission prevented it. Once National Light and Power was purchased by the SPC, there was really no further need for this extra regulatory body. The SPC did and has served the province well.

The purpose of the motion, now just to say a bit about that, is to set up a public utilities board with the obvious purpose of examining SPC rates and profits. Its object would be to reduce rates, perhaps to get back to power at cost which some have said at times is the policy of the SPC, or question have been raised about that. Just a word or two on that, Mr. Speaker. There was really never what you could call a functioning power-at-cost policy in Saskatchewan. It was enunciated by Premier Gardiner in 1929. For the next 15 years or so the SPC lost money all the time so you had a power-below-cost policy.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s when the SPC started to expand and move power into communities from different sources, it would seem that you could not calculate properly the cost of power. You also had associated, as a result of early agreements made by the Gardiner government, certain communities able to buy power at cost; Saskatoon, Swift Current, among others. They were getting into a position where they were actually buying below cost.

It was clearly recognized at a conference here in Regina, in 1952, of all the major cities that eh power-at-cost idea simply had to be given up. Since then there has been no

such policy as far as the SPC is concerned. In the late 1950s the policy was to take a small profit, to use that money to cross-subsidize, to subsidize rural electrification and the likes of that. In 1962-1964, Mr. Thatcher and Mr. Steuart, among others, (The premier and deputy premier of that time or shortly after that) talked a great deal about the need to increase profits. SPC profits were too low. The return on the investment was not large enough. This is where you get an emphasis on profit. Also it is during the period of Mr. Thatcher that you get the practice of money being taken out of the profits of the power corporation and put into general revenue. I just wanted to say a word about that. That policy has never really been followed. You couldn't follow it very well.

Now, SPC profits were generally low. I think even today they are actually pretty low. The minister has talked about comparing SPC profits. I want to make comparisons here, comparing SPC profits with the total investment. They are not all that high. If you look at the profits of certain others from power, I think SPC profits look extremely low. And here's where I see sort of a threat to a variety of groups in this province by this resolution. I would wonder if the member for Estevan can support this resolution, if the member for Swift Current can support this resolution, and if even the mover, the member for Regina South, can support this resolution.

The SPC is not the only one which makes profit from power in this province. The SPC makes some but the SPC is not the only retailer of power. Saskatoon buys it wholesale and retails to people in Saskatoon. Swift Current buys it wholesale and retails to people in Swift Current. If you pass the resolution and set up a public utilities board, how are you simply going to regulate SPC retail rates? Could not such a board be expected to regulate SPC wholesale rates and the rates of electricity purchased at wholesale from the corporation to be retailed to the people, let us say, in Saskatoon or Swift Current?

Saskatoon — to show the profits there (and I think this is rather interesting) a newspaper clipping, I think it's from the Star-Phoenix, February 1980, reveals that the city currently nets about \$7 million a year on power purchased from the SPC. If this was retailed to the people in Saskatoon by the SPC the profit to the city would be only \$2 million. So it would be a substantial reduction in power costs to the people of Saskatoon but also a very serious loss in revenue to the city of Saskatoon.

Swift Current, I haven't the figures here. I hope to dig them up but I think you will find the profits here are probably around \$1 million. They would have a very small investment compared with the SPC. The ratio of profits to investment would be much, much greater, the same as in Saskatoon. There are also some others with a profit from power.

Now if you put up a public utilities board and you reduce SPC rates, you are going to reduce the amount of revenue coming in to the SPC. You are also going to reduce payments out of gross revenue to communities. You are going to reduce the surcharge on electrical bills paid to communities. Let's just take a look at Estevan. Estevan received in the last years, 1979. I have that Mr. Member for Estevan. I hope you will vote to eliminate some of the profits to the community of Estevan. Estevan in the surcharge of 5 per cent received in the last year \$163,800, out of gross revenue payments a further \$78,700. I don't think they have very much invested so it's a very large return for the department they have.

If you add the payments to Regina out of the gross revenue and surcharge, it comes to something like \$4.5 million, a lot of money. Now, if you start regulating SPC rates you are going to regulate these and you are going to cut them down. now, I could go on through the various cities — Moose Jaw, Melville, North Battleford, Prince Albert,

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Yorkton, Lloydminster — these cities will all be affected and they will all be adversely affected financially. So this is what you are proposing to do.

I might offer some suggestions as to why this may be some sort of a Devine plan, you know, for reducing Saskatoon's revenues since they didn't elect any Tories, or reducing Swift Current revenues since the Tory for there has changed parties, or things like that. I won't apply any motive here. But I do suggest it is more than just the SPC rates involved and that the revenue of the city of Regina could be very seriously affected; the revenue of the city of Saskatoon could be very seriously affected; the revenue of Swift Current, of Moose Jaw, of Weyburn, of Yorkton, of Prince Albert, of North Battleford and so on.

So I would urge you to reconsider and withdraw this resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. P. PREBBLE (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on this resolution. I'm not going to vote for the resolution, but I want to say that, in my view, the notion of setting up some sort of public utility review board is a good one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — but it shouldn't have the functions which are suggested specifically in the resolution in the sense that I don't think it should have the ability to regulate Crown corporations. I think that is most inappropriate. What I do think, Mr. Speaker, is that it should have the power to provide the opportunity for public hearings and public input into rate increases which are being proposed by the Crown corporations.

I want to spell out, Mr. Speaker, what I think a public utilities price review board should do and why I think it would have merit. First of all, the way I would see it operating is that the Crown corporations would have to notify the review board of proposed rate increases. I think the review board would make these proposed increases public. If individuals or groups disagree with the proposed increases, they should be entitled to intervene and to demonstrate alternatives to the rate increases which are being proposed. I think the review board should have the power to recommend on the rate increase and whether or not the increase is justified. I think the review board should have the power to recommend on alternative policies to the rate increase, whether these are adjustments across the board or adjustments for specific classes of service. I do not think it is at all appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that the review board have the power to regulate Crown corporations. In my view, that is a function of the Government of Saskatchewan, of the cabinet. The review board should have powers to recommend only.

Now, I support the concept of this board, not because I think rates in Saskatchewan right now are too high. I think any observer of the current power rates, or natural gas rates, or telephone rates, will realize that on the average we have either the lowest or the second lowest rate in the country for most of the public utilities. I think the fact that that is the case, Mr. Speaker, demonstrates the value of public ownership of utilities as opposed to private ownership.

I think, however, what we constantly need to guard against is the possibility of Crown corporations getting outside the process of public review which is required to ensure they are, in the long term, operating in the interests of the public.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — I think that has been the case to date, Mr. Speaker, with only a few exceptions.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Here's a leader, not a follower like Clint. He's a leader. Yes, sir, there is a leader. He's not a follower.

MR. PREBBLE: — But I think, Mr. Speaker, there is a need to continue to ensure, and to look for new ways of ensuring that Crown corporations continue to be accountable to the public. I think the Crown corporations committee of the legislature is one way of doing that. I think another way is by having a public utilities price review board.

The outcome of the review of this board may often not be a recommendation that rates be lowered. In fact, the board may want to suggest in some cases that rates be increased. But I think one thing which is not happening right now, Mr. Speaker, and that the establishment of such a board and a hearing process would allow, is for the public and the informed public expertise to examine new approaches to the Crown corporations setting the rates in the province. I want to just give one example of that and use Sask Power as the illustration.

I think if you operate on the traditional assumptions that all public utilities operate on across Canada, you'll see Saskatchewan Power rates are highly competitive and are generally far more in the public interest than can be seen in private power companies. But what is not being examined in the rate structure is whether the structure itself is appropriate and whether, in fact, by pursuing alternative policies more appropriate rates could not be established.

In my view, for instance, in the case of Sask Power the entire rate structure for each particular class should be reversed. To me it makes absolutely no sense, Mr. Speaker, that persons should continue, as they use more power, to pay less for it. That's the kind of thing for instance, public interest groups may want to bring before a public review board. They may want to argue, Mr. Speaker, that the Sask Power rate structure for certain categories within each category should be reversed and persons should pay more as they use more, and the low users of energy, the smallest users of energy should get a lower rate.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's unfortunate that the members opposite propose a review board to regulate the Crown corporations. Their intention is clearly different from the intent I'm suggesting. But I want to say to all members that I think there is merit in the idea of having a review board with the power to make recommendations to cabinet and with the power to seek public input into rate increases before they're undertaken, with the express purpose in mind by the government to ensure the fullest degree of public accountability of the Crown corporations. After all the whole notion of our government in establishing these Crown corporations was that they operate as fully as possible in the public interest rather than simply leaving these important services in the domain of private enterprise, as I know, at least in many cases, the members opposite would have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

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Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 13 — Student Aid

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution by Mr. White (Regina Wascana):

That this Assembly urge the federal government to provide increased financial support to needy students attending post-secondary institutions, through the introduction of a bursary program to supplement the federal student loan program.

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, our education critic, Mr. Taylor, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, has spoken on this and I spoke at great length on this in adjourning debate. I would therefore like to place an amendment to this motion, seconded by Mr. E.A. Berntson (Leader of the Opposition), by deleting all the words after the word ‘institutions’ where it appears in the second and third lines and substituting the following therefor:

through the raising of the ceiling on student loans.

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division.

NAYS — 24

Pepper	Skoberg	Vickar
Allen	McArthur	Matsalla
Bowerman	Shillington	Lusney
Romanow	MacMurchy	Prebble
Snyder	Mostoway	Johnson
Kramer	Kaeding	Thompson
Robbins	Feschuk	Poniatowski
Baker	Byers	White

YEAS — 10

Berntson	Rousseau	Katzman
Birkbeck	Garner	Duncan
Larter	Muirhead	Andrew
Taylor		

Motion agreed.

SECOND READINGS

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South) moved second reading of Bill No. 12 — **An Act to amend The Income Tax Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to speak on this bill. I introduced this bill

for the benefit of those people in the province today who have to purchase tools and equipment for their job and are not allowed to deduct this as an expense on their income tax. The self-proclaimed champions of labor across from me will no doubt do something to see that this bill does not get through, either vote it out or stand it or whatever. I'm convinced it will never see the light of day.

But, Mr. Speaker, to treat those trades people in this province as second class citizens in this respect is shameful. The businessmen, professionals, salesmen are allowed deductions against their income tax . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Even MLAs. You're right. In fact, very much so, MLAs. But when it comes to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If you want to speak on this bill, you're welcome to Mr. Member for Nipawin. Seems like a good evening for a chit chat from all sides here.

Mr. Speaker, as I tried to say, the professionals and businessmen and sales personnel, are all allowed an expense deduction against income tax for the purchase of tools of the trade or whatever. Mechanics, carpenters, or trades people generally are not. Mechanics (and there are I don't know how many in the province but they would number in the thousands) own anywhere from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and some even higher than \$10,000 worth of tools. Many of these mechanics will buy \$1,000 worth of tools per year. It's not unusual.

The Minister of Labour suggested the businesses should purchase the tools for them. The Minister of Labour should be aware that even the mechanics who are working for the government are buying their own tools . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes they are. You check it. You'll find that they purchase their own tools. The government is not buying their hand tools. So you're suggesting it for the private sector, Mr. Minister, but why is it that the government treats them the same way? You will force them to buy their own tools when they're hired by you and yet won't allow them to deduct this expense against their income tax. I say that isn't fair; that is certainly treating them as second class citizens. I'm not only referring to mechanics. The Saskatchewan Motor Dealers' Association has lobbied the government for many years to receive this benefit and to no avail. This is the first time, I believe, that a bill of this nature has been introduced in this legislature. But it doesn't just apply to mechanics. It applies to plumbers, carpenters, electricians and anyone who has to buy these tools or equipment or dress or whatever, for the conduct of their business.

I know we have listened to many eloquent speeches here tonight and carried on and on, and we do not have much time to discuss this one too long. I would urge members to give very serious consideration to this bill and see that it passes through this legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: — It was my understanding the member would move second reading of the bill at the conclusion of his remarks.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I move second reading of the bill.

MR. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Minister of Labour, during the comments made by the member for Regina South, you made the comment that the industry should be buying tools for the individuals working in mechanical repairs. I suggest to the minister that in the area where tools are supplied by the mechanics, they choose to have it that way. Then they have the type they want and so forth. It is interesting that a farmer, like myself, is allowed to write off tools used to repair machinery on the farm.

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The member for Arizona seems to want to get into the debate this evening. It's unfortunate he can't be here when the debates normally go on so he could keep in tune with the facts, but unfortunately he likes to spend his time in Arizona. And here comes the member for Saskatoon Riversdale. he has no responsibilities for his department again.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, we are discussing the bill on income tax. We should be concerned that those working men in the province who are required to learn their trade and purchase their tools be allowed to write off their expenses as they are incurred to assist them in making their living.

I think the minister is aware that because of metric conversion they are allowed to charge some of their tools on conversion. We are suggesting that they be able to write off all the tools required to make their living, the same as any businessman is allowed to. Therefore, I would request your support on this very important amendment for the working man who must buy tools for his livelihood.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: — The usual procedure is that I ask — is it the pleasure of the assembly to adopt the motion? — which I did. I heard several yeas. I heard no nays. Therefore there was no need to request a vote. I will take it at this point that it is carried . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We've gone beyond that point. I'm sorry.

Point of Order

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — Inform me if I'm not in order, but is it not customary when there is a voice vote, if there is any indecision in your mind, to ask that the nays and the ayes express their point of view. I didn't hear you put the question.

MR. SPEAKER: — It is customary, if there is any indecision, for me to ask for the ayes and the nays, but I had no reason to believe there was anyone opposed to it. I had no doubt in my mind; all I heard was yes. I heard no one say no.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION — VOTE 16

Item 1 (continued)

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — A question, Mr. Minister. With regard to a proposed bridge south of Eston, north of Abbey, has your department investigated this? I know for a number of years now there has been lobbying on the part of people in that area to have a bridge put into that cover crossing the river between the Landing bridge and the bridge north of Leader. Can you advise me whether or not this is a priority of your department, to build a bridge in that area now or in the next two to three years?

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation): — Mr. Chairman,, there have been studies made on location on the South Saskatchewan River, east of Leader between that and the lake. There are a number of studies on bridges, but there are no immediate plans for the construction of a bridge in the area the hon. member mentions.

MR. ANDREW: — I take it, Mr. Minister that you probably have a number of different communities looking for bridges in their given area. Can you give me any indication?

When you say it is not in the plans, is it in the list of priorities a fair way down in the number of bridges you are perhaps going to be building in the next foreseeable five years?

MR. KRAMER: — My staff informs me there is no priority list. It is an area where if there were funds available in these times of inflation, if we recognize that a bridge there would be desirable, and there are several other locations which are desirable. . . But we have not set up priorities.

MR. ANDREW: — An old problem, Mr. Minister, is this. For a number of years now, the people coming down and making representation to your department have always received that same answer. I think if you were fair to them, you would say it is not in the cards for you in the foreseeable future. Would that be a fair statement to make?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, it depends on what kind of crystal ball you have. Foreseeable future covers a fair distance. Hopefully, with the tremendous prosperity Saskatchewan is enjoying and is going to enjoy in the future, I would say a bridge would be built and several others would be built in the foreseeable future. But I will not tie myself to a commitment as to whether it is going to be five or ten years.

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Minister, has your department looked into the feasibility of a causeway, like the type used in Europe, and the cost of a causeway across a particular stretch of water as compared to a bridge?

MR. KRAMER: — We did one study on the North Saskatchewan looking at the possibility of a causeway. The type of causeway we have considered is a concrete structure. We use them here and there throughout Saskatchewan, as well as over lots of small rivers and creeks where a concrete base, actually a concrete road is built. The flood waters go right over it in the spring. Then when the water subsides and there is a normal flow, it flows down underneath through culverts.

That was not considered feasible on the North Saskatchewan River at Paynton. That is the only study we have made. It was not considered feasible for two reasons. There is a tremendous amount of ice which comes down in the spring and there is a tremendous flow of water. It was studied but it was just not considered feasible.

MR. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Minister of Highways, re the causeway statement you just made. There was a study done. I am not sure if our department did it. Some people suggested it was DNS that did some of the study. I don't understand how it would be them. There was a study done to see if it was feasible to put a causeway where the Warman ferry is. I received the information from Mr. Ian Brand, who is involved with the city of Saskatoon traffic department.

He suggested the reason it was turned down at the time was because it was done before the Diefenbaker Lake Gardiner Dam. But now that we have no run-off of ice as we had at that time (in fact, it would actually almost melt in its own area) the suggestion was 18-foot culverts, if I remember correctly, with the cement you referred to earlier. They now suggest it's very possible to do it at that particular spot because we have only about 10 feet of water at the deepest spot where the ferry goes across and it would be a much cheaper method of crossing the water there.

In talking to my own constituents many of them have suggested they wouldn't mind assisting the government if they wanted to experiment that way by hauling our natural

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resources, which are better known as stones, down for you to use for the break to develop that. I would suggest that would be a good spot to attempt something like that. We don't have the ice flow we used to have on the South Saskatchewan River because of the Gardiner Dam. The Warman crossing is a perfect spot because of the shallowness and because of the availability of farmers with a lot of stones who wouldn't mind helping you use those as a base. I would ask your department to do another check using that spot as a spot you could attempt.

MR. KRAMER: — There's nothing that can't be studied and it's true that the flow of the river has changed. I want to remind the member that the 18-foot culverts were in 1978. They're only three feet now. It was just a psychopathic slip you made there in talking about the 18-foot culverts. They are a lot shorter now than they were then when he was your fearless leader.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Kramer, they suggested that 18-foot culverts were what you needed to cause the proper flow . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Culverts — 85 foot culverts were what you needed for the proper flow of water to go through so that the flow downstream would be proper. The suggestion was a certain amount of cement and if there were sufficient rocks dumped in there, it would cause the channel to work. As the ferry boys will tell you, they have been dumping stones for years to narrow the channel that they go back and forth across. I suggest that it's very feasible and will not be a major expense and may even make it easier than having to build new bridges in Saskatoon because a lot of traffic would be able to come that way.

MR. KRAMER: — The member for Rosthern is trying to tell grandma how to suck eggs because we have been narrowing the streams for our ferries for years. In fact, the first narrowing of the stream was a suggestion by a former minister of agriculture, I.C. Nollet, at the ferry at Maymont which was continually silting up. He brought that idea along one day and it was tried out and it has been done since.

We will continue to look for better ways and means of crossing rivers because bridges are growing more and more expensive. If there's any way we can construct a causeway that is going to permit crossing and eliminate a ferry other than for a two or three week period when the river is high. I think the department has looked at these possibilities, and we will continue to study these in an effort to do things as economically as we possibly can.

MR. ANDREW: — One question, Mr. Minister. Looking at the estimates and this is not yours, on rural affairs, municipal ferry accommodation, X amount of dollars. Are some ferry services conducted by your department and others by rural affairs? Why are they not all under the Department of Highways? Does it not seem logical that if you're dealing with building the bridges, building the roads, you should also handle this aspect of it?

MR. KRAMER: — I would like to inform the member for Kindersley that the ferries are all under the Department of Municipal Affairs, not under highways.

MR. ANDREW: — Doesn't it make sense that they would be part of the road system, that they would be under the Department of Highways?

MR. KRAMER: — Let me tell you it was an idea that I believe was conceived by former Premier Anderson and we just haven't bothered changing it.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Just a few short question, Mr. Minister. In the town of Leader on the northwest corner just south of the cemetery I believe there is a quadrant of land that's owned by the department. The town council has expressed a desire for a camper rest stop, overnight type of rest stop. Considering Highway No. 21 is the main north-south link with people coming say north of North Battleford, Meadow Lake area, perhaps going down to Cypress or down into the United States, it's rather a lengthy drive. Do you think your department could look into the feasibility of making that into a rest stop? I think if you would provide the pavement and whatever, the town of Leader would assume the responsibility for serving that particular part plus taking care of it.

MR. KRAMER: — It may be a good idea, Mr. Chairman, but that is the responsibility of the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. The Department of Highways only provides the service and the cleaning service. All the rest stops are initiated and built by the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, then would you consider giving the little piece of land to tourism if they would undertake the project?

MR. KRAMER: — I am sure we would consider it and we probably might consider it favorably.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Another point I would like to bring up tonight is this proposed road in the Great Sand Hills which is causing grave concern in the southwest area, particularly to the people who live in that particular vicinity. Has your department been approached in any way to do a feasibility study or provide expertise or that type of thing?

MR. KRAMER: — I know there has been a petition that has been circulated and a request by the municipalities but this road now is municipal affairs. The area is under the jurisdiction of municipal affairs, or rural affairs rather. And if anything is done, the application would be considered by the Minister or Rural Affairs. I would think you should direct that question to that department.

MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Chairman, I am aware the minister answered some questions for the hon. member for Meadow Lake yesterday with respect to Highway No. 43. You may recall that on March 11 I asked you questions with regard to relocation of the highway and whether there were plans to relocate. You indicated there were no plans to relocate. In fact we got into a bit of a match for awhile. Your words were that there are surveys undertaken and studies undertaken but those are not plans. I didn't really get an answer as to whether you intended to do anything with Highway No. 43. I would like you to repeat again for my benefit your response to that same question.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I can give the same response as I did last night that there have been several petitions. We have had two petitions with almost I would say an equal number of names and against a relocation of the Highway No. 43. A number of letters have been received and I think they are in the possession at least of the member for Swift Current. I am sure copies have been sent to some members, pro and con. The whole procedure, not only on Highway No. 43 but on all highways is that if there is going to be relocation, that particular area is studied. The economics for and against are considered and a decision is made. That decision is certainly not in the making at this particular time. When it crosses my desk, whether it's affirmative or negative . . .

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when we decide to build that highway we will announce where the route will be, either on the old location or on another location.

I said earlier and I say again, at this point in time I consider a plan to be something which is done after a decision on location has been made. At this point in time there has been no decision made as to the location — whether it shall remain where it is or whether it shall be changed.

MR. HAM: — Thank you for that much information. Perhaps to correct the record or any insinuation of the record, I have received in excess of 300 letters or names on petitions opposing the proposed change. If any I've received only one letter in support of the highway. I don't know how many you've received, so it would be appreciated if you would table that information.

I'm not sure whether the minister is aware, and I'm not suggesting maybe this has anything to do with the highway being relocated, but I understand if it is relocation it will run adjacent or very close to the back door of the member for Morse. I'm not sure whether there's any promotion going on in his department or not.

Based on what you just told me, I'd like you to explain why you refused my April 22 motion requesting:

All studies, surveys, questionnaires, correspondence, reports, memoranda, aide-memoires, recommendations and any other documents of the Department of Highways with regard to the reconstruction or rerouting of Highway No. 43 from Highway No. 4 east of Highway No. 2 or any other alternate reconstruction or rerouting to adjacent highways.

I'm wondering why you refused (at last I assume you refused, it came though another minister) any information with respect to that highway. I'm wondering why you're so concerned about not supplying information to us about it.

MR. KRAMER: — I believe, Mr. Chairman, I've given all the information to the member and to the House I can give at this time. I assumed the first one would be sent (possibly one should not assume) . . . It may be that the prominent Conservative who took up the petition I received (I think his name is Button) in that area for a change of location . . . Probably since the allegiance has been changed he's no longer communicating with the member for Swift Current.

MR. HAM: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, to correct the record, I don't know the gentleman you're talking about. It was not him I received the letter from. My correspondence and petitions came long before any change.

MR. KRAMER: — I'd be pleased to send a copy of the petition to the member for Swift Current.

MR. HAM: — I'd appreciate that. You indicated there were no plans at present, if I can use the word plans again. Can you indicate within a matter of months or years, or do you have an indication now that there are going to be changes to that highway. Apparently you've made studies. You must have some knowledge as to whether you're going to make a change within the next year or two.

MR. KRAMER: — I believe the west end from Highway No. 4 east is planned for

construction. Certainly it is one of the candidates for construction. I would say sometime in the near future there will be plans. The plans will be drafted by the management people in my department after a decision has been made as to whether or not it shall be rebuilt. When rebuilding is decided upon plans will be put forth, surveys will be made and a route will be chosen. We haven't reached that stage yet, but it could happen within the next two or three years.

MR. HAM: — Are you suggesting, Mr. Minister that surveys have not been made to this point? I understood they had been.

MR. KRAMER: — My staff inform me there have been no surveys made.

MR. HAM: — The question that comes to mind then is why do we have 300 or more people down there concerned about a highway being rerouted when there are no plans, no surveys, and apparently no discussion?

MR. KRAMER: — I wouldn't have the slightest idea. But I know there is a lot of gossip and rumour about, which springs from nowhere. I would advise the member and all the people who have written, that we will inform them when plans are being decided upon. That is all I can say at this time. The innuendo that the member for Swift Current is putting forward is that a route will be chosen because certain people live along a certain road. I want to assure him that policy went out with the Liberal and Conservative governments 25 or 30 years ago.

MR. HAM: — It may be my thick skull (and I'm not afraid to admit that) but I have difficulty understanding why we have the vast majority of people in Mr. Gross's constituency (if I can use his name) concerned about a highway that may not be rerouted. You say you have many letters in your office supporting this highway to be rerouted, but nobody has ever surveyed it. Nobody has even talked about it. I'm wondering if we're not wasting our time talking about a highway that's not going to be rerouted. I just can't understand all this. Can you explain it?

MR. KRAMER: — I can't read the minds (heaven forbid if I could) of the people at Vanguard and Glenbain, and through that area, who have written or why they have written. I have no intention of trying. I know there have been lots of letters. I can say this: there has been nothing from my office suggesting anything will be done except that we are intending to rebuild that highway. When we rebuild it we are going to rebuild that road in the most economical fashion possible. And we will rebuild it in order to serve the people in Saskatchewan, not only the local people, but the through traffic, as best we can.

MR. HAM: — On the comment of not being able to read the minds, I can appreciate that. But on that note, would you agree, when the time comes that you do have a plan to rebuild or reroute that road, you will hold public hearings in that area so those people can speak their minds?

MR. KRAMER: — As far as I'm concerned I have no problem with public hearings. I have seen a lot of rerouting done over the last, not only 28 years but the last 35 years. I know very well public hearings only result in a tremendous public squabble pro and con and solve nothing. What I rely on is the advice of my engineering staff who are going to build a road that is going to be the most economical, the nearest distance between two points for the most part (unless there are other mitigating circumstances), that is going to serve the public of Saskatchewan and Canada the best way possible. That's the way it

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should be built, not on the basis of local input. The coffee row experts always have better ways of doing things than the engineers.

MR. HAM: — I wouldn't deny the fact you have experts working in your department. I agree, we should have experts working in each government department. However, I would hope there's more than just coffee row experts in this case, because if you have the same number of names as I have, obviously it's the vast majority of the people in the area whose feelings you will take into account. That's extremely important.

You mentioned you have completed some studies. Would it be incumbent upon me to ask you to table those studies along with the petitions you have in your custody?

MR. KRAMER: — I didn't say I had completed the studies. I said there are studies under way.

MR. HAM: — Well, I hope you and your departmental officials will keep the people in that area well-posted on any plans rather than go through this again. Notify them well in advance instead of having your survey crews rush in some day to start staking out a road, and then having a rash of letters and phone calls to both of us.

Off that subject for a moment, Mr. Minister. Once or twice over the last two years of estimates, I asked you to take a serious look at increasing the number of guardrails, which you have a lack of in this province, particularly in hazardous spots where guardrails are normally installed — in hilly conditions. I am thinking of the hills at Diefenbaker Lake, Saskatchewan Landing, as one small example. I know the minister has driven a lot in the past, and I have too, but I have to suggest that of all the places in Canada and the United States I have driven, this province probably has the most hazardous curves on hills and the most dangerous areas for travel without guardrails. I wonder if you have at this point changed your attitude or your policy toward guardrails?

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I get a little tired of statements made which have no foundation in fact. The member says he has travelled in a lot of other places. I travelled through Alberta and British Columbia, and passed 200 or 300 foot precipices where there were not guardrails whatever. We have them on medium grade, not enough possibly, but certainly on very, very small inclines; we have guardrails on curves and so on. And I think it's ridiculous. I would just like you to visit our neighbor. Let's just take a look.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Where are we going — Alberta?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, you bet. We heard something last night about safety. Let's take a look at the record. In Saskatchewan, fatalities last year decreased in spite of 200 million miles of increased traffic. It decreased from 306 fatalities to 296 — a decrease in spite of increased traffic of 3 per cent. In Alberta, fatalities increased from 573 to 692. That's per million miles travelled.

AN HON. MEMBER: — It's still less per capita.

MR. KRAMER: — It is not less per capita, it's per million miles travelled.

AN HON. MEMBER: — It's still less per capita.

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, the member is always getting his mouth into gear

before he has his brain hitched up. The fact of the matter is the criteria is exactly the same — it's per million miles travelled.

Let's take a look at Saskatchewan injuries. We had a reduction of 10 per cent in Saskatchewan, while they had an increase of 40 per cent in injuries in Alberta. In Alberta, injuries increased from 14,077 to 19,700, whereas in Saskatchewan they went — I'm talking about injuries and the accidents follow exactly the same.

AN HON. MEMBER: — How many more accidents?

MR. KRAMER: — Many more accidents — the accident rate is up in Alberta by about 40 to 50 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What's it up in Saskatchewan?

MR. KRAMER: — What's it up in Saskatchewan? The accident rate in Saskatchewan is up 23 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Since seat belt legislation.

MR. KRAMER: — Not since seat belt legislation. The amount of accidents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! Order, please. I think we have kept fairly good decorum in the House. I would say to any of the members who want to ask a question, they will have an opportunity but I would appreciate it if they'd rise in their place and not be speaking from their seats all the time. The minister has the floor at present and I would just ask your co-operation. I think we could get along much better.

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, once again, if they want to take the injury accident ratio in Saskatchewan, one person is injured in every five accidents. In Alberta, one person is injured in every four accidents. A person is about 25 per cent less likely to be injured in Saskatchewan when involved in a traffic accident. These are not my statistics; they're comparisons by our safety experts in Alberta and Saskatchewan. So let us not make the mistake of talking about unsafe highways; the fact of the matter is we have more roads. Someone said something about accidents in the cities. Mr. Chairman, 70 per cent — 70.5 per cent to be exact — of the accidents in Saskatchewan occurred in the urban areas, not on the highways but in the urbans. We had the lowest accident ratio in on our highways in seven years last year. It went down to 143 fatalities which was the lowest in seven years.

MR. HAM: — Statistics can be twisted or used by anyone for any particular purpose if they like. Mr. Minister, you have to agree that for the most part we have fairly straight, flat roads. We don't have the obstacles of mountains or the terrain for example, which they have in Alberta — the increased population they have in Alberta. I'm not going to stand here and defend Alberta, let me put it that way.

But with respect to the guardrails, within a 50-mile limit of Swift Current, from Lake Pelletier in the South on Highway No. 343 on some fairly dangerous curves, there are no guardrails. Just south of Swift Current, Highway No. 4, and the first coulee south of Swift Current, there are no guardrails and people have been killed there; I don't know how many over the past 25 years. I mentioned north of Swift Current, on the Landing road (this is just my area now which I'm talking about, not other parts of Saskatchewan) there are no guardrails at all and there are some very dangerous curves.

I've driven mountainous roads in Alberta and I've driven mountainous roads in Arizona which make you drunk just to drive on them, they're so crooked through the mountains but they're completely guardrailed all the way through. I'm say I'm glad we have fewer accidents and our accident rate is increasing less than other provinces. Let's be number one totally by putting up the guardrails where we need them. You know, we talked about it last night — increased funding for your department. Guardrails are extremely important and we're very fortunate in some of these areas, we haven't had more accidents, more deaths.

MR. KRAMER: — We spent three-quarters of a million, Mr. Chairman. We spent three-quarters of a million on guardrails alone on our highway system last year. That buys a lot of tin or steel or whatever they're made of.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I have about three question that I want to ask. It may develop into more than three but there are three basic questions. Two are local concerns and one is of a provincial nature. The first question I want to ask is with regard to a request by the R.M. 151, which is in the Rocanville area, regarding the movement of potash by truck, usually American trucks which are bringing goods up into Canada and taking loads of potash back. They're loading up at the PCS mine, Rocanville Division, and overloading according to the weight restrictions of Highway No. 8. Since they are overloaded they have to avoid the weigh scales which are at Moosomin, therefore they're taking a municipal road cutting off through into Manitoba to avoid the weight scales. Of course, it's pounding out the municipal roads and subsequently they have made a request for your department to ask you what you're going to do about it; they have vowed they will take a backhoe out there and they'll dig up the municipal road, if necessary, to stop the movement of potash via the trucks on that particular stretch of road.

So I would like to know firstly, Mr. Minister, if you're aware of the concern that I raise which has been raised with you by the R.M. 151 and if so, what action to this point are you prepared to take in that regard?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I thought I had answered that question last night. I guess the member was not here. But the fact of the matter is we have met with the municipal council. We have had discussions. The Minister of Rural Affairs has been in on the discussions. Those roads being used as diversion roads (if I can use that term) and certainly being looked at and are under consideration. We have said that to municipalities (not only 151), those suffering from extra haul by the potash trucks coming in from Manitoba and probably from Manitoba through down to the United States. We will discuss with the potash companies the possibility and certainly the responsibility for putting some money into the upgrading and the maintenance of those roads. This is an ongoing study.

I think thus far the municipalities are satisfied. I haven't heard of any threats to dig up the road because it seems to me a few local people must use those roads. I think the possibility of digging them up and digging ditches through them would be slim. The danger is being generated because of these fly-by-night truckers coming in because they can take a back haul. They are hard to pinpoint. There is no doubt they are using these roads and something must be done about it.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I, of course, asked the minister responsible for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan during discussions of Crown corporations more

or less the same question. My proposal to the minister, at that time, was that PCS should be loading trucks only to the load limits allowable on Highway No. 8. Now if they did that, there would be no reason for the potash trucks (whether they be American or whatever) to take any other route but Highway No. 8 because it is not all that much shorter going through Manitoba anyway. Then they wouldn't have to be concerned about going by the weigh scales. So, therefore, the obvious question is: is there any way that you, as Minister of Highways, in consultation with the minister responsible for PCS can work out an arrangement whereby, in fact, PCS only loads these trucks to the load limits placed on the highways they are required to travel on?

MR. KRAMER: — It sounds like an idea worth exploring. I haven't talked to the minister in charge of the potash corporation. We have had the same problem in Hudson Bay, for instance, where truckers are hauling tremendous overloads into Hudson Bay of logs and hauling them into Prince Albert. They are a little difficult to catch. I have suggested more than once that the onus might well be on the receiver of the goods. In this case the receiver is in Saskatchewan.

MR. BIRKBECK: — O.K. Thank you, Mr. Minister, on that particular problem. The other one I want to pose is with reference to an improvement, hopefully, on Highway No. 8. It has missed project array now every year since I was elected in 1975. I wouldn't want to think the people down there just simply had to vote right to get some roads improved.

Just for a moment, Mr. Chairman, I would reply to the minister and say, yes, I was absent from the House yesterday. I might add it was the first day of this session I have not been in the House. I did ask my hon. colleague, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, to ask some questions if I was not able to get back in time and obviously I wasn't. He did that. I asked him what questions he asked. I wasn't aware he had asked that particular one with reference to the movement of potash over municipal roads. Notwithstanding that, with regard to (hopefully) improvements in Highway No. 8 the improvements are coming down. They're in the Saltcoats riding now. I suppose maybe that is a peace offering to the former minister of agriculture on his demotion.

Nonetheless, when it comes down through my constituency, hopefully in the near future, it's the wish of the town of Moosomin. . . I will side you with you at least in part on this. Many years ago when the highway was built the town said, we want that highway coming down main street so we can get pavement on main street. I have to, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, have some sympathy with the government in this regard.

Now the town has grown up and all these trucks and traffic are coming down their main street. Now they say, we don't want this traffic here any more. We have the pavement; now we don't want the traffic. We want you to run Highway No. 8 straight through where it should have gone in the first place. That will be Cook road at Moosomin.

This is something I would like to see done, notwithstanding the fact that I do have some sympathy with you in that they want to have their cake and eat it too. Looking at it from purely a safety measure point of view, which you're quite concerned about — you have your survival club and so on. Talking about safety, the Cook road, as it's known, is a main artery (it's the western extremity by-passing Moosomin). It is a gravel road and there are residential areas on both sides of the Cook road. As a matter of fact Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has some units in there as well.

The problem is simply that the traffic there should be going the speed limit, which is about 25 mph or 30 mph or 50 kilometres. But people are not travelling the speed limit

at all because they feel they are outside the town; they're going through there at more like 50 mph.

It is an extreme danger because we have a lot of young families living in the newly developed area on the west side of Cook road. Certainly there are a good number of young people and a good number of older people in a senior citizens housing project down there as well. There is a railroad there which is going to need a controlled intersection put on it, lights that is.

Certainly a project by your department to take Highway No. 8 straight through, by-passing Moosomin, would be the logical thing to do in anyone's judgment. I would like to know, Mr. Minister if you are giving that very serious consideration. I know the town is going to be pressing for it. Certainly I will be doing all I can to work in co-operation with you and the town of Moosomin in getting that particular stretch of road improved. There's a real need to have it improved. I'd like to know if you've given it any consideration whatsoever.

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, we have. We have given it consideration and my deputy minister tells me he's been out there and discussed it with them four times at least. I have met with the town council two or three times. I think the member is probably aware of that. But at this point in time there has been no affirmative decision made on it. I agree, it's a problem and it may continue to be a growing problem, but at this time there is no decision to by-pass.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to put another question to the minister in another area, being Moosomin, of course. With regard to the proposed by-pass, all the land affected by the Trans-Canada by-pass has been inappropriately dealt with.

There are problems I brought to our department's attention and I would commend your department for having taken some suggestions from me as a member on the opposite side of the House and settling with those people.

There's only one area left now that has to be dealt with. I would like to know if your department has made any offer whatsoever to the town of Moosomin for the settlements with regard to their sports ground area which will be affected by the proposed by-pass. They are at present wanting to relocate the sports ground but before they can do that they need to know what your offer is for that particular piece of ground, if you like to put it simply. That's one of the problems the town is grappling with now. They really can't make a proposal, an offer if you like, for a new parcel of land until they have some idea what your department is going to be able to pay them to relocate. That's basically where it's at right now. I would just like to know, Mr. Minister, if you have any ideas about what your proposals will be there for the town of Moosomin as well.

MR. KRAMER: — We are actually waiting for them to make a decision. They do not want us to buy the old sports ground until they have completed a deal which I believe would be south of the town. I guess it's sort of their move.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, then I wonder, Mr. Minister if they make a decision and make a deal with a farmer in that area to purchase a certain amount of land to relocate their sports ground, and just to use some figures, let's say that that parcel of land and the costs of relocating their sports ground and so on and so forth would amount to \$30,000, would it be reasonable to suggest that your department would compensate them within 10 per cent one way or the other of that figure?

MR. KRAMER: — I don't know the purchase of the sports ground has anything to do with the value of the land that we are going to appraise and buy. We will purchase that land on the basis of the present day value, no more, no less. We are not in the business of subsidizing sports grounds. Culture and youth has that.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, that's fine.

MR. KRAMER: — It may work out to be the same, but the point is I can't be in the business of subsidizing sports grounds.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, somehow I can't help but feel the minister and I are getting along too well on this particular subject. O.K. Notwithstanding that I appreciate the minister's answers. I know it's difficult for him to give a precise answer as to how he would settle those problems.

Mr. Chairman, if I could just move out of the local concern area and move to a concern that I have on a provincial basis, with reference to building your highway — I wouldn't really call it a highway— your temporary road you put across Lake Athabasca every winter. I would like to know firstly, how much does it cost the department to put that highway across (if I can just use that term) Lake Athabasca every winter? Do you have a rough estimate as to what the cost is?

MR. KRAMER: — The cost would be less, far less this year. It should be anyway because last year we built an all-weather road to Cluff Lake. Therefore, we only had some 100 miles of winter road to build rather than more than 200 we had before. I'm going from memory now, and I'll give you the last year's figures in a moment when the staff have them. I have them from memory, sort of \$500,00 to \$600,000 a year. It started out with \$400,000 and kept on going up with inflation. The strange part of it is, the maintenance of that winter road and the tonnage hauled over it was actually equal to the annual year-round maintenance on similar roads throughout the province. Because of the fact that it was a concentrated haul and if you took so many dollars per ton hauled, it was actually, surprisingly enough, an economic figure.

But the important thing about the road, Mr. Chairman, to Uranium City was that for the first time in many years a town, a good-sized town, a Saskatchewan community, had access to the rest of Saskatchewan by road. I think of the psychology of that because unfortunately over the years, waterways and air were the only means of communication.

Because I guess of the Cluff Lake mine we had to go most of the way, so we went all the way. Hopefully something will happen in the future. I've discussed it and I don't know what the end question is but we are hoping because of waterways and because the federal people have accepted throughout Canada the responsibility for water transport, that we may be able to work out a deal for a water-crossing by ferry or something in the future. This will continue to provide a link because it would be very easy to go the last 60 miles to the south shore of Lake Athabasca. Hopefully there will be more development north of Lake Athabasca which will make the road more and more economic as the years go by.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, following on the remarks by the minister with reference to providing a service for Uranium City and of course the subsequent crossing of Lake Athabasca every year for a very limited time — 30 days or so is the

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most you can get out of it. It might be slightly more than that, but roughly. In keeping with my own vision in the long run for northern Saskatchewan and looking at the potential development in the North, I would like to make what I would consider a very unique proposal to your as Minister of Highways and I would include whatever departments of government are required to put this package together. I would like very much to see Uranium City lined up as you say with the rest of the province.

Looking at the potential that's going to be developing there over the next decade. I would like the government to consider the possible use of a hovercraft on that lake so you could use that particular vehicle of transportation on an ongoing basis. You could use it in the wintertime, you could use it in the summertime and you wouldn't have to worry about putting your temporary road across and having a concentrated haul. You would have a constant movement of goods back and forth across Lake Athabasca and you would be able to provide a very adequate service.

I would just like to throw that out as a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, to the minister and I would of course suggest that the minister take it under advisement and do some studies on that particular idea and concept as well and to report back to the House maybe in the fall sitting. I think you could have a study done. I'm sure that if you were in touch with Great Britain, they could give you a good indication as to what the hovercraft is doing for them with regard to the crossings back and forth of the English Channel. It is used very extensively there. I think they could give you a rough idea of what the cost of a hovercraft would be: the maintenance of them, what they could haul, and so on and so forth. So that's the suggestion I throw out to you with the optimism I hold for the North and the development thereof.

I just repeat I would like very much for you to consider it and possibly bring a recommendation back to the House in the fall sitting.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's thinking.

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, it sure is. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to inform the member that I was very optimistic about the same idea about six or seven years ago. I continue to be optimistic about that idea. In fact, the federal government and the Government of Alberta spent a lot of money on an experimental hover ferry across the Peace River at High Level, Alberta. The former minister of transportation for Alberta, the Hon. Hugh Horner, invited me to the official opening and launching of what they called Pioneer 1. I was one of the first people to travel by hover ferry across the Peace, along with Mr. Horner and a number of other dignitaries and folks. About 400 people were there.

I'm very disappointed, and I know the people of Alberta are disappointed, to read just a week ago in a press release that after spending between \$5 million and \$6 million between DREE and the Alberta government, Pioneer 1 has now been hauled into the Department of Highways maintenance yard and is sitting in dry doc, as it were because it has been a failure. I was hopeful, I really was. I thought it was a great idea and I thought it was our answer for Athabasca. Now there may be other ways of doing it but the difference between Lake Athabasca and the English Channel is that Lake Athabasca freezes over. The ice situation is a real problem. That's what they found on the Peace River. Some new ideas — there is never anything completely dead. There is one hover ferry working in northern British Columbia that the same news release says is working with some success. I believe Pioneer 1 will be taken to Ontario and they'll attempt to use it where the ice conditions are not as bad.

So yes, hover ferry or hovercraft is something which continues to be examined, but it's a real setback. Pioneer 1 was a real hope for us, until we began getting bad news from the Alberta people last year and the year before. That's the story on hover but it isn't all bad. There are people talking about going across Fond-du-Lac and through there. But that's worse than building through the Rockies. On the north side there are 1,000-foot eskers — that's an impossible dream. We have to figure out a way of getting across the lake.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 7 agreed.

Item 8

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, not long ago the Minister of revenue, Supply and Services announced an increase in the cost of driver license from \$3 to \$5 in the case of private, and from \$6 to \$17 commercial, as I recall. I don't have it in front of me, but I think those were the amounts. By the way, in the case of the private, it was 66.66 per cent increase in the cost. He justified this increase by saying it was needed for the increase in highway maintenance. I note from the subvote, Mr. Minister, that our increase is slightly more than 4 per cent this year which is far less than the inflation rate. I think this has been mentioned before. The actual dollar amount is slightly over \$2 million. The amount to be generated from the increase in the driver licenses was to be some \$7 million. Why the discrepancy and the deception, if you like?

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly have never found my colleague, the Minister of Revenue to ever be deceptive. He's never been anything but frank. When we're talking about collecting revenue, revenues are collected and go into a consolidated fund regardless of the source. But if a study is made on the amounts traditionally thought to be the revenue that should go into the building of highways and roads and the maintenance of roads, there was a time not so long ago when that revenue collected from gasoline and licences and so on, provided up to 90 per cent. I think there was a time when it was lightly over the total highway budget. Last year the revenue from those sources amounted to 57 per cent of the highway budget. It's obvious that when the revenue from those traditional sources is dropping immediately you think about the drop in roads.

I can't tell you what was in the mind of the Minister of Revenue and Supply, but certainly one of the deficiencies in the total money supply is from those revenues that have always been considered to be . . . Not that they were because they went into the central fund; all of them do, wedding licences included. And so, as I say, I can't speak for the minister. He speaks very well for himself. On that premise, this year I wouldn't be surprised if we're down to 50 per cent. The rest will have to be drawn from other sources of revenues besides the licences, the gasoline tax and all those things.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the minister for the explanation because we entirely agree. We have been saying right along that revenues collected from the government go into the consolidated fund or the general revenues. That is right, so tell me why is it the government will come up with these excuses, and these reasons to deceive the public when they are coming out with an increase in whatever taxation you see fit to raise? That's the point we are making and that's the point we have

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been making all along. Those revenues are general revenue going into the consolidated fund. That's right, but don't use it as an excuse to raise the taxes or raise licence fees or registration fees or insurance costs that you needed for this reason. Let's be honest with the people of this province for a change. Thank you.

MR. KRAMER: — Well, being honest for this government is certainly no change. We have always been more than honest, Mr. Chairman, and I resent that suggestion. I say again, that when the Minister of Revenue and Supply chooses, he could have chosen others especially when you see a drastic drop in the share of those revenues. I think it was perfectly logical for him to say, that's one of the reasons he chose that one. He could have chosen others.

The fact of the matter is, I don't know what the member for Regina South would choose. He says we need more money. He says we're not spending enough money on roads. We're getting more for our tax dollar, and our contractors are supplying dirt for less than any other prairie province. I'm talking about yards of dirt and comparable circumstances. The contractors are providing more efficient service. Our staff in the Department of Highways — we have one person to every 2.5 working in our neighboring province to the west. That's per mile of road or whatever you wish. I don't think we have to make excuses for any rise in taxation when we are honestly raising them, Mr. Chairman, in an effort to provide better service.

Item 8 agreed.

Items 5 to 21 agreed.

Vote 16 agreed.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION — CAPITAL EXPENDITURE — VOTE 17

Item 1 agreed.

Item 2

MR. KATZMAN: — Are any of those funds in this subvote used to subsidize the purchase of busses and so forth or is that municipal?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, that's right.

MR. KATZMAN: — Could you send me a breakdown at a later date of who you plan to subsidize for busses this year?

MR. KRAMER: — Yes, we can supply that to you. The Minister of Revenue says our busses don't break down but I know, that's not given.

Item 2 agreed.

Item 3 agreed.

Vote 17 agreed.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION — HERITAGE FUND — VOTE 17

Items 1 to 3 agreed.

Item 4

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, is that the one you're getting some money back from the Cluff Lake mine or was it the other one?

MR. KRAMER: — That was the road north of La Loche. A portion was paid by Amok Limited.

Item 4 agreed.

Item 5 agreed.

Vote 17 agreed.

**DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION — SUPPLEMENTARY —
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE — VOTE 17**

Item 1 agreed.

Vote 17 agreed.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC BOARD — ORDINARY EXPENDITURE — VOTE 15

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We're now going to deal with the highway traffic board. Mr. Minister, would you like to introduce your staff there?

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation): — Mr. Chairman, it's a pleasure for me to introduce the staff who are here with me. Bill Sheard, who is no stranger to this House was formerly and for many years our chief engineer with the Department of Highways. If he had remained, he would probably have made that 150 years of service without me. We have Mr. Henbury, who is in charge of our driver licensing; Mr. Gordon Russell, Carl Shiels, our director of safety, who was formerly with transportation and was the person who was our safety director when we initiated Traffic Safety '77. We have Mr. Landry and Mr. Hammond behind the rail. With that, Mr. Chairman, I would simply like to point out that I am not as well acquainted probably with the highway traffic board as I am with the department which we just went through, having inherited the department on July 1; my chairman came with us in August. But we will attempt to go through the estimates for the highway traffic board as expeditiously as we possibly can.

Item 1

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I agree with you that hopefully we can move through these estimates quickly with co-operation from both sides of the floor tonight. I think you pretty well know what my first question is going to be. Mr. Minister it has to do with one Mr. Randy Wangler of Wilkie, Saskatchewan. I know the Attorney General has said there will be discussion within the cabinet and a decision would be forthcoming but that was some two or three weeks ago. My concern, Mr. Minister is just this young man. I am asking you on behalf of this young man, with all due respect to you, Mr. Minister, that he be given the opportunity to take the test.

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I think the member has a bit of a misconception about the role of the board and the role of the minister. I was informed that not too long ago he made a statement in the local paper that the unfortunate Wangler situation was before the cabinet. That, Mr. Chairman, is completely untrue, because the cabinet does not consider the licensing of anyone. The highway traffic board is a quasi-judicial body that makes decisions in the same way as courts and so on. They work under a policy of rules and regulations which are prevalent throughout Canada. The case of the young man that the member for Wilkie brings forward . . . I would like to point out to him that he has stated publicly on more than one occasion that he has been unable to get any answer from me.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, he has never by letter, telephone or anything else, asked for any advice from me. If he had, I would have told him that he had to do what I have to do if I have a case, and that is to query the board. I am not as a minister (and I passed the word along to the member for Rosetown-Elrose not so long ago) going to be interfering with the decisions of the board. The Wangler case has been studied.

The responsible people on the board have discussed the situation with jurisdictions right across Canada. They have not closed the files on it yet but there is no place in Canada where they would recommend that a person with one arm be allowed to have a class 3 licence. There have been some exceptions in even those areas, I am informed in asking the board. The only thing I can do is ask the board and the responsible people there. There is no area that they would advise. I understand that this case has gone to the ombudsman. I believe there was assistance or the CBC ombudsman was also inquiring into it. All of the decisions have been supportive of the board's original decision. The Saskatchewan rules over the years have been that that particular physical deficiency will not allow a person to take an examination.

Now the member has said, and I've heard him say, what do you expect him to do? I believe it was a mistake to send a form letter type of thing that said, look, if your condition changes, we will consider. I am saying there should have been a different explanation indicating to this boy rather than the form letter which was unfortunate.

We are part of the Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Administration. Saskatchewan belongs to that. The rules are discussed every year. We are prepared to take this matter up at the next meeting of the board (that will be the final discussion on it) to see if there is any change in the advice we get. The Canadian Medical Association met a month ago in Winnipeg and recommended against any change in the rules on drivers of heavy duty vehicles. Our own medical examiner here recommends, the board tells me, against it. Every jurisdiction we know of either said they would not advise us to do it if they have any exception, or the great majority of them say no way.

MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I don't know where to start first. But the Attorney General (I don't know; I do not have time to go through Hansard) did say and I'm not quoting but roughly he said the minister was reviewing this. Now you have just said the minister is not going to interfere in this.

Mr. Minister, I'm going to try to keep cool on this. The members opposite think this is a big joke. How many of you have a son who doesn't have an arm and wants to work in Saskatchewan? Now laugh about that. All of a sudden it's not funny any more is it?

AN HON. MEMBER: — You are the joker.

MR. GARNER: — The Minister of Health says I'm the joker. You have two arms.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Ah, come off it.

MR. GARNER: — Come of it nothing, Roy. You know it. Mr. Minister, this young man was allowed to take the written test. Is that not true? The minister said yes. He is nodding his head saying yes. O.K. The young man was allowed to take the written test. If he was not going to be able to finish and take the driver's test, why was he allowed to take the written test in the first place? You take him halfway to the mountain and leave him on hold. Is this democracy? No. Is this fair play? No.

The young man goes up North in the wintertime to work on the oil rigs. Do you think an oil company would hire him to be a roughneck if he weren't qualified?

Mr. Minister, I'm not asking you to just give him the licence. I'm saying give him a chance to take the test. If he doesn't pass the test I'll back it up; he shouldn't have the licence. But he should have the opportunity to take the test in a free society. You know that and so do the members opposite.

You are dealing with a young man who wants to work in Saskatchewan, who doesn't want to go on social aid or unemployment insurance. He wants to work. He wants to better himself. And you are laving him hung out to dry; so are all your government members. Mr. Minister, that is wrong. Now first of all answer me. Why was the young man allowed to take the written test?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, it's pretty obvious that when an examiner goes anywhere, a group of people comes in and they do not at this point in time . . . The boy does have a licence to drive ordinary vehicles. A lot of handicapped people have. That's one thing the written test did discover and an examiner discovered that the boy . . . I admire the young man very much, and I have tremendous sympathy for him. The members points his finger at me as if I am the person saying he shall or shall not have. It is totally untrue.

This is a rule that is not only in Saskatchewan. This is a rule that was established through experience and judgment of the Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Administrators, the medical association and our own medical examiner. All of them say it is unsafe for this young man to drive the heavy vehicle because circumstances can arise.

They tell me that in emergencies he would not be able to react in spite of all the efficiencies he has developed. I say to the member for Wilkie that he had aroused false hopes and exposed this young boy to a number of things he should not have. I think it would be far better to direct this very bright young man into another field of endeavour that, with his ambition, he can do rather than expose him to this humiliation.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister this is a family operation and this government is always talking about family farms and helping families out. We have a father and three sons running a very efficient excavating-trucking business. Are you telling me now I should go back to Wilkie and say to that young man, don't work with your father and your brothers, get another job; the government doesn't think you're qualified to better yourself in that job?

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What about the handicapped people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister? I hear this government preaching that they help the handicapped people. You say you have sympathy for him. I don't want your sympathy and neither does he. He wants the opportunity to work and show that he is a man. He is more of a man than any other man in this House, on both sides. Mr. Minister, this is shocking. There's no other way to describe it.

You maybe did not see the television show we did and you maybe think I shouldn't have put the young man through it. Don't ever think that I didn't think about that. This young man is 19 years of age. His personality is still shaping. He's trying, trying to get ahead, trying to better himself. And I've got a government that just puts their hand down and says no. Is this government's attitude to try to break this young man? To come down on the handicapped people?

A little bit of information, Mr. Minister, for you. The young man has a class 5 driver's licence right now, and he has an artificial limb, 4 inches on his arm. He has the licence right now to drive a single-axle, five-speed, two-speed axle truck, manual steering. Now, he wants a licence to drive a tandem axle, just an extra set of wheels, automatic, air brakes, power steering, an easier vehicle for the young man to drive, which he can drive and he proved beyond a shadow of a doubt to the news people who came out and photographed this. He can drive a payloader. He can drive a cat. I don't think there's anything made he can't drive, and he wants to drive, and he wants to work, and he wants to better himself. I have a government here which just want to regulate him right out of work, put him on social aid, unemployment insurance, break his spirit, destroy his personality, send him to Alberta.

Mr. Minister, I'm not going to stand for it. I have asked you nicely. I'm not asking, as I've said before and if I repeat it a hundred times in this Chamber, for you to just go and give him a licence. I'm asking for you to send an examiner out there and if he can pass the test your examiner gives him, he deserves the licence. If he doesn't pass it, I'm the first one to back you up and say, no, he shouldn't have the licence.

I'm calling for a fair deal for a young man who wants to work in Saskatchewan. It's of no benefit to me. I'm a fortunate man. I have two sons. They have both their arms. You have a very fine young son. You should be proud of him and I don't doubt you are.

MR. KRAMER: — I have two of them.

MR. GARNER: — Well, you have two of them. I haven't met the other one yet. And it's wonderful. They have both their arms. But I'm talking, Mr. Minister, about a young man with the rest of his future ahead of him. I'm going to read a letter from your highway traffic board dated October 24, 1979.

Mr. A.R. Wangler, Wilkie, Saskatchewan. Dear sir: As you are aware the highway traffic board at its meeting of October 23, 1979, reviewed the contents of your driving file, including letter of reference written on your behalf.

I would just like to stop right there. I have letters of reference from the local mayor, his school principal and the local RCMP detachment. Now, Mr. Minister, you tell me why the local RCMP detachment would want this boy to have a driver's licence to drive this

big truck if they don't think he's qualified? You know it's wrong. Why cannot this government put politics aside? Put them out the door and give this young . . . No, you're shaking your head. I'll go on with the letter:

The board directed that in accordance with section 96(4) of The Vehicles Act, your driver's licence No. 09755281, remain at a class 5. Further the board directed that pursuant to section 72(g) of The Vehicles Act (and here's the key) you will continue to be refused issue of a class 1, 2, 3 or 4 driver's licence until such time as you supply this office with a satisfactory medical report.

Now, Mr. Minister, you and I and every medical practitioner in this province know he cannot produce that report because he lost his arm helping a friend bale. He's adjusted, Mr. Minister. It's been a terrific adjustment. But unless you live through it yourself you don't know. He is a fine young man with a clean driving record. 'And at such time as you supply this office with a satisfactory medical report' — now what kind of a letter is that to send out of your department?

If you have a driver's licence of any class except class 5, please return it to this office immediately. Yours truly . . .

And I can't make out the signature. It's for B. Miller, the secretary. You must have a photocopy of it. Mr. Minister, why? And I ask again, why would this young man . . . You said they found out he had an artificial limb when they went out to give him the written test. Why, before he took the written test, didn't you say, no, I'm sorry, you won't fit the classifications under The Vehicles Act? You can't take the written test. That was the time to say whoa to the young man, not first let him take the written test and pass it. Then when he comes back to take the driver's test, you say, whoa, we can't do it. Then you send an official out from Regina or Saskatoon (I don't remember where; the mother told me about it) to let the family down easy. Mr. Minister, how do you let that young man fall way off that mountain? The law is there and it states he can't have a driver's licence. He should not have been allowed to take the written test, first of all. Why can you not, in this case, Mr. Minister, put politics aside? You've gone part way with this young man. Let's give him the test. Let's give this man the opportunity to take the test. He is well enough prepared and mature enough to handle it. I know the young man very well. If he doesn't pass the test, he knows he won't get the driver's licence. That's fair ball.

Mr. Minister, you are the dean of this House, and I have held a lot of respect for you. I don't beg very often in my life, but I am begging you here tonight as an hon. minister of the Crown to give this young man a chance at this test. That's all I'm asking. I'm not asking it for myself or for anyone else. I'm asking it for Randy Wangler. Give him the chance for the test and you won't hear another word from me on it. I'm just asking you. In fact, Mr. Minister, and I don't do this very often, I am begging you. Give that young man a chance for a test.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Chairman, I wish the member would not continually skate around what I've already told him. I have told him these rules are not made by me, fortunately or unfortunately. The rules regarding handicapped drivers are rules accepted and developed across Canada by the Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Administrators. Every year there are reviews of those rules. Even if I had the power, I would

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certainly be remiss in my duty, whether you're begging or pleading or anything else, to all of a sudden to make exceptions to a rule that is applicable across Canada with very few exceptions. And those areas where there have been exceptions . . . You said something about Alberta. We asked Alberta how many one-armed drivers they had. They couldn't tell us whether they have any at all. We just cannot get that information. But we're talking in the main. We have medical examiners, not ministers. It would be wrong for me as a minister or if any of you people happened to be a minister, to expose . . . That is what my advisors tell me, the medical examiner, the people who have had experience. The letter the member mentions is unfortunately a form letter sent out thoughtlessly. And that's one of the things that go wrong when you're shorthanded. It should have been a special case. I will even apologize for that kind of letter going out. I would have been angry as well.

The fact of the matter is that the examiners that go out, and you talk about them, should not have the written test. They are not qualified nor have they asked to screen anyone. The written test is preliminary. That's when you find out what the physical handicaps are. So you are saying to me, as the minister, that I should fly in the face of advice that has been built into rules and regulations across Canada and make an exception.

Now, just let me follow this through. Even then, I want to say this. I am saying we are going to discuss this once more. The case is not closed. We are going to discuss it once more with the Canadian council. But I am not going to arbitrarily break this rule and fly in the face of rules debate. We have a medical examiner, a person here who is now a doctor. He's an orthopedic specialist, who was a truck driver before he became a doctor. Even he advised against going in this direction when the board is asking for advice. Now, what the member is asking me to do is the same as asking me to go to the licence appeal committee, there are lots of unhappy cases there, to interfere with a quasi-judicial body. That's what you're asking me to do. You can ask me, but I'm not going to do this. I am saying, and I have written — in fact I have a letter from Clara Wangler, his mother; there's a letter on my desk I received in the last two or three days. I had said this is still under review. I find it very difficult to close the gate entirely, but I am faced with this kind of advice (and I want the whole House to know this) saying you cannot devise a test which is going to provide proof of what a person can do in an extreme emergency.

We can keep this discussion going. I simply say the Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Administration of which we are a part — the great burden of advice we get is countered. If we were to licence someone like this we are told if there was an accident there would be a tremendous liability on the licensor, especially if the medical examiners have advised against it. We would have no protection. All of this is part and parcel of responsibility. I speak from a position of responsibility while you speak from a position of total irresponsibility.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:25 p.m.