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EVENING SESSION

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN — VOTE
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Item 1 (continued)

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Minister, hopefully, the evening isn't going to drag on to all hours. I don't want to be critical of the way that you answer questions. We are going to have a number of questions. We're not going to make political speeches and we would appreciate it if you didn't and just provided the answers. I know it's not your nature to speak too quickly. Certainly though, an injection of Bev Dyck at this point in time would be very useful. We would appreciate it if you would kind of speed up the answers. We don't need too long to collect our thoughts and figure out what the next question is going to be.

I want to start out by saying that we certainly uncovered what I feel as been a regular scandal in northern Saskatchewan and we're not going to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, now just relax there; the boys in the back benches like to say something once in a while. I can appreciate that. We're not going to get back to that subject but after all, that's where we left off. There are just a few trimmings to the cake that we'd like to put on before we finish in that particular area. And when I say that particular area, I mean the dark cloud of mistrust that is left over northern Saskatchewan as a result of a number of things that have happened with fraudulent cases and charges that were laid. I believe about 22 in one instance were ruled not guilty. Nevertheless, the fact that they were brought before the courts certainly indicates there's a problem there. I'm sure you recall, even though it was a considerable length of time ago when we were in Department of Northern Saskatchewan estimates, the charges that we brought were that there was a good reason in northern Saskatchewan to have a judicial inquiry. We stand behind that particular argument we made then. We feel a need for a judicial inquiry into the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. We want to present just a small amount of evidence that we still have but we haven't presented yet to support the argument the opposition has made that we indeed require a judicial inquiry into Department of Northern Saskatchewan affairs.

I have a number of personal letters and of course a number of people have indicated to me that they don't want their names revealed. They're in the inner circles, if you like, of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan workings. I can appreciate their concern, but they have certainly indicated to me that there are a lot of things that are not right in northern Saskatchewan.

I might be wrong, but I do feel the minister responsible does want to clean up the act in northern Saskatchewan. I feel that many years ago, if seven can be considered many, he expounded on some of those concerns and ideas he had regarding northern Saskatchewan which, at that time, were similar to the views that we presently hold in a number of given areas. Because of that, I feel the minister now responsible for northern Saskatchewan does sympathize with some of the arguments we are making on this side of the House. I think that he, himself, wants to clean up the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. He wants to remove that dark cloud of mistrust that is over the whole department and let the northern Saskatchewan residents and local government

flourish so we will have some brighter days on the horizon in the future. With that I want to just take my place for a few moments. I would advise, Mr. Minister, that you do not have to reply to my opening comments. All I've said basically is that we presented some very good cases of scandal and fraud in northern Saskatchewan. We substantiated those and they're well documented. We want to document just a few more to prove our case, to back up our call for a judicial inquiry into the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, so you as minister can proceed and do the job you were elected to do and appointed to do as Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. With that I'm going to just allow a few minutes for my colleague to present yet some further evidence as to scandal and terrible things happening in that awful place called northern Saskatchewan.

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — I have but a couple of questions, Mr. Minister. One of them relates to order in council no. 528 of 1977. I don't expect you to have that with you, but in there is shown a large number of figures — \$1,500 as a rule. A couple of these are (perhaps the names will be familiar to you): Marcel Fiddler, Sarah Cook, Irene Morin. Many of these were the people involved in the Thompson trial. There were also three or four other pages of these contributions. Perhaps I could send this over to you and you could perhaps reply as to just exactly what these are.

HON. J.A. HAMMERSMITH (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — I'm informed that these are grants associated with housing improvement for persons in the northern administration district handled by the northern housing branch.

MR. ANDREW: — The ones that are asterisked, Mr. Minister — I understand that is part of the grant paid to the various private contractors resulting in the trial and the fraud charges. Could you answer that?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I'm informed that at the time there were, in addition to these grants that were handled by the northern housing branch, also CMHC grants. The CMHC grants were paid directly to the contractors.

The information is not here as to whether the ones you have asterisked were paid directly to the contractors or whether there was an assignment taken from the individual eligible for the grant, or whether it went to the individual and subsequently to the contractor. We can get the information for you. We can't tell you specifically with regard to the particular ones the precise manner in which they were handled.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Of course I think the minister realizes the seriousness of the situation. Our information is that the ones which were asterisked are exactly the same ones for which Thompson has been found guilty. In all likelihood the department itself was making grants to projects that it supposedly worked on. The projects were in fact done by Thompson and the other contractors. This leads to the statement by the judge that the department actively and passively participated in the fraud.

What it means is that the department was giving grants to projects it never worked on, the very ones that the contractors have been found either guilty of or brought to trial on. That's what those ones marked with an asterisk, mean. I'm going to ask the minister if since the last time DNS was brought before this House, he has commenced any internal investigation on his own as to the matters raised that subsequently led to the trials against the private contractors?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — These grants could very well have been combined with RRAP grants in the event that in a particular project the RRAP grant was not sufficient to pay

the costs of the approved project. I don't have the information before me to tell me whether or not in fact these are the particular matters associated with the trial the hon. member mentions.

I did, when the matter was before the House previously, outline to him the details of the internal investigation undertaken by the department at the time, and the subsequent changes in program administration and management, to deal with the problems that came to light as a result of the complaints about some particular matters.

Since that time we have not, and I have not, given instructions to undertake any further investigations. It's clear that the necessary changes in management and administration have been made. With regard to whether or not a judicial inquiry is warranted, I think we all recognize that one of the individuals yet to come to trial was a person who at that time was an employee of the department. He was subsequently charged and I said when the matter was before the committee previously that when all the trials related to this matter were complete, we would review all the evidence at that time, and at that time the government could make a decision on whether or not a judicial inquiry was warranted.

MR. LANE: — You are now admitting tonight that in fact the government is actively considering whether or not there will be a judicial inquiry into the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. That's what the Attorney General said anyway.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — No, that is not what the Attorney General said, and that is not the case. The Attorney General said that the time to consider that matter would be at the time all the trials were completed, and at that time all the matters would again be reviewed and that kind of decision could be made.

MR. LANE: — I'm wondering if the minister would return those and we'll photocopy and send those to him with the ones marked. Again, I ask the minister to very carefully review the grants. We will have them marked for him because our information is that in fact the department used RRAP moneys to make up for cost overruns in projects handled by the department. In some of these grants, particularly the ones asterisked, there was, in fact, no departmental work done although moneys were charged up to the particular project — the asterisked projects being the ones for which charges arose against the private contractors.

My next question is, has the minister investigated whether or not RRAP moneys or CMHC moneys, were used or transferred into the department to pay cost overruns on departmental projects?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — First of all, Mr. Chairman, we will, when we receive the copy, get all the information related to the situations asterisked and provide the hon. members with that information. The member will recall that, when we discussed the matter previously, I outlined to him (I don't have the dates before me now) actions subsequent to the investigations which led to the charges wherein Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Department of Northern Saskatchewan jointly did a complete audit of the RRAP. Consequently that investigation was done some years ago.

MR. LANE: — That is rather like having two self-serving individuals investigating each other. I mean that's not what I would expect to be an independent investigation. Obviously if CMHC has mismanaged or delegated authority, it has something to protect itself from. I suggest that those officials were not the ones to do the investigation.

I'm going to ask as a preliminary question, and I would like the minister to undertake to supply to me a list of the so-called object codes, their numbers, what they specifically refer to, projects, location, and to what item they are budgeted. I would like the lengthy list of the number, and object codes, and your officials know to what I am referring, and their verbal meaning (if I can use that phrase) – what the numbers, in fact, mean.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — It's not clear just which expenditures the member wishes to have provided. With the RRAP expenditures, those moneys would not be budgeted in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan budget. It would be a . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — I didn't ask for that. I want the codes.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — O.K. Well, are you talking about the codes for the entire northern housing branch budget? I take it that you are talking about the year 1977, or 1976 and 1977, both years. My officials say they can have those within about a week.

MR. LANE: — The next question, of course, is, why did it take the department so long after the matter was raised in the House to start the investigation? And I mean the investigation by the RCM Police. It took approximately a month. The Attorney General certainly hasn't given a satisfactory answer, other than that the department had to check things out itself. But approximately a month, given the seriousness of the allegations, is certainly in my opinion an unwarranted delay.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that there was an unwarranted delay. When the allegations were made, the department undertook to look into the matter, to attempt to establish whether or not there was any basis in fact, any foundation to the allegations. Having done that, it came to the conclusion there was indeed, and at that point the minister of the department requested the Attorney General's department to undertake an investigation. I'm not aware of any undue delay. I think, in the context of travel times and distances and communications in northern Saskatchewan, that period of time was not what I would call an undue delay.

MR. LANE: — What date did you request the Attorney General's department to commence the investigation?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — A copy of the letter is not on file with the department. The department's chronology indicates late May. The other day the Attorney General said May 20. I think that would be accurate.

MR. LANE: — Are you prepared to table copies of the correspondence requesting the investigation?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — No, Mr. Chairman. I think that those communications between ministers are confidential and it is not unusual to maintain confidentiality in those communications. This is similar to the position of the Attorney General. He could not table them; I would take the same position.

MR. LANE: — Are you prepared to give such information to a judicial inquiry?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I think that is a rather hypothetical question. It hasn't been determined that there will be any judicial inquiry. I think if the hypothetical situation to which the member refers were to arise and people had to present evidence under oath,

there would be no basis for refusing.

MR. LANE: — Should there be a judicial inquiry and the information is requested, you are prepared to supply it?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Correct.

MR. LANE: — But you won't supply it to the Legislative Assembly? That is now another argument for a judicial inquiry. This is the only way we are going to get to the bottom of the matter to find out the reasons for the government's long delay in denying the allegations and saying there was nothing to them. They said what a terrible opposition it was to make such disparaging remarks against the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. This happened to be the political debate at the time.

Has the minister investigated and determined what files the officials of the department seized at the time the matter was raised in the Assembly or immediately thereafter?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I am informed that when the person currently awaiting trial, Melvin Laffrenere, was fired, the person responsible for firing him seized the files from his office and kept them in his possession until they were turned over to the RCMP.

MR. LANE: — Maybe the minister would like to tell us where the safekeeping was. Here is a review of the cross-examination of Mr. Murphy who was, I believe, the official who took possession of the records. I would like to put it in its proper context. There are serious allegations of criminal conduct against officials on several projects in northern Saskatchewan. The government politically started out denying . . . The former minister took the position of denying such activities. The same events led to criminal charges. Here's what the official did, by his own admission He was asked what he did with the records for safekeeping.

Mr. Murphy, you indicated that the documentation from Mr. Laffrenere was kept in safekeeping by yourself. Is that correct?

That is correct.

By safekeeping I take it safekeeping to you means keeping it in a garage, is that not correct? Is that where you kept it?

Yes, in my personal garage.

And the garage was not locked at any time?

No, not usually.

Now, what kind of an investigation, and what kind of official takes documents with potential evidence of criminal conduct, goes out to seize them, and then leaves them in safekeeping in his garage, unlocked? That is an example of how deliberately sloppily the records of the department opposite were kept.

I suggest the way the department opposite handled the investigation is certainly negligent. I suggest that's one example and there are more. We'll come to more. It was an obvious attempt to merely get things out of some people's possession and do with the records what they wanted. Every bit of evidence that came forward leads to the

conclusion that the government was deliberately slow in its investigation, sloppy in its collection of records, and restricted in the parameters of the investigation. Every single fact leads to one conclusion, that is a cover-up and a cover-up by officials who had something to hide. Every piece of evidence only leads itself to Judge Noble's conclusion.

I suggest to the hon. minister that you have enough evidence now to warrant a judicial inquiry. You have more than enough. I want to then ask you, are you prepared to have a judicial inquiry on the disposition of the Laffrenere matters should Mr. Laffrenere, as the legal phrase goes, cop a plea and enter a guilty plea without trial?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Mr. Chairman, it's impossible to answer that question at this time. I repeat to the hon. member that when all of those matters have been disposed of by the courts there will be the necessary information to make that decision. That decision will be made at that time.

MR. LANE: — Can the minister explain how, in the Gruending trial, there was evidence that some of the documentation was missing, the very documentation that I just referred to? I believe it was Mr. Gruending, if my memory serves me correctly, who indicated at the trial that he happened to have made some photocopies. He had the photocopies of the documents which were subsequently proved to be missing or alleged to be missing from the so-called safekeeping garage.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Everything the department had was made available to the RCMP in their investigation. The documents to which the member refers, or to which he referred initially (I'm not certain to which documents he may be referring now), were taken from Mr. Laffrenere's files, kept until the RCMP investigation began and were then turned over to the RCMP. If there are specific allegations with regard to specific documents which are alleged to have been missing, I'm not aware of which documents those are.

MR. LANE: — Have you read the transcripts?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — No, I have not.

MR. LANE: — You have some obligation as the minister to at least take a look at the evidence under oath at the trials, which led a judge to the conclusion that the bureaucracy had run amok and that the department actively or passively participated in a fraud. I suggest to you that you're turning a blind eye to some very serious allegations made by witnesses, and serious allegations made by a judge. And I suggest it's that type of action, thinking you can cover it up or turn your back on it and it will go away, that is damning the department in the public eye.

And I suggest to you that you as well are showing a severe lack of judgment in coming before this Assembly without having perused the transcripts and initiated your own investigation. Because if the allegations are true, you have some serious problems up there and it is in your own best interest and to your advantage to clean up. Sure, it may cast a cloud over the former cabinet minister, but Lord knows he deserves it for the way he ran that department. But now you are just carrying on the same type of practice the former minister did, and that is, we can cover it up; no one can come up here and investigate; we don't have to look at that. And I say you are falling into the same trap the former minister did. I suggest as well that you're doing yourself a disservice. I think you're making a serious error in judgment in coming before this Assembly at this time,

not having read the transcripts to at least satisfy yourself that allegations made by witnesses are not true, or if they are true, that action was taken.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Mr. Chairman, the member will obviously draw whichever conclusions he wishes to draw. However, I repeat that the trials are not all complete. The alleged involvement of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, I think it's fair to assume, is involvement alleged to have taken place on the part of an individual who has yet to come to trial. And at that time a complete review of all the evidence and of all the transcripts will be made. I think that is the responsible way to do it. I think it's not responsible to just take bits and pieces of the totality of the evidence from one or two of the trials and to draw broad conclusions without the benefit of evidence which will presumably be brought to light in the two trials yet to come. At that time the evidence will be reviewed.

In the meantime it is untrue to suggest, as the hon. member has, that nothing has been done. I outlined to him in some detail very specific and very precise changes which have been made in the administration of not only the RRAP program but within the northern housing branch since the time of the events which led to allegations and investigations and charges. And I think it is responsible to assure that the program is being administered in the most responsible way possible, and to await the complete evidence before drawing the kinds of conclusions the hon. member has drawn. I repeat again that it is not unusual for him to draw conclusions on the basis of only parts and bits and pieces of evidence. His experience, and the experience of this House, with his habit of doing that is not limited to the matter now before us. He has done that on several other occasions and he's free to continue to do that. He was shown on other occasions to have jumped the gun, to have been irresponsible. If he wishes to continue to do that, that's his choice.

MR. LANE: — I think it's the height of irresponsibility for you to come before this Assembly after nearly two months of knowing the issue, and then to say you haven't even bothered to read the transcript. It's a very strange thing that the government opposite is probably the only group in the British parliamentary system that believes ignorance of the law is a defence, that if you close your eyes and turn your back, you're innocent of all the charges.

I suggest to the minister opposite that your actions in the last two months in turning a blind eye to the allegations and the evidence of witnesses has brought you right into the centre of this RRAP (residential rehabilitation assistance program) scandal and DNS scandal. You are now part and parcel of the actions which have gone on. You can't hide any more by the defence that you weren't around because you've had time to investigate the allegations made by the witnesses. You've had ample time to review the transcript; you've had ample time to discuss the allegations with your officials; and you've had ample time to request the resignation of anyone if the evidence were true. And what have you done? Nothing!

You have fraud staring you in the face and you've done nothing. You have an allegation of a judge that a bureaucracy has run amok, and what have you done? Nothing. I just warn the minister that he is now the one responsible for that department. You're responsible now for the failure to take any action or at least investigate the allegations made by witnesses. You're just following the same practice, because there was a lengthy delay in investigation when the matter first came up. Now you get the transcripts and you don't even look at them. You want more delay.

I'm going to ask you now, were there any instructions by your department to the RCM

Police that the investigation was to be restricted only to the private contractors?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — No there were not, Mr. Chairman. There were no instructions whatsoever from the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They do not get their instructions from the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

I want to say that in the preface to his remarks the hon. member demonstrated again that he is eminently qualified to speak at length of ignorance and irresponsibility. There is, as a result of a thorough investigation by the RCMP, one former employee of the department charged and awaiting trial, and presumably any involvement of the department to which the judge may have referred will involve that individual. He is entitled to his trial; I think to draw conclusions of guilt on the part of any number of people, to suggest by innuendo that there are unidentified frauds, is the height of irresponsibility, and I repeat, a matter in which the member for Qu'Appelle has shown himself eminently qualified to participate.

If he has evidence, if he has reason to believe that there are undiscovered frauds, he doesn't need to present that evidence to me or to the Attorney General or to anyone else. But surely he has an obligation, if he really believes as he claims to, that there is undiscovered or unknown evidence of further criminality, to make that information available to the RCMP. Surely if he is sincere and completely honest in his belief that there is criminality as yet undiscovered and he has information with regard to it, then certainly his obligation and his integrity would lead him to do more with that than to attempt to bleed out the last possible bit of political posturing in which he can participate.

Make your evidence available to the RCMP. You don't think they made a thorough investigation? The assistant commissioner does. I am not aware that the RCMP has invited the judgment of the member for Qu'Appelle on the quality of their assistant commissioner or their other officials, but I'm sure they would be interested in his opinion. I therefore ask, why doesn't he give them the benefit of his opinion and his concerns?

MR. LANE: — If I were a minister of the cabinet, faced with a situation like this, I would have had the RCM Police in the next day. However, that is not the action of the government in office.

The member has gone a long way from the letter of concern to the Premier of some years ago. You say the investigation was complete. Let me read from the transcript. In the last part you said private contractors only. This is the cross-examination of Corporal Lamoront.

Answer: That is correct. That was the information I received and the parameters in which the investigation was supposed to take.

Question: And that is one of the reasons you didn't check any of the houses that DNS is supposed to have done themselves under the RRAP program?

Answer: That is correct and there has been nothing raised for me to go outside the scope of the parameters that were set.

Question: So you didn't go to look at the quality of the work or the lack of quality of work done on those houses?

Answer: That is correct.

Earlier in the same cross-examination of the same RCM Police constable, he was asked very pointedly the question, did you look at any homes which were RRAPed by the DNS? And the answer was no.

There is enough evidence, and I'm warning the minister that he'd better start reading those transcripts, because he's missing quite an interesting story. I suggest again you're doing yourself a disservice as a new minister in not investigating. Let me assure the minister that if there's no judicial inquiry after the disposition of the Laffrenere trials, we'll be back here again next year, going over that. We'll be going over it in a lot more detail and the minister had better be ready.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — It's not news to anybody that we will likely be back here in the fall. Hopefully, the Laffrenere trial will be complete and all the evidence will be in. I repeat, that's the time to review the evidence and to make some decision as to whether or not a judicial inquiry is warranted. I will look forward to further discussions with the member for Qu'Appelle at that time.

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — No, not quite; I'm the fresh one. I've been resting all day and I'm ready to go for a while.

Mr. Minister, regrettably I was away earlier today on another matter. I find it rather surprising that the government has chosen to leave the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to an evening such as this. On the other hand, I really shouldn't be surprised because it's sort of a trade mark of the government to leave the trouble areas until the last night of the session or, shall we say, the wind-down of the session.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! The hon. member for Thunder Creek has the floor.

MR. THATCHER: — You're doing a fine job there, Mr. Chairman. The comments from that side are relatively easy to handle. It's the ones from this side which give you difficulty. They have a little more intelligence to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, it was approximately the wind-down as this House was approaching Easter, the latter part of March, when your departmental officials were in this Assembly. A few of the faces are different, but basically they are the same people. We talked about the same things, and the answers haven't changed very much. As the member for Qu'Appelle indicated to you a few moments ago, it is incredible that two and one-half months later you have not read the transcript of that trial. It is absolutely incredible.

I would venture to say that virtually every other trial that affects the members of this Assembly every one of you on that side has read from start to finish. But something like this, you're pleading that you haven't read. I don't believe you, Mr. Minister. I think you have read it and I think you know what's there. If you haven't read it, you know precisely what the high and the low spots are in it. I'm sure your officials have dissected that transcript from one end to the other; you have the same officials and the same lousy

answers.

Mr. Minister, you know very well what's down there. To have the gentleman in front of you, the gentleman who fired you some years ago, the gentleman responsible for such programs, whom you referred to as Bowerman and Churchman and their B&B gang (bookkeepers and bureaucrats), is to invite even greater disaster than characterizes DNS presently. The man in front of you knows what's down there. What you termed the B&B gang some seven or eight years ago knows what's down there.

I'd like to ask the minister, the present minister, what happened to the guy who wrote this letter? What happened to the guy that called a spade a spade? What happened to the guy who took on the whole government and called it as it was, who told the truth, who said to the government, this is the way it is? What happened to him? Where is he? I sure don't see him in this Assembly tonight.

Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you, the guy who wrote this letter had some guts. He called a spade a spade. He told the truth as he saw it and whether or not any of us in this Assembly agreed with him or not, he told it as he saw it, whatever his reasons. And for that reason, that person on August 13, 1973 in La Ronge has my complete respect.

I ask the minister, where did that guy go? What happened to him? Because if that guy in 1973 had been the minister in charge of DNS, I venture to say there would be a full-scale judicial inquiry into the operations of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. The man who wrote this letter in 1973 would have said to the RCMP, get in there and dissect this place. This place is a rat's nest of corruption and goodness knows what else.

AN HON. MEMBER: — And it's rotten.

MR. THATCHER: — Yes, he might even have used the term, rotten. What happened to him? What happened to that fellow? Mr. Minister, I suggest to you that is a tragedy. Whatever did happen to the man who wrote that letter, because whether we agree with him or not, he had guts and he had the courage to call a spade a spade. And it's unfortunate that same man who wrote the letter couldn't be the minister in charge of DNS today, because the man who is answering those questions now is a shell of whoever wrote this letter.

Mr. Minister, you know very well that there's a problem in your department, a very severe problem. We can harangue over and over again tonight and tell you what you already know. You'll have another trial up there and let's assume the results may be similar to this. And I'm in no way trying to pass advance judgment; please don't misunderstand me.

But let's hypothesize for a moment and suggest that the results are identical to or very similar to what we already have in front of us. Mr. Minister, I suggest when confronted with the transcript you will say precisely what you said in the latter part of March and what you're again saying tonight. And I think it's quite conceivable that again, one year hence, as we approach the end of this session, you'll leave it until the end when we are trying to do too much business, too much important business in one day or in two days.

I predict that you will slough the next trial, assuming it has a result like this, under the carpet as you're trying to do here. Mr. Minister, I don't believe you don't know what's in the transcript. I think you do, and I'd like to ask the minister very specifically. Have any of the officials who are present with you read the transcript of that trial? And have they

advised you? Have they filled you in on the specifics and the allegations of the trial? And I'd like to further ask you, Mr. Minister, do you believe the allegations contained within the transcript?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The Attorney General's department will review all the transcripts when the trials are complete and we will have the report at that time. I might say that with regard to many of the questions the hon. member asks, he will, if he goes back to the last time the department was before the House, find the answers. He was at that time otherwise occupied as well and I can understand that. I can understand also his anxiety to get all the work done and that is evidenced by the regular attendance of the member for Thunder Creek in this House. I say when the trials are complete and the evidence is in, we will make the decision then. I expect the member for Thunder Creek will have something to say at that time. Whether he calls a spade a spade, or a shovel by another adjective, will be evident then.

MR. THATCHER: — You know, Mr. Minister, what more can I say than you are pathetic? You are almost beyond contempt. You know you didn't even deal with the fact as your officials saw and advised. Instead the best you can do in the light of a straight, outright corrupt department at the very least, the extent of what you can come back with is: well, maybe the guy asking the question has had troubles with his attendance. That's the best you can do.

You know, Mr. Minister, maybe you are a rookie minister, and maybe some ministers take a few years to come along but honest to goodness, your performance a couple of months bordered on the pathetic. It bordered on the pathetic when we spent a day and a half with the Attorney General taking over for you. Now the Attorney General is not here tonight. You are having to carry the ball yourself and you are worse than pathetic. It comes down to the same thing again; you have a department, in the words of the justice, that has run amok. And that is the kindest thing anybody can probably think of to say about the department now. That department has done worse than that; it has reeked of corruption and graft. Goodness knows what else a judicial inquiry would ever bring out.

You won't call a judicial inquiry now because you know what is there. Your officials have told you what is there. Your predecessor who fired you once upon a time, I'm sure must have passed you a note occasionally to tell you what was there. And you won't call a judicial inquiry when the other trials come out roughly equivalent to this one. You'll use the same excuse that the opposition is throwing mud. Heavens, we've heard the heckles from the backside over there, throwing mud. How could we possibly throw any more on the Department of Northern Saskatchewan than what has already been thrown at it. You slough it off; you say, it isn't true, it's character assassination.

I respectfully suggest to this Assembly today that of all the mud that has come on one department from so many different directions — let's say that 90 per cent of it isn't true — even if 10 per cent of the allegations that have come to that department over the past six or seven years is true, you have a full-scale, major scandal on your hands.

Someday, Mr. Minister, it is all going to come out. It will come out someday. You know you can sit on these things for so long but they have a tendency ultimately to seep to the surface. Your department, I suppose, is something like Mount St. Helens (or whatever you call it). Ultimately it's going to erupt, and when it erupts, it is going to shake this government to its very foundation. Mr. Minister, if you don't act on that one, it is going to finish your political career with a bang!

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman I wonder if the minister could inform the House as to whether or not the government proposes to provide a gas tax exemption for Indians?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — That's a matter, Mr. Chairman, for which the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is not responsible. That is a matter the member should be raising with the Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Do you support that particular concept as proposed? You are obviously attempting to evade the question. Do you favour gas tax exemption for Indians, or do you not?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — My personal feelings are irrelevant. The member is aware that the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians has made some proposals. He is aware, I am sure, that in Ontario under certain terms and conditions some Indians are exempt from gasoline tax. Once the matter has been thoroughly researched and the various matters relating to the proposal put forward and the options for action are there, that will be the time to make a decision. I don't think this is the time to make a decision and I don't think my personal opinion adds anything at this point.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Minister, if in fact you as Minister of Northern Saskatchewan do not feel your comments or views as they relate to a gas tax exemption for Indians are relevant, then your position as Minister of Northern Saskatchewan is not relevant. If you don't have concern enough for the Indian people to expound on your feelings as to whether or not you think that would be a good proposal, I think it is a responsibility of yours to answer that question in the House tonight. It is your own comment; you are saying the provincial government is studying that; it is under review. Surely you must have an opinion on whether or not you support it. That's a very simple question. I don't really care whether you think your comments are relevant or not. I, as an individual member of this House, happen to think that your comments on this particular subject are relevant. I expect an answer.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The member will get his answer in due course from all members of the government once the government has made a decision.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will accept that reply from the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, a reply which virtually says he doesn't really have an opinion on that particular matter. He doesn't have one and we will get it in due course, due course being when this House is out and when it cannot be debated in this House. That's fair game, because I will very simply put it to northern Saskatchewan residents and tell them that you are not prepared to stand in this House and defend then one way or the other. I really don't know. By your own words, you have admitted that you don't know which position you are prepared to stand on in that particular matter.

Another member from the government side hollers across, what's your position? I tell you, Mr. Minister, I am not the government. I'm not the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, and you are. Throughout the estimates, you have been very consistent in not answering questions from this side of the House and this is one more quick example of your inability to answer a question and state your position as minister responsible for the department. We may have to stop using that word 'responsible'. You are the minister, but I don't know how responsible you are. Certainly I don't know until you start to answer some questions in this House. Now, I will just record that and I'll make the best use of it, I am sure. I will move on to another question.

Mr. Chairman, in the estimates I note a projected reduction in the expenses of the extension services of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Now, Mr. Minister, can you tell this House specifically which parts of the extension services, excluding staff, have been cut back to bring about this reduction?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The major reduction is a reduction of \$60,000 in grants to the Natotawin community newspaper on the west side. There is a reduction of one position; if you want the exact value in dollars of the reduction of that one position, we can give it to you.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Just to clarify that point, Mr. Minister, I want to get that information; you can send it across.

In the most recent annual report of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan under the extension services branch, I note that six issues of Denosa were distributed to all northern households, schools, libraries, etc. There would be some who would contend that this is a form of government propaganda. But that aside, I would like to ask the minister if this program would be continued this year? If so, where will it be published and at what projected cost?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — There is no definite plan for the current year to continue the production of Denosa. It is under review by the department and the department will be making some recommendations with regard to whether or not to continue the publication within the next couple of months.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I note as well that extension services is responsible for the production of Northern News, a 15 minute daily radio program. Since this is paid for by taxpayers' money, and in the interests of fair play and non-partisanship, I wonder if the Department of Northern Saskatchewan would consider giving time to the official opposition spokesman for northern Saskatchewan to highlight his views on northern Saskatchewan?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The Northern News program which has a long history in this province is basically a program of interviews, for the most part (not always) in the Cree and Chipewyan languages with northern people. It covers hunting, fishing, trapping activities and other activities which northern people are engaged in. It is not a program in which the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is featured or publicized in any way.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder if the minister could tell us what the purpose is of the regional communications centre in Beauval? What is the cost sharing between the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — That was the centre in which the newspaper I referred to, Natotawin, was published. It was 60-40 cost sharing, federal-provincial, for two years. It has been discontinued. That's the \$60,000 reduction in extension services.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder as well, Mr. Minister, with regard to the Northlands agreement, if you could answer a question. As I note from the most recent annual report, under the human development section of this agreement money is spent on

alcohol rehabilitation. I wonder, Mr. Minister, how serious a problem alcoholism is in the North, in your particular view, whether you deem it relevant or not, as compared to the rest of the province? How would these rehabilitation programs vary from anywhere else?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the problem is serious in northern Saskatchewan, as it is elsewhere. A recently completed study by Janus Consultants for the department indicated that the per capita consumption of alcohol in northern Saskatchewan was not significantly different than it is in the rest of the province. However, there are presently two alcohol rehab centres operating, one in Ile-a-la-Crosse and one in Sandy Bay. They are operated by community boards, which contract through the social services branch of the department for the operation of those centres. In addition, the member will recall that through Northlands, and a cost sharing arrangement, we just recently completed a training program for 30 native alcohol counsellors from the North, a program put on by Nechi Institute from Edmonton. That's a program we would propose to continue next year. The department is also in discussion and negotiation with some other communities which are interested in establishing either alcohol rehab centres or a program of that nature.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder then, Mr. Minister, if you can enlighten us as to specific projects and accomplishments of the economic and resource development sector of the Northlands agreement? Their terms of reference state that they attempt to influence the pace and direction of resource development and broaden the northern economic base and employment opportunities for northern people. My question is, considering the high unemployment in northern Saskatchewan, just what has this sector been doing?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — If the member can just give us a moment, I'll get the details of some examples of some of the matters that were . . .

MR. BIRKBECK: — Yes, I'll accept having your officials send that particular information over as well.

I would like to return to the forest management section of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. What role is this branch taking in reforestation? How much does the department allocate for such programs? As well, would the minister elaborate very briefly on those particular programs?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The reforestation program the member refers to particularly was transferred as of April 1, 1980 to the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. The budget was in the neighborhood of \$275,000 to \$280,000 when it was in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. The other matters in which the forestry operations branch is engaged include the operation of sawmills, the operation of the Chisholm mill and the sawmill at Weyakwin that recently burned, and includes some logging operations. These are the kinds of programs that, under Northlands in the sector the member referred to, would be funded in that manner: the sawmill program, fur-training and grants for trappers, fisheries development program, and programs of that nature.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Minister, the freshwater fish marketing board recently reported that fresh-water fishing is on the decline in northern Saskatchewan. I'm wondering if you can tell us what the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is doing to encourage this industry and what type of specific programs are geared to help the fishermen and

market the product?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I'm not sure what the source of the hon. member's information is. The information we have from the freshwater fish marketing corporation is that production is up. Sales are up and the price is up. In addition to that we have established, under the leadership of officials in the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, a task force made up of DNS fisheries personnel, tourism and renewable resources personnel and the people from the Department of Co-operatives who had been involved with co-operatives in northern Saskatchewan. They are putting together an overall strategy for the long-term development of the fishery, as well as dealing with the freshwater fish marketing corporation on marketing, not only in the export market, but increased marketing within the province.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, with regard to the northern continuing education branch, I would like to know how many of the programs are geared toward northern industry and needs. Has your department kept a record of those who have completed the program? In particular, are people trained in these programs staying in the North or are they leaving? And if so, have you any idea what percentage are staying in the North?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Well, in addition to funding the community colleges, the northern continuing education branch mounts, either itself or jointly with the community college, a number of training programs. I listed all of the programs for this year specifically to the hon. member when we had the estimates before the House previously. But it is fair to say the programs are related to resource development and that the majority of trainees do stay in the North. I think of a recent example, a pre-employment mill operator program that was put on jointly between the West Side Community College and Amok Limited. The program trained mill operators from the communities of Beauval, La Loche and Buffalo Narrows. On the occasion of their graduation, they received a job offer from Amok and the date they were to report for work.

As much as possible, the programs are tied directly to employment, so that at the end of the program the individual goes directly to a job in the North.

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, now we start the government flip-flop. I read to you:

Northern job plans not working. A report produced by an independent consultant for northern employment service (NES) dramatically outlines government failure to date to bring employment training and upgrading benefits to the North.

Now, in one statement you're telling us that everyone is being trained and employed and kept in the North and an independent consulting firm comes along and says it's wrong. Now, I mean who is telling the truth here? What's going on? You say, we are. I mean, I'm not going to waste the House's time to read a page full of articles. It was done by an independent consultant . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . O.K. then we go one step further — hiring northerners seen aiding Key Lake area.

How many northerners are going to be involved in that Key Lake program? Now give me a ballpark figure; that's good enough. How many of them will have been trained in the North or are you not going to have to bring in people from out of province to do the jobs?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — First of all, the study the hon. member refers to was a study regarding the effectiveness of the outreach program carried on under the auspices of the federal Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission. I would inform the hon. member that as a result of that the federal department has agreed to place the responsibility, through a contract for that program, in the hands of a northern native board. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan was instrumental in assisting that process and bringing it about partly by paying one-half the cost of retaining the independent consultant.

With regard to Key Lake, I can say to the hon. member that the provisions of the surface lease will be similar to the provisions at Cluff Lake and will require at least 50 per cent northern participation in the work force, which, during the construction phase, will be considerably higher than it is in the operational phase. In terms of numbers it will be over 50 per cent and yes, the people will be trained. The number (I can't be 100 per cent accurate), I think, in the construction phase at peak is somewhere around 1,200; the operational phase, depending on other factors, can range from 250 to 350 people, over 50 per cent of whom will be northerners. They will be trained, as they are with the mill at Cluff Lake. Well over 50 per cent of the mill operators there will be native northerners.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could tell us what the present housing needs for northern Saskatchewan are? How does this compare with actual programs and what are the department plans in housing for the next two years?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The most recent study which was done by the northern municipal council, under contract in 1976, identified the need for in the neighborhood of 1,000 units. The current agreement between DNS and CMHC (Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation) is for 225 units this year and 225 next year. At the completion of that, another survey will be done with regard to primary needs, but it's getting very close in many communities to those needs being met and the department is now moving into the area of senior citizens' housing and other types of housing needs.

MR. BIRKBECK: — All right, Mr. Minister. I'd like to ask if the environmental health branch of health services is involved in making the people of the North aware of the potential hazards of uranium? Indeed, what role is the Department of Northern Saskatchewan playing in radiation control, and does the minister feel there is a need to educate the public on the environmental effects of uranium?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I think the matters referred to by the hon. member are in the Department of Environment and in some cases in the Department of Health.

MR. BIRKBECK: — All right, Mr. Minister. How many people live in northern Saskatchewan?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Approximately 28,000 to 29,000 people in total.

MR. BIRKBECK: — What percentage of those people are on the SAP (Saskatchewan Assistance Plan)?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — We'll get the percentage from the case load in just a moment.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder if to make better use of the minister's officials we couldn't have a question for all of them. Obviously the minister doesn't have any answers. So while you're looking for that information, if some of the other officials (and I see you have lots of them there) would take notes and get busy and dig up a few answers, we can get along quite quickly. You'll note that my questions are quick and your answers are long because you don't know the answers.

Now, I want to know as well, what percentage of those people in northern Saskatchewan are on SAP. I want to know how many people? I want to know what percentage it would be if treaty Indians were excluded. I want to know what percentage of northern population is in fact treaty Indian? I want to know how you are allowing for taxi and ambulance service. There are lots of questions there. Let's have some answers.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I'll very quickly give you the answer on the percentage of population on SAP. In any one month it would be less than 1 per cent. The population breaks down to roughly one-third treaty Indians, one-third Metis and non-status Indians, and one-third people of Caucasian ancestry. We'll dig the information out for you very quickly.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I would differ with the minister responsible for northern Saskatchewan. In fact my figures from a reasonably accurate source, the DREE (Department of Regional Economic Expansion) report, indicate that the percentage of people in northern Saskatchewan on SAP is closer to 16 per cent and not less than 1 per cent.

Now you can differ with that if you like. Do you have a grant structure (while you are looking up that information on ambulances) for ambulances in northern Saskatchewan similar to that provided in southern Saskatchewan?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — We'll get those answers. I think the confusion arises from DREE using the dependency rate which takes the total number of people over any one year in total who would have received some assistance at one time or another. But in any given month the percentage of population (which is what the member asked and which is different than the dependency rate) on SAP is less than 1 per cent.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, I think we should maybe move into the very explosive situation in northern Saskatchewan of the fires this past year. What contingency plans or what effect are the fires in northern Saskatchewan going to have on: (1) the Saskatchewan forest products industry, (2) Simpson Timber at Hudson Bay (there is a very bad fire there), and (3) the P.A. pulp mill? Are these businesses and even the Crown corporation still going to be able to function and continue in the next 10 to 15 years?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — For the most part the merchantable timber that has been affected is not in the northern administration district. I suppose the member for Wilkie refers to Hudson Bay and the Porcupine Hills as northern Saskatchewan and I suppose that's accurate. But that's not in the northern administration district. It's not in the DNS area. The people in the industry in those areas where the merchantable timber has been affected and people in forestry work in government have to assess how much of that is salvageable and over what period of time. Really, I think, the people in the industry are also saying it is too early to establish just exactly what the effect is.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, are you telling me then that the P.A. pulp mill does not get

timber out of the northern district? Is that what you are saying?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — No, that is not what I said. What I said was that most of the marketable timber which has been affected is not in the northern administration district. Yes, some of the timber in the PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Mill Company) lease has been affected as it was in 1977 and other years. One of the initial responses, both on the part of PAPCO and on the part of the government, was to assess the amount of salvageable timber and the value of it and what could be done with it. I think foresters, whether in the industry or in government, would say that it is too early to make that assessment with any precision at this time.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, now that the Reg Cockle trial is completed and Mr. Cockle has been vindicated, will the minister tell us if there are plans to reinstate this individual to his previous job with the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and to compensate him for lost wages during 1978?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — My information is that the individual referred to, while he was found not guilty on some charges, was found guilty of breach of trust, so he will not be reinstated or compensated.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Minister, the Minister of Finance recently stated that there would be no revenue sharing formula for northern Saskatchewan until northern municipal government matures. I wonder, Mr. Minister, as Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, if you can explain how the government defines the word matures?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The proposed revenue sharing program is being dealt with in the consultation process on the long-term role and structure of local government which is currently going on in northern Saskatchewan. I haven't seen the comments from the Minister of Finance which the hon. member for Moosomin refers to. In our view, we have set out jointly with northern local governments a number of areas which they have identified which need to be addressed by whatever long-term structure for local government emerges. As that process occurs, the revenue sharing program will also take shape to complement the new structure and the role of local government which develops.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder, Mr. Minister, could you indicate to this Assembly if you feel that the Department of Northern Saskatchewan should be considered an example of mature government for the northern municipalities to emulate?

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Well, I think its functions are very different. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan delivers provincial government services while local governments and municipal governments will deliver municipal services. Obviously their roles are different. Their structure is different. There are different criteria to be applied.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I wonder then, Mr. Minister, would you indicate the terms of the land leases negotiated with Amok with respect to employment of residents of northern Saskatchewan? As well, while you are thinking about that, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister would indicate if Amok has lived up to its employment commitment? How many jobs have gone to northerners and what percentage of these jobs have gone to natives? Has a meeting occurred yet with the people of La Loche as they requested in March concerning certain grievances against Amok? Those are plenty of questions, Mr. Chairman. You have plenty of officials. I think if you can't give those answers, those

questions are on record; provide them for me at a later date.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Do you want the answers now or do you want them at a later date? I'll have to make a copy of them and send it to you. We've got the questions on record; we'll provide the answers to you.

MR. BIRKBECK: — There is one other area that I want to leave with you, and that is that the provincial government, and your department, lay claim to all of the programs and the development in northern Saskatchewan. You espouse yourselves as the only people who are looking after northern Saskatchewan concerns. I'm certainly going to be the last one in this House to take the time of the House, at this particular hour and day, to go through it. But I have in my hands a copy of grants made available for northern Saskatchewan — an array of programs. If I were to go through them, I would clearly indicate to this House, and to you as minister, that the federal government has a far greater input into northern Saskatchewan than does the provincial government. Yet your government takes all of the credit for those particular developments and programs.

Mr. Minister, I don't want to debate this issue with you tonight. All I want you to agree to is that the federal government is doing more for northern Saskatchewan than the provincial government is.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — That is not true. To give a couple of examples, for instance in the case of the Northlands agreement, the way the federal contribution comes into the Northlands agreement is that first of all the Department of Northern Saskatchewan must budget in total those moneys and then submit projects for review to the Northlands program review committee, to see whether or not they will be cost shared.

The same is true with special ARDA and other kinds of funding. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan must do the initial up-front (if you like) funding and work. The fact is many of those federal programs are there as a result of planning and negotiating efforts by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

I will say, however, that, yes, the contribution of the federal government is significant. We do work closely and co-operatively with several federal departments — CMHC, DREE, Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, to name a few.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I could ask questions, I think, until about midnight. But I think it would be rather futile, since my point has been very well made as critic for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, that in fact you, as minister responsible for this department, are unable to answer one question from this side of the House; you're either unable or unprepared. If it's unable, then you're irresponsible and if you're unprepared, then that's the height of stupidity, as you've had since March to get prepared.

There's an array of questions. Certainly I disagree with you in your comments as to how much input this government is having in northern Saskatchewan. Obviously, and the statistics will prove it (they're right at my feet), the federal government, on a dollar basis, is providing more for northern Saskatchewan residents than is your department.

Our point has been very well made. It's very clear, Mr. Minister, that you are a weak minister, weak in terms of the northern Saskatchewan department. I don't say that in a real, personal damning way. You can take it personally if you like. I say it's unfortunate;

it's unfortunate for this government, because you're not the only weak minister over there who's been unable to answer questions from the opposition. I just went through a list of questions that I had, and I didn't particularly look for difficult questions, as the media can attest. They were simple questions relating directly to your department and you didn't have the answers. Out of eleven questions in a row, you had the answer to one question.

Now, I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that if in fact you're going to do anything for northern Saskatchewan residents, you're going to have to brush up on your department and not leave that responsibility to the bureaucracy. Because, as we have pointed out very clearly, that bureaucracy has run amok. And if you're going to tag along with them, you're going to run amok as minister and I suggest to you that you already have. You already have run amok. If that's Noah's ark you're climbing on, you had better think again, because, Mr. Minister, in no uncertain terms you have failed in your department in the short time you have been minister. And that might be your only scapegoat.

When I use statistics taken from the DREE report, you say, well, those aren't accurate statistics. And yet, when you're making an argument to counteract one made by the opposition, you quote from the DREE report. I parallel that with comments made by the Premier before dinner. He says that he doesn't expect that members of the same party in different regions of the country would think the same, in trying to argue why his position was different from his federal counterparts. And then, in the afternoon, in answering questions from the member for Wilkie, he says, well those Tories in Alberta are using the same regulations (regarding Sask Tel) we are here. You know, that's what you're doing when you try to argue the facts and the figures which reveal that, in fact, northern Saskatchewan is in trouble.

There's a dark cloud over northern Saskatchewan, and the only positive thing you've done is move to at least investigate how you might further local autonomy with your Options '80 program, and that came from the opposition. And I suggest to you that in terms of suggesting and promoting that Options '80 program, you would have been well advised to have taken a month or two longer to put that program together, because we have questions coming from the northern municipal council, saying you didn't take into consideration their views in putting that program together.

So in any given area, Mr. Minister, you have failed as the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan and I don't see any reason I should ask any further questions tonight, because obviously I'm not getting any answers, or if I did I'd have to wait 10 or 15 minutes for each one. The member for Regina South says, ask for his resignation. I don't think that would do us any good either. We have a top heavy government which is weak in ministers and I think you have all run amok.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 26 agreed.

Vote 26 agreed.

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN – CAPITAL EXPENDITURE – VOTE 27

Items 1 to 7 agreed.

Vote 27 agreed.

**DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN – SUPPLEMENTARY – ORDINARY
EXPENDITURE – VOTE 26**

Vote 26 agreed.

**DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN – HERITAGE FUND – PROVINCIAL
DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE – VOTE 27**

Item 1

MR. LANE: — Just a couple of questions. Can you indicate the number of permanent employees from each of those projects? I am prepared to accept it at a later date if you would undertake to supply it to me. This is for items 1, 2 and 3.

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we will supply the hon. member with the information.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 and 3 agreed.

Provincial Development Expenditure – Vote 27 agreed.

**DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN — SASKATCHEWAN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS – STATUTORY EXPENDITURE – VOTE 53**

Vote 53 agreed on division.

The Committee reported progress.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Romanow (Attorney General) that Bill No. 132 – **An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interests Act** be now read a second time.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — A couple of comments. The bill in the view of the opposition certainly does not go far enough. The position has been taken by the opposition, and it has been articulated in the past by the member for Thunder Creek, that basically a conflict of interest bill that purports to give an assurance to the public that the members are not taking unfair advantage of the relationship to the government is welcome. But given the great growth of government, it does not go far enough in giving the public the assurance that those involved in government are not taking unfair advantage of their position.

We've had at least one example this year of a senior civil servant getting a complex commercial insurance contract on the same day that he set up business. It's interesting that those contracts sometimes take months to negotiate, because in the case of a major hotel you would have to have public liability insurance, the amounts to be negotiated, the rated to be negotiated, the items within the hotel have to be negotiated, indexed and agreed upon. In the case of the Hotel Saskatchewan, any major art works have to be valued and again indexed. The building itself would have to be appraised for insurance purposes. All of these activities are complex and I venture that the negotiations for the SGI contract took over a month. And here we have a senior civil servant not tied to SGI, who somehow managed, on the same day that he set up his insurance agency, to get a major insurance contract. He obviously had detailed insurance information, access to the files at SGI and took, in my view, improper, irregular and unfair advantage of his position.

If, in a province like Saskatchewan, senior civil servants are going to be able to leave their position with inside information, go into the private sector and compete with the small businessmen of Saskatchewan, then obviously we have an unfair and improper situation. And this bill in no way deals with an unfair situation in Saskatchewan. It is time for conflict of interest legislation for senior civil servants. They probably have, in many cases, based on the activities that we have seen in this session, more knowledge about an issue than certainly the cabinet minister does. If they can now leave and use information which they have developed to compete with the small businessmen of Saskatchewan, it is unfair. It is improper. The member for Kinistino brings in Adam Niesner. Now I don't know his business dealings but let me tell you that I suggest Mr. Niesner has made a contribution to the business community of this province . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, now he says a very good one, and yet did he have a chance to compete for the SGI contract on Hotel Saskatchewan? Nonsense, of course he didn't. Did Campbell and Haliburton or McAra or any of these others? No, they didn't, because they didn't even know it was coming up. Frank Buck went to SGI and got specific access to the files and took them out, and that is not nonsense; that is precisely what officials in SGI tell us.

As well we have the brother of one of the political hacks opposite getting an SGI agency, contrary to the previous system where there was a freeze in Regina on the number of SGI agents. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, even in Ottawa, where the Liberal government was so blatant about letting senior civil servants take advantage of the knowledge they had accumulated at public expense to then make millions, and I am referring to Strong for example and others, they decided that perhaps there was some public concern about the issue and really at one time went so far as to say publicly that they would consider doing something about it. That's how serious the issue was in Ottawa, so serious that the Liberal government would state they would consider doing something about blatant political patronage.

There is an unfair and improper situation developing and I say that given the size of the government in Saskatchewan, and its economic impact, it is more incumbent that there be conflict of interest legislation for senior civil servants. Mr. Speaker, it is the position of the opposition that we will support the bill in principle, but we will be opposing it at third reading to express our concern that the bill simply does not go far enough and it is not going to deal with an increasing political problem in the province of Saskatchewan. I could go on. I don't know if there is insider information in the case of the three-time-defeated NDP candidate, Mr. Parker, and some of the others, or whether a former MP and a present MLA has got inside information. But to go back to former civil servants, they are occasionally taking advantage and let me assure you, Mr.

Speaker, that the dedicated civil servants who are looking at the government service as their full-time career have indicated to us they would welcome such legislation. It is those who are using the civil service for a quick vehicle to get that knowledge and take advantage of the contacts who should not be allowed to do that to the detriment of other people in Saskatchewan. I stated our position; we will be supporting the bill in principle to indicate that we favour the principle of conflict of interest legislation. We will be opposing it in third reading to indicate strongly that this bill does not go far enough.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 65 – An Act to amend The Cemeteries Act

Section 1

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — I have a brief comment with regard to an amendment which will make this bill not apply to part 2 which is commercial cemeteries. The request we had deals with municipal cemeteries, which is all I am interested in dealing with. We have agreed to delete the commercial cemeteries.

Section 1 agreed.

Section 2 agreed.

Section 3 as amended agreed.

Sections 4 and 5 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 134 – An Act to amend The Business Corporations Act

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill No. 131 – An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979

Sections 1 to 14 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 96 – An Act to amend The Tobacco Tax Act

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 130 – An Act to amend The Fuel Petroleum Products Act

Section 1

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Chairman, I would like to just say a few words on this bill. I don't recall whether or not the minister was in the House today when I questioned the Premier on this bill. If he wasn't, I would remind him of what I said. The Premier has indicated today that the government and the Premier will be aiming toward the Chicago price of oil (or as close to it as possible) as quickly as possible. In view of the fact that such a change in the price of oil in the province of Saskatchewan represents very likely a \$2 to \$2.50 per gallon price to the consumer, I would ask the minister at this time to withdraw this bill.

Mr. Minister, what we're looking at in this bill is a 40 cent, 50 cent, and perhaps even as much as 55 cent tax to the consumer in Saskatchewan on the price of gasoline. What you are looking at, Mr. Minister, is that you are going to be taxing the people of Saskatchewan, rather than allowing them to derive a benefit from our natural resource, namely oil. The price, as indicated by the Premier today, is going to move within the next 12 months by \$4 a barrel, and perhaps more. In the very near future it will be \$30 or \$35 a barrel for the price of oil in this province, which will mean \$2.50 at the pumps, which will mean 50 cents of tax that your department will be receiving from the citizens of this province. Mr. Minister, that \$4 increase alone will bring a \$2 benefit per barrel to the government and to the people of this province; additional revenues not calculated at this point in time. That additional revenue to the resources of this province is sufficient to look after the needs of the Department of Highways and the maintenance of those highways without imposing additional tax burdens on the people of this province.

I implore you, Mr. Minister, to withdraw this bill before this evening is out. There is no need for it. The revenues will be there. What you are doing, I reiterate, is taxing the people for their own resources, those resources you and your government have said over and over again belong to the people of this province. If it belongs to them, why charge then for it twice?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Doubly so.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That's right. Doubly so — in a sales tax at the retail level, and at the wellhead price. You're getting it. You don't need it. There is no need. As a matter of fact, Mr. Minister, I even suggest further to you that instead of the 19 cents you have been charging to the people of this province, reduce that tax. You can afford to do so. Mr. Minister, for the last time I will ask you to withdraw it and consider reducing the tax you have presently. This government can afford to do it.

MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Chairman, just a brief reply. As I indicated when I introduced this bill in second reading, the theory is that registration fees and gasoline and motor fuel taxes roughly approximate the expenditures you make on highway building and maintenance. It's obvious that has been falling rapidly in recent years as the cost of building and maintaining highways has been rising. I would also point out to the hon. member for Regina South that the gasoline burned in this province comes from Alberta crude almost totally. Therefore his argument with respect to the crude oil is not a valid one.

Secondly, I want to point out to him that if the price of oil goes up by about \$4 a barrel in the current year, that will mean about 15 cents at the pumps, and 20 per cent of that is 2 cents in terms of revenue to the province in terms of road tax. We have no intention of withdrawing the bill.

MR. P. PREBBLE (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — Very briefly, Mr. Chairman, since the hour is late, I'd just like to say I support the bill. I think the bill is needed. I'd like to see one change in the philosophy behind the bill and that is, I think we should not only see this tax as a means of raising money to pay for highways, but we should also see the tax as a vehicle for raising some money to invest in more energy conserving means of travel. I notice, as an example, that many European governments take a percentage of the gas tax and apply it toward funds for urban transit. I notice that the state of Oregon takes 1 per cent of their gas tax and applies it to the construction of bicycle paths and pedestrian paths in urban centres. I would very much like to have seen us, by way of the legislation, look at that kind of an innovative approach. However I hope that even if we don't incorporate it into the bill, we'll begin to see the money we raise from this tax contributed not only toward the construction of highways, but also toward an investment in more energy conserving facilities, such as urban transit and pedestrian and bicycle paths. Thank you very much.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to see the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland favor further taxation to his constituents. I am sure 99 per cent of his constituents own automobiles and it will be coming out of their pockets. The member for Saskatoon-Sutherland will remember at the next election that he favored doubling the tax to those people who have to pay out to the province. This caucus will be opposing this bill all the way.

Section 1 agreed.

Sections 2 to 6 agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill No. 85 – An Act to amend The Queen's Printer's Act

Section 1 agreed on division.

Section 2 agreed.

Section 3 agreed on division.

Sections 4 to 6 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill No. 84 – An Act to amend The Department of Revenue, Supply and Services Act

Section 1

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, just give me a minute to look for it. You're going a little too fast for me tonight. I want to ask the minister one question on this bill and I can't find what I am looking for, but it refers to the executive aircraft, I believe, in this bill. Why are you bringing in this amendment to the bill? Do I understand that you're trying to cover up the costs (and I may not be putting the words properly) of the use of executive aircraft?

MR. ROBBINS: — We're not trying to cover up anything. We're trying to make it crystal

clear that the capital cost, the insurance cost, the maintenance cost, and the pilots' wages are charged in the Department of Revenue, Supply and Services through an account totalling \$595,580 last year, which you can clearly see. The variable costs are charged in terms of the usage of the aircraft. The reasoning and the rationale behind it is that it's a vehicle used by all the agencies of government, and it's quite different from an automobile allotted to the Department of Health, or to the Department of Revenue, Supply and Services, or somewhere else where you can determine the capital cost for that department.

You cannot do that with a vehicle like an aircraft used by all the agencies of the government. That's the rationale behind it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — What basis will you be using to determine the cost of usage of that aircraft?

MR. ROBBINS: — The variable cost? The variable costs are computed on the basis of fuel, the sustenance of the pilots – if they have to stay overnight, their meals, etc. That's charged on a mileage basis to the department which books the aircraft.

The fixed costs, consisting of the maintenance of the aircraft, the insurance of the aircraft, the pilots' wages (which you have to pay whether they fly or not), are charged in the Department of Revenue, Supply and Services to the account showing \$595,580 in the current year.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I understand that the variable costs were charged in the past to the various departments using the aircraft and fixed costs were absorbed. That's the information we received in the House last year. What is different from this bill? Why bring in the bill if you're doing exactly what you were doing before? Now, further to that question, what rate are you going to use to determine the cost? Or are you going to take a total cost and forget the mileage and hours of flying? How are you going to determine what the cost was of the operation, use and ownership of all those aircraft?

MR. ROBBINS: — What the bill is doing is legalizing the approach we used a year ago. The auditor said we did not have the legal authority to charge the fixed cost to the revenue department and the Attorney General concurred in that when he checked the legislation. The legislation simply makes it legal for the department to charge the fixed cost of the aircraft to the department.

The variable cost is computed on a mileage basis related to gasoline consumption and the sustenance of the pilots. The wages, the cost of maintaining the aircraft, insurance costs, etc. are fixed costs and are charged to revenue. It's true that when we did this previously it was not legal to do it; we did not have the legislative authority to do it, they said. The auditor drew this to our attention. That's why we introduced the bill.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I'm happy to hear the minister admit that what you were doing last year was illegal because if you check Hansard you will find that's exactly what the opposition was trying to tell you last year – that the system, the method in which you were accounting for the use of aircraft was illegal, to say the least. It was certainly not accountable to the people of this province which amounts to illegal accounting of use.

Now answer the question I asked earlier if you will, Mr. Minister. What per mile or per hour cost are you going to determine so you can advise the people of the province what

they're paying?

MR. ROBBINS: — What I was attempting to draw to the attention of the member was that we didn't have the legislative authority previously to do it. We're doing exactly the same thing this year as we did last year. The fixed costs were charged to the revenue department and they were clearly shown in the estimates, as clearly as they could be shown. The variable costs currently are charged at 44 cents per kilometre.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, last year I believe the figure given to us was 30 cents, as the charge that was being made. It should have been perhaps around \$2 per mile as the true cost. So the fact of the matter is that last year we tried to tell you the system you were using was wrong, that the people of Saskatchewan were not properly informed as to the true costs of the use of those aircraft. You are going to do the same thing you were doing illegally but now you're going to pass legislation to hide from the people of this province the true cost of the use of executive aircraft by the cabinet ministers of this province. Why not tell them what the truth is, what the actual cost of those aircraft is — not 30 cents or 44 cents as you have indicated now? The profit to the private companies renting aircraft, Mr. Minister, is exorbitant because they're charging five times that much for the use of aircraft. What you're saying is it's costing you 44 cents.

MR. ROBBINS: — The problem with the member for Regina South is that he's using figments of his own imagination. It's quite clear that the fixed costs were shown last year, the same as they're shown this year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm telling you where they come from. The fixed costs are the costs of the pilots' wages (which you have to pay whether they fly or not), the maintenance of the aircraft, the cost of its insurance and the depreciation on the aircraft. It's very simple to figure out. And that's the cost that's charged to the fixed cost . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the member would shut up and listen he might learn something.

The other side of the coin is that the variable costs charged at 30 cents per kilometer last year were not high enough because the costs of fuel were rising and the cost of operating the aircraft was greater than anticipated, and we can only go on the record as it actually occurs. So we've raised that rate to 44 cents per kilometer and the 44 cents per kilometer will cover the variable costs based on current estimates.

Section 1 agreed on division.

Sections 2 to 8 agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill No. 113 – An Act respecting Corporation Capital Tax

Section 1 agreed on division.

Section 2 agreed as amended on division.

Sections 3 and 4 agreed.

Section 5 as amended agreed.

Section 6 as amended agreed.

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Section 7 agreed.

Section 8 as amended agreed.

Section 9

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, you were going pretty quickly and I just want to go back to section 5. Why would you change the word ‘the’ to ‘this’ when it should be ‘the’?

Section 9 agreed.

Sections 10 to 15 agreed.

Section 16 as amended agreed.

Sections 17 to 23 agreed.

Section 24 as amended agreed.

Sections 25 to 28 agreed.

Section 29 as amended agreed on division.

Sections 30 and 31 agreed.

Section 32 as amended agreed.

Section 33 as amended agreed.

Section 34 as amended agreed.

Section 35 agreed.

Section 36 as amended agreed.

Sections 37 to 39 agreed.

Section 40 as amended agreed.

Section 41 agreed.

Section 42 as amended agreed.

Section 43 agreed.

Section 44 as amended agreed.

Section 45 agreed.

Section 46 as amended agreed.

Sections 47 to 49 agreed.

Section 50 as amended agreed.

Sections 51 and 52 agreed.

Section 53 as amended agreed.

Sections 54 to 59 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended on division.

Bill No. 91 – An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the Amalgamation of Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan and the District Court for Saskatchewan

Sections 1 to 14 agreed.

Section 15 as amended agreed.

Sections 16 to 24 agreed.

Section 25 as amended agreed.

Sections 26 to 29 agreed.

Section 30 as amended agreed.

Sections 31 to 45 agreed.

Section 46 as amended agreed.

HON. E.B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Culture and Youth): — Mr. Chairman, may I suggest that hereafter until section 91 we take it page by page. I think the hon. members are afraid of the contents of it. It will go a lot faster because there are 112 sections in it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Is it agreed we do it that way? O.K.

Sections 47 to 90 agreed.

Section 91 as amended agreed.

Sections 92 to 100 agreed.

Section 101 as amended agreed.

Sections 102 to 113 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 77 – An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act

Section 1 agreed.

Section 2

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — I'd just like to raise one matter and have our objections on record. I'm not sure what the government can do about it, but under the existing legislation we have basically an informal and expeditious procedure called the local master whereby routine proceedings can be dealt with. He was formerly a judge of the district court. An appeal was to the Court of Queen's Bench, usually at the same centre, so it was a very expeditious and inexpensive procedure to deal with many matters. Under the amalgamation that procedure is eliminated so that anybody who has an appeal now has to go to the court of appeal for Saskatchewan. For many people this is going to mean a great expense and a great deal of inconvenience and, I suggest, perhaps an overburdening of the court of appeal. So as far as that area is concerned I want it noted that it's a weakness in the amalgamation and it's a greater cost to the public; we object to and oppose that provision. I don't know how you deal with it, but I would hope your officials direct their minds to some expeditious procedure for dealing with these appeals.

HON. E.B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Culture and Youth): — I'll just respond very quickly, Mr. Chairman, by saying it's my understanding that the officials of the Attorney General's department and the Attorney General and the judges did consider the problem of the more expensive and less accessible appeals. It was considered by the officials and by the Attorney General and by the judges. They frankly found no way out of the dilemma, while admitting the problem the member raises. Such things as an appeal en bloc to the Court of Queen's Bench was considered and that was thought to be more cumbersome and more time-consuming in terms of judges' time than it was worth. I think what I can say to the member for Qu'Appelle is that the department and the Attorney General are aware of the problem. They'll be monitoring it over the next year or so. If it turns out to be a real problem to the profession and to the judges, we'll then have to, together with the judges, devise some intermediate form of appeal. But for the moment, while admitting the problem, there just seems to be no intermediate step we can take.

MR. LANE: — The only other item I would like to raise (I will jump ahead so we can approve seven pages at once) is the matter on clause 18 on page 4 where the appointments of any sheriff, etc. or – I'm sorry, or of the district court, I thought it read. I apologize. That's fine.

Section 2 as amended agreed.

Section 3 agreed.

Section 4 as amended agreed.

Sections 5 to 17 agreed.

Section 18 as amended agreed.

Section 19 as amended agreed.

Sections 20 and 21 agreed.

Section 22 as amended agreed.

Section 23 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 76 – An Act to repeal The District Court Act

Sections 1 and 2 agreed.

Section 3

MR. LANE: — What is the projected date of implementation?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — The goal at the moment is July 1981. That is subject to change if such things as the rules of court are not ready. As the member will know there is a great deal of stuff to get ready but it is currently July 1981. It may go back in time as we get closer to that date.

Section 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

INTRODUCTION OF STUDENTS

MR. F.J. THOMPSON (Athabasca): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly a group of six Grade 9 students from the Beauval School. They are accompanied by their teacher Len Dupuis who is also the principal of the school in Beauval and their chaperone Claire Roy. I would like to welcome you to the legislature tonight and on behalf of all the members here I sincerely hope your trip is both enjoyable and educational. We hope you have a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (Continued)

Bill No. 126 – An Act to amend The Unified Family Court Act

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 133 – An Act to amend the Statute Law

Sections 1 to 22 agreed.

Section 23 agreed on division.

Section 24 as amended agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended on division.

Bill No. 132 – An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interests Act

Sections 1 and 2 agreed.

Section 3

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — I would like to ask a question on section 3 and the definitions of participation share. Now it strikes me that the act can easily be avoided by preferred shares which are designed to put off any participation in profit or dissolution during the term that the individual is a member of the Legislative Assembly. It strikes me it would be easy to craft preferred shares to get around the act.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I think that is something that we would look at. It's a new point. I think the officials at this point in time would take the view that 'entitle' includes entitling at some future time so if the preferred share gives the member the right to profits after he no longer is a member, he is still entitled to participate in the company and, therefore, comes under the purview of the act. But, as I say, it is perhaps a new point that officials would have to look at. That is my gut reaction.

MR. LANE: — Secondly, what is the situation? I don't see it covered. If someone has a preferred share which is in fact a debenture (in other words you are not participating in the profits; you are taking a return of 5 per cent; it could be non-voting), it strikes me that that also is not covered by the bill.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I would say to the member that that still is a right to profits. The interest which the preferred share entitles the member to is still paid out of profits and therefore . . .

MR. LANE: — The difficulty you have, of course, is what is your definition of profits? If you are talking net profits, this could be paid prior to the net profits. All I am suggesting to the minister is that his officials should be well aware that I think there are ways that the bill may not be as tight as the minister had hoped . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The hon. member may not have seen one recently, but let me suggest that there are varying definitions of profits, as some solicitors may know, and there may be some difficulty because of that.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Chairman, I admit to the member for Qu'Appelle that there may be loopholes in this piece of legislation. I say to the hon. members that this is the trickiest bill we have tried to draft for this session. It was an extremely difficult bill and I would admit that someone, sooner or later, may find a loophole in it. When he does, we'll have to cover it. It represents our best efforts over a year's time.

Section 6 agreed.

Sections 7 to 12 agreed.

Section 13 agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill 109 – An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Farm Ownership Act

MR. BERNTSON: — I have a couple of brief comments on this bill. I indicated in second reading that this isn't the way we would have done it but we will be giving support to the

bill. One concern that I do have, particularly this year when we have a severe drought, is that we have young people trying to get their start in agriculture by working in Alberta on the rigs to build up their little grubstake because a quarter section of land isn't a viable unit. So he owns a quarter section of land which his father is farming and he's out in Alberta earning enough money to buy another quarter section.

I know what you're going to tell me. You're going to tell me that section 13 of the bill (section 15 amended) provides for that. But it's a discretionary call by a board that considers whether in fact an exemption is advisable or not. I'm always just a little suspicious, a little leery of discretionary calls by boards set up by this government. If, however, the minister gives the commitment that section 15 amended will provide for the particular situation that I've just laid out, the bill will slide through without undue delay.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Agreed, and I share the hon. member's concern. What I will do is forward his concern as recorded in Hansard to the board. Mr. Olsen here, who works for the board, has notice of it and I will forward my concerns as well.

Section 1 agreed.

Sections 2 to 16 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 121 – An Act to repeal The Drainage Act

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 122 – An Act to repeal The Private Ditches Act

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 120 – An Act respecting the Control of Drainage of Surface Water

Section 1

MR. R.H. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Mr. Minister, yesterday I voiced the opinion of the opposition as it relates to this bill. We certainly oppose it at every level because of the lack of input throughout rural Saskatchewan. I guess there is no way of stopping it from going through. You wouldn't accept my amendment or my motion, so we will proceed further with the bill at this time.

Section 1 agreed.

Sections 2 to 13 agreed.

Section 14 as amended agreed.

Sections 15 to 27 agreed.

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Section 28 as amended agreed.

Sections 29 to 70 agreed.

Section 71 agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended on division.

**Bill No. 123 – An Act respecting References in the Statutes of Saskatchewan to the Minister of
Municipal Affairs and Certain Other Related References**

Sections 1 to 25 agreed.

Section 26 as amended agreed.

Sections 27 to 40 agreed.

Section 41 as amended agreed.

Sections 42 and 43 agreed.

Section 44 as amended agreed.

Sections 45 to 82 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended on division.

**Bill No. 88 – An Act to provide for the Preservation, Interpretation and Development of Certain
Aspects of Heritage Property in Saskatchewan**

Sections 1 to 3 agreed.

Section 4 as amended agreed.

Sections 5 to 22 agreed.

Section 23 as amended agreed.

Sections 24 to 27 agreed.

Section 28 as amended agreed.

Section 29 agreed.

Section 30 as amended agreed.

Sections 31 to 35 agreed.

Section 36 as amended agreed.

Sections 37 to 43 agreed.

Section 44 as amended agreed.

Sections 45 to 50 agreed.

Section 51

MR. G.M. McLEOD (Meadow Lake): — Just very briefly, Mr. Chairman, while you catch your breath, I want to thank the minister for seeing fit to include the amendments in section 30 and in section 51, in both cases amendments that I proposed to him as I indicated in second reading. I want at this time to express our appreciation to him for including those; we can live with the bill now that those have been included.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Chairman, ever so briefly, I want to thank the members opposite for the co-operative spirit in which this act has been dealt with. It will go a long way to ensuring that the act as implemented is a success and is accepted.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Section 51 as amended agreed.

Sections 52 and 53 agreed.

Section 54 as amended agreed.

Section 55 as amended agreed.

Sections 56 to 67 agreed.

Section 68 as amended agreed.

Sections 69 to 82 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 92 – An Act to amend The Labour Standards Act

Section 1

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Chairman, I passed some concerns along to the Minister of Labour and the acting minister who is handling it. Do you have any replies on how are you going to handle those concerns?

HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Minister of Education): — Mr. Chairman, I believe the hon. member's concerns are with section 6 of the bill. The hon. member will note that in section 6, subsections 3 and 4, there are provisions either by regulation or through application to the director of standards and apprenticeship to make exemptions either for classes or for particular establishments. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, we will be considering submissions which are made by employers to have exemptions provided wherever those clauses might provide hardship to the employers.

I will indicate to the hon. member that I will be bringing forward a House amendment which will provide that section 6 not be proclaimed at the time this act comes into

force; rather proclamation will be delayed until such time as all employers have had the opportunity to make submissions and until such time as the minister, the cabinet and the director have had time to review those submissions and to take into full account the problems being submitted. Therefore, we will try to deal with the problems that way.

MR. KATZMAN: — I assume that means the restaurant industry and the hotel industry which operate seven days, 24 hours. Is that what you are referring to?

MR. McARTHUR: — I can't make any commitments at this time, I think it would be foolish of me to do so, about particular types of establishments. But certainly all classes in which there could be problems will be listened to and we will then make decisions based on those submissions. I feel that should satisfy the concerns which are being expressed by those establishments.

Section 1 agreed.

Sections 2 to 7 agreed.

Section 8 as amended agreed.

Section 9 agreed.

Section 10

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, I have one concern. This still doesn't solve the problems. It is still a one-way bill. Employees don't have to give any notice. Employers have to give all the notice. It is a one-sided bill.

Section 10 as amended agreed on division.

Sections 11 to 13 agreed.

Section 14 as amended agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 103 – An Act to amend The Heritage Fund (Saskatchewan) Act (No. 2)

Section 1

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Chairman, I just have a very short comment to make about the heritage bill. In the interest of saving time I will not go through the bill. I will indicate to the Assembly that we in the opposition are opposed to the bill as amended, certainly not to the concept of a heritage fund but certainly to the bill as amended for the simple reason that the bill, as it has been presented to the Assembly, gives too wide-ranging powers to Crown corporations, to ministers of the Crown, and to the departments of the government. Something that really scares members of the opposition is the possession of those wide-ranging powers. The heritage fund, intended for future generations of this province, has become nothing short of an extension of the consolidated fund to be used as such. That is the only comment I want to make.

Section 1 agreed on division.

Sections 2 to 12 agreed.

Section 13 agreed on division.

The committee agreed to report the bill on division.

Bill No. 104 – An Act to amend The Income Tax Act

Sections 1 to 6 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

The committee reported progress.

THIRD READINGS

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary) moved third reading of Bill No. 105 – **An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act**

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Unionest Party): — Mr. Speaker, it would have been tempting this evening to have noticed the clock on several occasions. It would have been tempting for many members of this Assembly to look at the kind of charade that has occurred this evening. However, we left off, before I was so rudely interrupted, speaking on natural justice and the provisions of bias as they materially affect Bill No. 105.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want for one minute to make you believe that in some way I am going to try and delay this Assembly in any possible way. I do want the members to understand that natural justice has been interfered with. Mr. Speaker, with all deference and respect to this Assembly, they are making a mistake; all members are making a mistake on this bill. They are attacking people because of what they believe in instead of establishing rules and regulations by which we all can live. You may decide that's not the case. We've had enough debate in the legislature. I suggest that the only possible way to solve this problem is either through the courts or by going directly to the people. I suggest that both of those consequences are going to occur.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time on division.

HON. D.W. CODY (Minister of Telephones) moved third reading of Bill No. 13 – **An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act**

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a very short comment on Bill No. 13 before I introduce a motion, Mr. Speaker. This government has in the past made the mistake of introducing legislation and passing legislation in the Assembly which has been declared unconstitutional by the courts. I think it is time members of the government realized they have made these mistakes and will make these mistakes in the future, and that every occasion to perhaps prevent that kind of error should be exercised and attempted. And having said that, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wilkie, Mr. Garner:

That Bill No. 13 be not read a third time until a judgment has been rendered by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal as to the validity of Bill 13 under The

Constitutional Questions Act.

MR. SPEAKER: — We're dealing with Bill No. 13 to which an amendment has been offered. The debate continues concurrently on the motion and the amendment.

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. speaker, it looks as though this is getting to the end of Bill 13, but as I rise in this Chamber I notice once again the Premier of Saskatchewan is not in his seat. The man who is trying to be . . . Oh, here he comes. Very nice. Welcome back, Mr. Premier. You come in the back door. I'm not used to that back door stuff from you.

Mr. Speaker, not once through the discussions on Bill 13 has the Premier entered into the debate, and I say shame. Shame to the Premier; he is a disgrace, and so is his government, to the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this is one more avenue of power and control requested by this government, and with their majority they are going to get this kind of power and control against the wishes of the people of Saskatchewan and the businessmen of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, what is the end of this dogmatic socialist government? They're scrambling cable television. What is the next step? Next they will be into the programming of television. Mr. Speaker, this government is quite willing to put \$2 billion into the potash mines, but won't put \$100 million into irrigation in the province of Saskatchewan, when it is direly needed today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, it is a policy of this government to wait for the drought. Now we have the drought; we don't have the irrigation.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I wonder if we can have it a little quieter in the House so I can assess whether the drought has a connection with this bill.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, I was just pointing out where the priorities of this government are. They are not with the people of Saskatchewan. This government has gone into a fibre optics program, a program which the people of Saskatchewan cannot really afford. By Bill No. 13 and the scrambling of the telecable, they are denying the people of the North the right to television, because the companies right now could provide service to the people of the North. This government is depriving them of television in the North, because they want to manipulate and control. That is the total content of Bill No. 13 — total monopoly, total control of communications in the province.

Mr. Speaker, there isn't another socialist government between Japan and Britain; there isn't another one in North America. I see the Minister of Health shaking his head; about all he can do is shake his head. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will recognize and see through this socialist government. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, in the next provincial election they will not be back as government after Bill No. 13.

Amendment negated on division.

MR. COLLVER: — One of the things the member for Wilkie always forgets is that subsequent to his comments on Bill No. 13 there might be one or two others. Now I wouldn't want anyone to think that any of us in this legislature were opposed to Bill No. 13 on the basis of strictly partisan viewpoints. I wouldn't want anyone in this legislature to think that anyone was opposed to it on the basis of trying to drag out the legislative

session.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's easy for you to say.

MR. COLLVER: — That is easy for me to say. That's right. But, Mr. Speaker, on the other hand I think it is important for people of this legislature to recognize that the NDP, having brought in Bill No. 13 and having made mistakes at the start, in my judgment, were attacked very violently and virulently by members to my right.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We did our best.

MR. COLLVER: — Yes they did; they did their best. In fact, in this particular area, their best was good enough, because the NDP did finally agree to an amendment which corrected the problems in Bill No. 13. I congratulate the members to my right; I congratulate the member for Wilkie. I would suggest, however, that at this particular juncture they let the matter die so that we can go home to our families.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time on division.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Chairman, I would like at this time to move the usual four resolutions which are required.

RESOLUTION 1

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I, therefore, move Resolution 1:

Resolved, That toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, the sum of \$20,463,980 be granted out of the consolidated fund.

Motion agreed.

RESOLUTION 2

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to move Resolution 2:

Resolved, That toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1981, the sum of \$1,311,672,520 be granted out of the consolidated fund.

Motion agreed.

RESOLUTION 3

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to move Resolution 3:

Resolved, That toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on

June 17, 1980

account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1980, the sum of \$16,943,120 be granted out of the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed.

RESOLUTION 4

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Chairman, I would like at this time to move Resolution 4:

Resolved, That toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1981, the sum of \$421,316,680 be granted out of the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed.

The committee reported progress.

FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

APPROPRIATION BILL

HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Finance) moved first, second and third readings of Bill No. 137 – **An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Years ending respectively March 31, 1980, and March 31, 1981.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, before presenting the motion for second and third reading of the appropriations bill, I would just like to make a few comments.

In the budget speech on March 13 I described our government's . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I know the Minister of Finance is anxious to get at this, but if he could give first reading first, then we could go on to the second reading.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, I so move.

Motion agreed to and bill read a first time.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The members of the House are rather anxious to hear what I have to say. Therefore, I'm being impatient in making my remarks. As I began to say, Mr. Speaker, in my budget speech on March 13 I described our government's policies and the budget plan for 1980-81.

The government's platform is well known and well respected. It includes first and foremost a commitment to effective and responsible government. We believe that the leadership role of government is to state one's positions clearly to the public, to look first at the long-term interests of the province and to plan carefully and comprehensively. We believe that our record of economic development, of sound fiscal management and of innovative health and social programs, shows that leadership.

Second, we emphasize the need for steady, long-term economic growth. We must

continue to move beyond the boom and bust syndrome of past decades to a diversified economy controlled by Saskatchewan residents, an economy resistant to changes in the climate and in world economic conditions.

Lastly, we stress the goal of our economic development, a quality of life which is second to none, Mr. Speaker. This includes especially the Indian and native peoples of Saskatchewan whose needs must be met and will be met in the new decade. It includes, also, the funding of rapidly escalating health care costs and a new emphasis on preventive health programming, to contain these cost increases in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, these policy thrusts are interrelated and interdependent. Without economic growth, we cannot have new social programs. Without sound management of government programs, we cannot have steady economic growth. Mr. Speaker, the government's platform has been well thought out and well proven.

As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, our government's program for economic development is a good program. It is comprehensive, it makes sense and, Mr. Speaker, it works. The record is there for all to see. We have proven that this government manages money effectively. We have proven that our economic strategy is the one sensible approach to long-term economic growth. For example, this strategy has given us, Mr. Speaker, flexibility with urgent problems, such as the drought now afflicting Saskatchewan farmers and cattlemen.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order, order! I want to warn the members of the Assembly this debate can only go on for two days. That's the statutory limit on it. I know you're anxious to get into the debate but if we give the Minister of Finance a clear opportunity now, it may shorten the debate somewhat.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My remarks are very short and I'm in the process of concluding them. I'm sure the members opposite will be glad to know that.

As I was saying, the Minister of Agriculture has already announced a \$15 million to \$20 million drought relief package, in addition to existing programs such as crop insurance and others. That drought package offers assistance for transporting cattle and feed, for developing municipal and farm wells, and for dugout pumping. Other measures will be considered as the summer progresses.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, for 1980-81, was approved by the committee of finance, subvote by subvote. It is a sound budget. It is a balanced budget. It's an integral part of our policy of long-term fiscal accounting, of balancing revenues and expenditures over the length of the economic cycle. Yet, Mr. Speaker, it is far from an austerity budget.

Mr. Speaker, it reduces taxes for senior citizens, for parents and, through broader exemptions on their farm equipment, for farmers also. It lops off a total of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order, order! I'm just going to hold the Assembly until we get order and I'm going to rise every time we require order, in order to give the Minister of Finance his opportunity to comment on this particular bill. I intend to do likewise when other people are speaking.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I ask the members to give the Minister of Finance a chance.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — In conclusion, let me just highlight several important initiatives, Mr. Speaker, and then I will move my motion.

This budget highlights several initiatives: \$2 million for an environmental protection division in the heritage fund, \$20 million for an energy security reserve, \$55 million for the purchase of 1,000 new hopper cars, a new community capital fund, an escalator mechanism for revenue sharing, a \$15 million five-year justice package, and the list goes on, Mr. Speaker, to include many items.

I could go on in this debate, Mr. Speaker, but as you indicated it could go on for a long time. There's a great deal that one could speak about, but I think that in the outline which I have provided, it sufficiently indicates the innovative and the progressive attitude that is seen in the approach of this government to budgeting for the people of Saskatchewan.

So I would like, Mr. Speaker, at this time, by leave of the Assembly and in accordance with Rule No. 48, to move second and third readings of this appropriation bill.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Just a few points, Mr. Speaker, in winding up the second session of the nineteenth legislature. I am indeed very pleased to have the final remarks to say on behalf of the members on this side. I know I speak for the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party when I say that I'm sure that Mr. Grant Devine is indeed very proud of the members of the official opposition for the way in which the members on this side of the House have demonstrated this year, Mr. Speaker, their resourcefulness and ability to properly scrutinize the departments of the government, the Crown corporations and to criticize non-events of the government.

Mr. Speaker, the second session of the nineteenth legislature has been marked by, and certainly will be remembered by the people of Saskatchewan for, several highlights, including the \$2 billion budget that was presented to this legislature in March. A budget that reached a \$2 billion mark five years after it had reached its first \$1 billion mark, which took 70 years to reach in the first place. To celebrate our 75th birthday with such an event is not really a proud moment for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will remember this session for the provincial debt, with which we are now faced, approaching the \$3 billion mark.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will remember (and I must say that this session has been marred by the mismanagement of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan) the failure of that department to provide the answers and to give the answers that we, on this side of the Assembly, asked for.

Mr. Speaker, they will remember this year for the drought that we are experiencing today in this province, and the fact that this government has no programs and no money to help the Saskatchewan farmers.

The minister, a few minutes ago, indicated a \$15 million assistance program. I say to the minister that that is less than one per cent of

the budget that was presented by him in this House not too long ago. Certainly, when we talk about less than one per cent of the budget for the industry that is the backbone and the mainstay of this province, I would have to say it is an insult to the farmers of this province who are certainly deserving of more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Not too long ago I asked the Premier, Mr. Speaker (he replied he didn't know the answer; I have to accept the fact that he doesn't know), whether or not they are going to spend \$30 million to \$40 million on the new building for Sask Power. I say to you, Mr. Premier and to the members opposite, that \$30 million to \$40 million would certainly go to help the farmers of this province far more than building a new building which is not needed by the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The people of Saskatchewan will remember this session for the failure of the government to guarantee to people of Saskatchewan that there will be no further increases in prices of utility rates in the province of Saskatchewan this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. One other item which was glaring at the members and at the people of Saskatchewan this year was the discovery of the patronage which has been demonstrated by the government throughout various departments and various Crown corporations — in particular the Crown corporations of this government.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a long session, 81 days. I understand it is a record for the legislature of Saskatchewan. Certainly, we in the opposition are happy to see it end. We have tried to do our job, to do the job which we were elected to do by the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, at the last election we lost by a mere 3,600 and some votes. To date, with this new opposition the government is facing, they know we are here. They know that the reason we are here for 81 days is because of the continuous scrutinizing and criticizing of the government and calling the government to account. Come next election, Mr. Speaker, the 3,651 votes which we lost by in the last election will be a very much smaller amount. There will be a much larger differential between what they will receive and what we will receive. It will be for us to form the government the next time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our leader, Mr. Grant Devine, who unfortunately has had to view the procedures of this session from higher up this year. But there is really nothing wrong with being a little higher up. He is sitting up there tonight. On behalf of Mr. Devine, I want to say thank you for having the opportunity to speak on this motion. Certainly, we hope the government will introduce better programs and legislation in the coming year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Unionest Party): — Mr. Speaker, I have the suspicion that this particular legislative session might be remembered for a few other things

besides those which the member for Regina South has suggested it will be remembered. On the other hand, I also believe, in the long run, the items mentioned by the member for Regina South will be the items of importance.

After all, the purpose of this Legislative Assembly is to examine the government of the province of Saskatchewan. This particular session has been taken up, I must say in some small measure, with measures which do not materially affect whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan is doing a particularly good job. It has been taken up with, if you like, measures which affect the totality of this country and the totality of whether or not the people of Saskatchewan are going to want to continue with the present union or whether or not they are going to want to look for other options. Whatever happens in that regard, I must say that in my personal judgment the NDP Government of Saskatchewan has, for the first time in my experience in politics in Saskatchewan, faced an opposition that in some detail has attempted to outline mismanagement at small and minor levels, which after all are the levels which really materially affect the people of the province – and in the long run that is what is essential. The mismanagement, the hypocrisy and the arrogance of the NDP in Saskatchewan is what is going to be remembered from this session.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and bill read a second and third time.

ROYAL ASSENT AND PROROGATION

At 11:27 p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne and gave royal assent to the bills presented to him.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was then pleased to deliver the following speech:

Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my duty to relieve you of further attendance at the Legislative Assembly. In doing so, I wish to thank you and congratulate you on the work you have done.

You have taken steps to improve the working conditions of the people of the province, and to strengthen the measures already in place which protect them against the effects of injuries or disabilities sustained while at work.

In the interests of the recipients of both public and private pension plans, you have passed legislation which ensures them adequate retirement incomes and shelters them from the inflationary trend in our society.

You have approved amendments to The Senior Citizens School Tax Rebate Act, The Property Improvement Grant Act, and The Renters Property Tax Rebate Act to extend their benefits to residents of the province not hitherto covered in order to recognize their contribution to the cost of municipal services.

By passing legislation to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act, you have refined the ability of the authority to proceed with the protection and beautification of the river bank and the surrounding area in Saskatoon.

You have strengthened the ability of the province's telecommunications system to

provide the best quality of service to the people of Saskatchewan by enshrining the system's basic principles in legislation.

In order to ensure the average citizen better access to the court system in Saskatchewan, you have passed legislation to simplify and consolidate the system.

To increase the protection of passengers in motor vehicles, legislation has been enacted to make the use of rear seat belts mandatory.

You have passed legislation to create separate departments of rural affairs and urban affairs, thereby recognizing the growing importance of local governments.

In recognition of our province's unique and valuable past, you have passed legislation to conserve and protect significant heritage resources.

By passing The Act to establish Ecological Reserves and The Act respecting the Assessment of the Impact on the Environment of New Development, you have strengthened the principles and procedures of environmental protection.

To help Saskatchewan farmers transport one of the province's most valuable resources you have established the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation.

To afford the agricultural industry in Saskatchewan continued vitality, you have taken measures to ensure that farmland in the province is primarily owned and controlled by Saskatchewan people.

In recognition of the economic promise of Saskatchewan, you have created the Department of Economic Development to co-ordinate major economic development projects.

I thank you for the provisions you have made to meet the further requirements of the public service and I assure you that this sum of money will be used economically, prudently, and in the public interest.

In taking leave of you, I thank you for the manner in which you have devoted your energies to the activities of the session and wish you the full blessing of Providence.

The Hon. Mr. Cowley, Provincial Secretary, then said:

Mr. Speaker, and members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is the will and pleasure of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor that this Legislative Assembly be prorogued until it pleases His Honour to summon the same for the dispatch of business, and the Legislative Assembly is accordingly prorogued.

His Honour then retired from the Chamber at 11:36 p.m.