

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Nineteenth Legislature

Monday, June 17, 1980.

AFTERNOON SESSION
WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I wonder if the hon. member for Regina Lakeview could have leave to introduce this group of students.

HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Regina Lakeview): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce to you and the members of this House this afternoon, 28 Grade 4 students from Lakeview School, who are sitting on the west gallery. These students and their teacher, Mrs. Becker, have walked over this afternoon from Lakeview School. They are touring the Legislative Building and have stopped by in the galleries to watch some of the debate in the Assembly this afternoon. They will also be touring the Wascana Centre Authority area later in the afternoon. I'm sure all members will join me in welcoming this group of students and wishing them an enjoyable afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE – EXECUTIVE COUNCIL – VOTE 10

Item 1 (Continued)

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Unionist Party): — Mr. Chairman, this will probably be the briefest and quietest debate that the Premier and I have ever had in this Chamber. I can assure the Premier it's not for lack of desire. It is merely for lack of physical prowess at this point in time.

The Premier will be aware that over the coming months he will be the central figure, and in fact the major representative of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, at the constitutional conferences and hearings that are to be held, which may materially affect and materially change the entire framework of Canada and Saskatchewan. I think the Premier will concur that these are monumental talks, probably the most important talks that any premier has ever had to attend on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

I ask the Premier, therefore, if it is his intention, at some point prior to any formalization of arrangements, to go to the people of the province of Saskatchewan with the proposed changes that either he or his group negotiate with the other premiers and the Prime Minister?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Chairman, I think that is a question which I cannot now answer. I do not exclude the possibility of that, nor do I commit myself to it. I think it is quite likely that, if we arrive at some compromise agreement which is acceptable to the 11 governments involved, it may well be proposed that the arrangement so arrived at be presented to the people of Canada, either by way of a referendum or by way of a series of referendums in individual provinces.

Without committing myself to that course of action, it would seem to me that if we in fact arrive at a renewed Canadian constitution, it would indeed be appropriate for the Canadian people to have an opportunity to voice their opinions on it and to ratify it. One would hope that the agreement would remain following the attempt to have it ratified

since, I think, no one can deny that a constitution is a major part in the fabric of a nation. We have a constitution which has not officially been recognized and accepted by Canadians because of our history. I think there is much to be said for the proposition that a new constitution should be submitted to the people of Canada for their approval.

MR. COLLVER: — Let us presume that the Premier is correct, and that the governments are able to reach some kind of arrangement (and I would like to get to that in a moment in terms of how that might be achieved). If that is the case, presuming that some form of agreement occurred, and in fact a referendum or a submission to the people is made in the province of Saskatchewan, let us assume that the people of the province of Saskatchewan negate that proposal. Suppose that the people of the province of Saskatchewan are the only ones, or just two provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan, while all other areas of Canada accept them, would you suggest that the people of Saskatchewan are thereby bound by your government's proposals or by the Government of Alberta's proposals, even though they reject that constitution? Would you suggest that they would be bound by that vote?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I think this is moving a long way into the hypothetical. In a constitutional sense the history has been that governments, parliaments and, in some cases, cabinets have agreed to legislative change on behalf of their provinces. I believe, in one case at least, it was simply a letter from the first minister. But that admittedly was with reference to a relatively minor change such as the introduction (in that case) of unemployment insurance.

We are here, I think at least, hypothetically talking about a major restructuring of the constitution. If we are indeed talking about a major restructuring of the constitution, then while I think our government is authorized to negotiate and to arrive at some sort of arrangement, there would be a great deal to be said for having that ratified by the people, perhaps this legislature or perhaps both (the people by way of a referendum or vote of some kind). In that case, I would assume that the provincial governments which are making the arrangement would make it qualify to the extent that it would be subject to some sort of a national referendum or as the case may be. I am not now giving an undertaking to do that. I don't know what the circumstances would be in the future, but I do agree with the hon. member that a strong case can be made for the ratification by the public of the changes which had been arrived at through the negotiation of the arrangement to which I earlier referred.

MR. COLLVER: — Keeping in mind I am unable to raise my voice, Mr. Premier, I hope you will attempt to hear what I have to say. The proposals which you have put forward in the past seven or eight years on behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan vis-à-vis primarily the resources, but I would say other areas of concern such as the provision of education and the provision of health care and the provision of municipal and local governments, I must say that in all instances that I am aware of, certainly since I have been active in politics in Saskatchewan, I have supported that part (as the Premier will be aware) of the Premier's submissions that related to the powers of the province of Saskatchewan and ownership of resources. I believe the Premier will agree that in all instances I have supported the Premier on those steps which would strengthen the role of the people of the province and of the government of the province of Saskatchewan.

During the past number of months (since in fact the election in February, but I would say more succinctly since about March or April) I have discerned in the Premier's attitude a noticeable and perceptible shift in his views relative to the position of the

province of Saskatchewan. I want to say, first of all, in the area of resource control and resource management, the Premier seems (and I hope that you will deny this when you stand to reply to this submission) to have shifted away slightly from that very strong position you have taken since 1971 about the role of the province of Saskatchewan, and are prepared to accept slightly less than provincial government control over resources which the people of Saskatchewan own. As a prime example, although the Government of Ontario never once shared with the rest of the people across Canada its ownership of nickel, and although the Government of Quebec never once shared with the rest of the people of Canada its ownership of hydro-electric power that it sells to New York State, the Government of Saskatchewan has over the last four or five years been required to share with other Canadians its ownership of the resource of oil. Two years ago the Premier was relatively adamant in his insistence that the price for oil quickly and rapidly move to world price so that the people of Saskatchewan could share fully in that resource. In the last month or in the last few months, the Premier has suggested that the time frame toward the movement of the price of oil to world price could be extended. Again I hope the Premier will deny this because of the problems being faced by central Canadians. It seems as if you have moved more toward an acceptance of the proposition by central Canada that the provincial governments and the people in this area do not own that resource and therefore should share with central Canada in full in that resource. I suggest to the Premier other kinds of examples of the federal government's lack of understanding and concern for the people of the West.

One of the prime ones that came out today and has been coming out for some time is that the pittance the Government of Canada has presented to the people of Saskatchewan and Manitoba relative to the drought conditions in our province is really ridiculous compared to the kind of assistance that it gives Chrysler Corporation and the aircraft manufacturers in Montreal and so on. So I really believe that if you are shifting this view from what you held two years ago, it is very short-sighted.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly (certainly from my point of view and from our point of view), the Premier has suggested, on numerous occasions but especially in the last few months, that he is prepared to accept (and I hope that this is wrong but this is the impression that I get), as a price to be paid for the maintenance of Canadian unity, the writing into the constitution of the rights of the two founding people – the English and the French. I have suggested in this Chamber before, I will suggest it again, and I will continue to suggest it, that the feelings of the people of Saskatchewan are not the same as those of the people of Ontario and the people of Quebec.

The people of Ontario believe, I think almost universally (some to their detriment), English first and everybody else second because they were a founding race. The people of Quebec believe French first and everybody else second.

If we write this into our constitution we will make, in my judgment and in the judgment of many, the people in western Canada of all racial origins and of all ethnic backgrounds feel like second-class citizens. We will make them believe that despite the society which we have been able to create in Saskatchewan which, in the main, has eliminated that feeling. I suggest that a great many people over the years have combined to make that feeling in Saskatchewan and in the rest of western Canada much more conducive to co-operation among people of various ethnic backgrounds. I suggest, for example, John Diefenbaker in his career, both as a lawyer and as a politician, went out of his way to bring to the attention of the people of the West and of Canada the fact that the founding peoples are of no special consequence, that we are

all in it together and we should be moving forward together as a group and not give special concessions and special considerations to any group, whether they be of English descent, French descent, or any other descent, in order that all people should feel relatively free to do what they think is right within the context of our government.

I suggest to the Premier that I think there has been a perceptible change in your attitude. If that perceptible change has occurred, then I say that you are being very short-sighted in your attempt to negotiate or if you want, to be a grand Canadian statesman.

It's one thing to say that it's nice to be represented and reflected in other areas as being a great statesman. It's quite another thing to usurp your responsibilities as the prime negotiating force for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I suggest to you on those two issues and others (which I won't go into because time is very short and my voice is not going to hold out) affecting the people in the province of Saskatchewan, that in order to present their views you must not change your feelings about representing the people of the province. As I say, it's fine to be a great Canadian statesman but you are the negotiator who is going to make the final decisions in terms of where Saskatchewan fits in the whole scheme of things.

If those two issues that I mentioned especially are to be given up, if the people of the province are to give up their control and ownership of resources, and are to give up that feeling that makes this society so much different from that of Ontario, and so much different from that of Quebec, and so much better than both, then I say to you that you are usurping those responsibilities.

In other words, Mr. Premier, what price Canada? Are you prepared to pay that kind of a price in order to maintain Canadian unity or because you have refused to present to this Assembly what is your list of priorities? I notice for example, the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs in Quebec has stated that at the bottom of his list (and he has been presenting a list) is the repatriation of the constitution.

All I have ever heard you say in this Assembly or outside, is that you are concerned about the ownership of resources. But you haven't given a priority list; you haven't said what priorities you place on these negotiations. I say to you with sincerity (I have said in this House before) I do not believe that you will be successful. I do wish you success but I do not believe you will resolve these major issues to the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan. If you are saying we are prepared to give up those as concessions, then I say to you, what price Canada?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I think the member for Nipawin has raised a couple of very salient and important points and I will try to touch briefly on two and allude very briefly to the third which he mentioned in closing.

With respect to the ownership of resources, I regret if I have given any indication that our position with respect to the ownership and control of resources is any different than it has been. We take the position that the provinces own their resources and are entitled to get the greatest possible benefit from the resources. We do not have the exclusive control of the resource. It is not possible in a federal country to have exclusive control of a resource. Nor, so far as I am aware, does any other province in a really technical sense allege that they should have exclusive control of the resource, for example that the National Energy Board should have no voice in whether or not natural

gas is exported. No one, I think, goes that far. Everyone acknowledges that there is some sort of a role for the federal government because resources are part of a national economy.

Our particular resentment has flowed from the fact that in the guise (as I would say), but at least by using the tools of exercising federal responsibility with respect to the appropriate control of natural resources in a federal state, the federal government has attempted to take a great deal of the value of those resources and redistribute it across Canada. That is the aspect of the matter which we, in the resource producing provinces, have resented rather strongly and bitterly since (as the hon. member for Nipawin has pointed out) that same type of sharing has not been conspicuous with respect to other resources.

In many speeches I talk about the hydro resources of Ontario and the Niagara River, which is an international river and therefore under the control of the federal government. There was lots of opportunity to share the wealth. Somehow it didn't get shared and we were paying three and four times as much for hydro power, for electric power (usually diesel generated) here in western Canada than were the people of Ontario when they were making use of this international river. We have expressed, and continue to express, that feeling of resentment.

I take the view that the price of oil should move to the international price and here I don't quibble whether it's the Chicago price or the international price or even 85 per cent of the Chicago price. We can sort that one out a little later. We are so far below any one of those that all we need to do is move rapidly toward one of those.

My fellow Premier, Mr. Lougheed, has indicated that he would be prepared to look at 85 per cent of the Chicago price as an appropriate target. It's, in any case, a fair way away, and for my part and for the time being, I'm prepared to aim at that target and to move toward it rapidly. I think calling for a world price, or 85 per cent of the Chicago price now would be somewhat traumatic since we must be at least \$15 and perhaps a bit more than that under 85 per cent of the Chicago price. So that would be traumatic, but if we move at a fairly significant rate, as was suggested by Mr. Clark's government, as I suggested this morning, I think we would think that's not an unreasonable proposition. And to that extent, having said that the Clark proposal was not unreasonable in all the circumstances, and we had some peripheral things to negotiate, if that was softening it was softening only, I think, and Mr. Lougheed was in the same position because we had fallen so far behind the world price we could hardly call for an immediate catch up. But we're still, both of us I think, calling for a very steady and pronounced climb towards that 85 per cent Chicago.

With respect to the notion of the two founding peoples, I have consistently suggested that, while this may have had some historical relevance, it has little to do with the Canada of today, and one of the favorite phrases in my speeches is that this is not a country of two nations. The figure is either one or several, but not two. The two nation theory is very closely allied to this two founding people theory, which presupposes that the Francophones in Quebec, or perhaps the Francophones in Canada are one nation, (not in a sense of nation state but one cohesive ethnic group, a nation in that sense of the word) for which a reasonable case can be made. A reasonable case can be made for the proposition that the Francophones in Quebec, possibly including some other Francophones are a nation in that sense of the word. The proposition that all the remainder is somehow another nation is without foundation. The only thing that ties that group together (ourselves and our fellow Canadians in Newfoundland and in

Ontario and British Columbia) is that we are all Canadians, and we all have to speak English. But we have many different ethnic origins, many different histories, many different feelings of attachment to different pieces of soil. Those are all the supposed things that make a nation in the ethnic sense, and we simply aren't another nation. So the right number is one for all Canada, or several, depending on how you are using the word.

I do want to make this point, and it may well be controversial. I take the position that in order to have a united Canada we are going to have to acknowledge the fact that this is a country of two languages and that just as we, who are English speaking Canadians, would wish to use the English language when we were in some parts of eastern Canada, in Chicoutimi or Kenogami or wherever, so our fellow Canadians, who use French as their mother tongue, may well wish to have a range of services available to them in the French language in other parts of Canada. When I say that I am not implying that this then becomes a country of two founding peoples or that it is a country of two nations. I do not believe that to be so. I do believe that it is a country where there are two languages used by a significant number of Canadians, and that this point will need to be recognized. It is indeed already recognized in our constitution and may come forward in a somewhat different form for recognition.

With respect to the list of priorities, we have put forward, on a number of occasions, our views on changes to the constitution. Our number one priority is undoubtedly to have changes in the constitution which assure us of the control of our resources which all of us believed we had. We are not now seeking powers to do things which we do not now do in any significant way. Rather, we are seeking powers to continue to do what we are now doing.

Members will know that we collect very substantial revenues and exercise very significant control over oil, potash and uranium, all under legislation which has never been tested in the supreme court. We therefore need to know that the policies we are now pursuing with respect to oil, potash and uranium and particularly with respect to their taxation, but very possibly with respect to the regulation of their production, are within our powers. We cannot be assured that the supreme court will give the interpretation to this legislation which we would have thought a few years ago was almost routine, and which we found not to be the case in, let's say, Bill No. 42, which went through every Saskatchewan court with a unanimous decision in favour of upholding the bill, and then was struck down by the supreme court. So, that is certainly number one in our priorities.

We share with the Government of Quebec, I think, putting a low priority on repatriating the Canadian constitution simply for the purpose of repatriating. We would like to see a repatriated and restructured constitution but the people in Quebec argue that you don't repatriate a constitution, which in this case means changing the way you amend it, until you know the new way you amend it. I think they are probably apprehensive that if the constitution is repatriated, attempts may well be made to amend it by a simple act of the House of Parliament and the Senate, i.e. the Parliament of Canada. I would be apprehensive too, that that might be a possibility.

One does not know how that would be responded to by the supreme court. Right now the matter has to go to Westminster and there may well not be a difference, but there also may well be a difference and the Government of Quebec is somewhat apprehensive on this score as, I may say, is our government. And we have expressed

that point.

We don't put patriation simply for the purpose of patriation high on our list of priorities; we do not think that quickens the pulse of many people in Saskatchewan. We think they are much more concerned with resources, communications, with whether or not, for example (and there may be a difference of views on this), the constitution guarantees the right of education in the English and French languages, or as the case may be. We think the people of Saskatchewan are more interested in those types of issues than they are on whether or not the constitution is repatriated.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, I wish to conclude very briefly my remarks. The Premier did not go to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, nor did his government, with the view, in '71, '75 or '78, that Canada is a country of two languages and that only those two languages would be recognized as the official languages in so far as the province of Saskatchewan is concerned. You did not go to the people on that score.

The Premier will be aware that in the province of Saskatchewan there are significant numbers of people whose prime language is Cree. He will realize that that group of people far exceeds the number of people in Saskatchewan whose first language is French. He will be aware that there are far more people in Saskatchewan who are bilingual Ukrainian-English or Romanian-English or German-English, than there are people in Saskatchewan who are French-English bilingual.

For that reason I suggest to the Premier that before he accepts that view, he should have an expression of the will of the people of Saskatchewan.

I have heard in this legislature a suggestion (certainly from our point of view and we've even had legislation that has passed second reading) indicating that because we did not present our suggestions that the people of Saskatchewan, the people of western Canada, should seek union with the United States, therefore we should have to return to the people. I am of the equal belief that because of that and because neither the Premier nor his party presented this to the people of the province in any one of the three elections, that if it's O.K. for me, then it must be O.K. for you.

I believe, and I am perfectly prepared to say, that if the Premier is prepared to take that issue to the people before he makes any final commitment on behalf of the people of the province in that regard, then certainly we would be prepared to test our ideas with the people of the province, based on that same issue.

So I suggest to the Premier that he is the number one negotiator for the people and that he'd better get some view of the feelings of the people of Saskatchewan with regard to locking in language rights into a constitution, in a province that has less than 1 per cent of its people who are French-English bilingual and has more than 15 per cent of its people who are Cree-English bilingual. In a great many cases in the latter regard, there are a great many people whose first language is Cree who do not even speak English.

So I'm sure the Premier would be aware that he would be remiss in his duties if he did not have, before agreeing to such a proposal, the wishes and feelings of the people of Saskatchewan.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I think (and I gave that as an example of the type of accommodation which may well be called upon) that we probably dealt with the

suggestion of the hon. member for Nipawin earlier in our discussion, in suggesting that the total package might well be the subject of consideration by the people of Saskatchewan and Canada. They may then have to make a judgment as to whether, if some things were achieved in the area of resources or communication or some of these other areas and some other things were less palatable, the whole package was acceptable or not.

It is very clear that it is not possible for a constitutional package to be acceptable in every respect in every province of Canada; that is simply not possible nor would any constitution be so thought to be in any federal state, be it United States or Canada. No one would suggest, let us say, that the provision that you shall not have any prayers in public schools (that one is part of the U.S. constitution) would likely carry in a plebiscite. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh yes, it is. That's right. The constitution is what the judges say it is and indeed that's what they've said. That wouldn't possibly carry in Utah and I think we all know it wouldn't carry in Utah or in Saskatchewan. So I'm just saying (and I'm not being difficult here), that no constitution is acceptable in all its respects in every region in any federal country. That's not possible, not conceivable.

I am sure that if we went through the BNA Act right now, we could get all manner of provisions as it now sits which would not be acceptable in four or five provinces and wouldn't get a majority. But as a package we accept it. This is what I am going to say – that we at some point are going to have to face the package. I want to put that forward because I think people should be aware that this is one of the things which we may well be asked to address ourselves to.

Going further into this area of, let us say, French language rights, if we were mounting this argument, if in fact that is found to be in a package, it would be there not because of any particular numbers of French-Canadians in Newfoundland or Saskatchewan, but rather that some millions of people who call French their mother tongue may well wish to move about in Canada, just as some millions who use English as their mother tongue may well wish to move about. I am not saying this will happen. I know it is strongly objected to by the Parti Quebecois who wish to make Quebec unilingual; it is strongly objected to by some other people in other provinces who wish to make their province unilingual in English as opposed to unilingual in French in Quebec. But there is a body of opinion which suggests that there may well be a case for having some measure of bilingual . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Is this your filibuster?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Oh no, I don't have the capacity to compete in the filibuster league. I just want to make that point. I don't press it because it is a purely hypothetical one. I could use another hypothetical one, perhaps on some change in offshore minerals, which we might or might not like, as the case may be.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Premier, a few minutes ago you indicated that you would be prepared to support the Chicago price on oil (I believe you said 85 per cent) and to do so as quickly as possible. I have no idea what that figure is but I would venture to say that it is probably more than double what we are getting today. Now that would reinforce the statement which I made in this Assembly yesterday when I indicated to the Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services that very shortly we will be reaching more than double the price of gasoline at the pumps. In other words, from what you have just told us a few minutes ago, we are going to be looking at paying \$2.50 a gallon for gas at the pumps. Having said that, Mr. Premier, the bill which was

passed in this House yesterday (now allowing you 20 per cent retail sales tax for a gallon of gas) means the taxpayers of this province are now going to be paying 40 cents to 50 cents a gallon.

First of all the 18 cents which you opposed so strongly last fall, and defeated our government on at Ottawa, will look like peanuts compared to what your government is now going to be taking from the taxpayers of this province. The taxpayers will be looking at a 40-cent to 50-cent tax on a gallon of gasoline. The idea of owning our own resources in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Premier, is not to penalize the taxpayers of the province but to derive benefits from those resources. You can use the argument as the minister did yesterday that the cost of maintenance of highways is going up. But if you are going to the kind of resource revenue at the Chicago price, those resource revenues will be there without having to tax the people a second time.

Mr. Premier, I will ask you again today, will you reconsider this horrendous tax of 20 per cent to the taxpayers of this province and go back to the tax we had before, or remove the tax? You will be able to afford to remove the tax with the kind of revenue which we will be getting if we go to that kind of world price.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Without getting into a debate on this, I think the short answer is yes. If we get to 85 per cent of the Chicago price or something approaching that, we will certainly be considering whether or not the 20 per cent rate is appropriate. I don't think we are exactly on the brink of getting to the 85 per cent Chicago price.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Premier, you indicated a minute ago, as soon as possible or as quickly as possible. What do you mean by that time frame?

MR. BLAKENEY: — It is not exactly a unilateral decision of our government. There seem to be some other parties to this, namely the Prime Minister of Canada. In the case of Mr. Clark, he was prepared to go at the rate of \$4.50 a year. This would have been some time. In the case of Mr. Trudeau, it is not clear whether he is prepared to go at that rate or not. It may be something of that order. But it is almost by definition going to take us four, five or perhaps six years to get to 85 per cent of Chicago at that rate, assuming that 85 per cent of Chicago doesn't keep moving very rapidly. If it keeps moving rapidly, it will be longer than that. Accordingly, I think, the problem of having too much revenue from that particular tax is not exactly imminent.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — What do you foresee in the very near future as an increase in the price of oil in this province, say, within the next 12 months?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I wouldn't know for sure, but assuming that it is \$4 a barrel, it will produce perhaps 12 cents, 13 cents, or 14 cents a gallon at the pump; it will produce 2 cents extra a gallon in the tax.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Plus the 12 cents in revenue.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Pardon?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — What 12 cents are you talking about?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No, I am sorry. I am just saying that if the price of oil goes up \$4 a barrel, the price of gasoline at the pump will go up about 13 cents or 14 cents. It is about 3 cents and a little bit more per dollar a barrel (if I may put it that way). That is how

it works out. There are 35 gallons in a barrel. So if the price of gasoline goes up, let us say, 15 cents at the pump (but I do not think it would on that basis) the gasoline tax will increase 3 cents a gallon.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — How much of the \$4 do you get?

MR. BLAKENEY: — How much of the \$4 do we get? Well, depending on the split, as I say, we may get in the order of \$2 of that, or a little less than that, depending on whether it is old oil or new oil. We are getting a steadily diminishing proportion because, while we have one formula for old oil and one for new oil, increasingly the oil is new oil and not old oil; increasingly it is coming from Lloydminster or some other places where . . .

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Where the tax is not required.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, it is a question of whether or not it is required. This is a matter we can debate upon when we can look at next year's budget, see how much it brings in, and whether or not the expenditures are good or bad.

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Premier, I imagine we could talk on oil all afternoon. There are some other concerns we have. I have one particular concern with regard to some senior citizens' homes in Saskatchewan which have been bandied around by CMHC and SGI for about two and one-half to three years now. I am speaking of Vibank, Cabri, Hodgeville, Oxbow and Lampman, and more particularly, Lampman.

As you know, Manor Homes, in constructing these various senior citizens' homes, went broke and that is when the problems started. I understand from both SGI and CMHC and from the contractor who has been in there trying to correct the problems, there was literally no design in these homes. The pilings were not placed underneath the footings. They were actually poured out in front of the footings. They were poured and the footings were not set on top of the pilings. These problems became worse as Manor Homes went broke and the bond was called in which was carried by SGI. Since then, SGI and CMHC have been working hard at trying not to be responsible. Each of them is afraid to touch it. In fact, I would suggest that if SGI and CMHC were to have a hockey team, they'd be world champions because they're both good stickhandlers.

My concern is that now the construction company has pulled out of the Lampman senior citizens' building unit. They've been gone from there for two and one-half months. We're living with two and one-half years of unfinished homes in Lampman and at various periods of times in the other communities. My question to you, Mr. Premier, even though I know that we are only involved in this case through Sask Housing as partakers of part of the financial burden of these homes and with this bond on SGI, will you take the responsibility of seeing that these homes are immediately finished? We've upset the lives of many of the older people in these communities who were promised that they would be able to move into these homes many, many months ago and, in some cases, a year and a half ago.

MR. BLAKENEY: — If they were promised, they weren't promised by our government. I would think that pretty conclusive because this project simply hasn't been ours. The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation built some houses. They chose a contractor and, in retrospect with all the 20-20 vision of hindsight, they chose the wrong contractor. Our involvement, so far as I'm aware, is that Sask Housing may have some peripheral involvement and SGI admittedly bonded the contractor. I don't know whether an insurance company can undertake to do anything but honor its bond,

which it asserts it's doing.

The question of whether or not Manor Homes or the trustee in bankruptcy of Manor Homes or CMHC, which called the tender, should finish the homes is a good point. Certainly, somebody should be attempting to bring this to a conclusion but I'm not sure that I am sufficiently familiar with the facts. I don't see my colleague, the minister in charge of Sask Housing, here, nor my colleague, the minister in charge of . . . Ah, ha! It appears SGI is here. He may know a little more about the bonding of Manor Homes and Lampman.

Let me say this. I will undertake to see whether my colleague, the minister in charge of SGI, can do anything to stir it up. We'd like to see the houses finished. As you say, the question of whose fault it is is an interesting point but the more interesting point is when the homes are going to be built, or when they're going to be completed. I will undertake, on behalf of my colleague, the minister in charge of SGI, to see whether there's anything we can do to expedite it.

MR. LARTER: — I appreciate that, Mr. Premier. I would like to add that the problem is that SGI has reached the limit of its bond and now we have a situation where both the bonding insurance company, SGI, and CMHC are backing off. Neither one is willing to accept any responsibility. This is our problem. It is the people in that area and the municipal governments that are suffering. They're the ones that are getting all the static. Plus they have an MLA who's quite concerned too.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I commend the MLA for being concerned. As I say, I frankly don't know the details of the limits of that particular bond, and I'm unable to help other than to give the undertaking that the minister will look into it. I see he has his file before him.

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Premier, as you see I have provided you with a copy of a book called Rustler, in which I'm sure you'll see the illustrations are rather explicit. My question to you is, Mr. Premier, are you in favor of selling reading material of that type tax free in this province?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think the question of whether or not it's tax free — if that's the issue, then I would say it is very difficult for any government to decide that reading material will be tax free, save only the reading material of which the government doesn't approve. I think that would create our tax collectors as censors and that would be an unhappy precedent.

The question of whether or not that particular magazine should be distributed, tax free, or with or without E&H tax, is, I think, the appropriate question. I for my part, (and I guess I have a different upbringing from some people, as I think was evidenced at another occasion here) would feel that whether or not that should be sold, it shouldn't be displayed, if I may make that distinction. I don't know whether or not I want to try to judge what people read. Perhaps they are the best judges themselves of what they read. But the question of whether or not material like that should be displayed on counters or on racks so that it is available generally to attract other readers, if I put it that way, is one on which I hold another view. I know this is how they have tackled that problem in some places. They haven't attempted to suppress the publication, since none of us wants to get into the business of censoring what other people read, which is perhaps their own personal business. The question of what is publicly displayed, however, I think is a public issue and I would, for my part, prefer that type of periodical not be publicly displayed in places which are ordinarily available to young and old.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, that also is a concern of mine, and as you well know, one of my concerns is the reading material that's available for the children of this province. Would it be correct to agree that you feel that type of literature is unfit for the young children of this province to be reading?

MR. BLAKENEY: — That is my personal view. I do not, shall we say, wish to stand here as the censor of what young people should read, if their parents think otherwise. Perhaps they have the right to make that judgment. As you say, I don't want to go into the livingrooms of the province to see what parents may be giving their children to read. That may be another matter. But I confine myself to the matter of whether or not it should be publicly displayed and I take the view that it should not be so displayed.

MR. TAYLOR: — Thank you, Mr. Premier. Then, as Premier of this province, if you feel it should not be publicly displayed, and I think the concern is that you can go into these drugstores or bookstores and you'll see groups of young boys and girls viewing those types of magazines, then would you consider, Mr. Premier, looking at bringing in legislation which makes the display of this at least shelved five feet off the ground, or that they be in plain cover, or behind the counter, or something of this nature? Would you consider that?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't know whether that's in the purview of the Government of Saskatchewan. But I will ask the Attorney General to look at this matter. The question of whether or not literature is or is not obscene is a matter as we all know covered by the Criminal Code, and I am not sure that we can pass legislation which would be directed to the control of obscenity in that way. I will ask the Attorney General to consider the matter. The places where I have referred to this have been states of the union, where as members will know, the criminal law is within state jurisdiction, and they then can attack the problem that way. I'm not sure whether it's open to a Canadian province to do that. I will ask the Attorney General to consider it.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, I think you'll agree that in this province we do have powers to restrict certain movies from the viewing of young children, and so on. Along that line it would seem logical to me that these types of things could be put in a less accessible place for the young people of our province. Would you agree with that?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, the censorship of movies by provincial governments was held to be constitutional, five to four, by the supreme court in the recent case a couple or three years ago, and that doesn't give me a great deal of confidence that any other provincial legislation in this area is necessarily sound. But I'm certainly not denying it. I'm just saying that I'll ask the Attorney General to look at it.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, what's your view on the necessity of sex education in the schools?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am of the view that family life education, which will include all aspects of family life including the fact that families come about because of sexual activities, would be part of family life education, and I would think that this would be highly desirable. I don't know whether it would be necessary. I suppose that depends upon the particular community and the strength of the particular family cores in those communities, but for most of the communities of which I'm aware, including my constituency, I would be quite happy if there were family life education courses in the

schools.

MR. TAYLOR: — Are you aware of the types of resources that are used within these courses, Mr. Minister? Are you aware of books of this nature that I have here with me? I'm not going to have a filibuster but these are the books I brought along: Open Marriage, a New Life Style for Couples; The Pleasure Bond by Masters and Johnson; The Canadian Family and Comparative Perspective; Values Clarification; and Our Bodies, Ourselves, by the women's liberation front. Now Mr. Premier, I think if these books were used as a teacher's resource at the Grade 12 level I don't think there'd be too much complaint about that, although there may be from some people in the society. But what's actually happening in the schools (and this is why I raised it with you this afternoon), Mr. Premier, is that these books are being used in the family life education courses in junior high. I just wonder if this is the type of thing that you, as the Premier of this province would think (Open Marriage, The Pleasure Bond) should be the types of things the people at the Grades 7, 8, and 9 levels should be subjected to in what is called family life education?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not familiar with those particular periodicals, and I'm sure they are not required as instruction by the Department of Education. If they are there, they are there because and with the consent of the board and the teacher involved and I don't know whether I'm in a position to say to any teacher of family life education what particular teaching materials he or she should use, particularly when I haven't read them.

MR. TAYLOR: — I think there is some responsibility on your government though to see what is used as authorized and prescribed resource books. I just wonder if the book Open Marriage is really in keeping with what the ratepayers in the school districts are wanting their children to be taught at that level?

Mr. Premier, I haven't heard you state (and perhaps you will today, I don't know) about the public moneys going into abortion. What is your stand on abortion, Mr. Premier?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think we are getting a little afield . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I don't know what you are asking. By and large I find that most people who deal with the matter of abortion take a black and white position. When they are pressed further almost all the protagonists take a gray position. I therefore don't quite know what you are asking me.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Premier, perhaps I can elaborate a little bit on that question. Your Minister of Health, prior to the last election, took a black and white position (as you put it). It was an unqualified yes to all of the Campaign Life questions. The questions being: if elected, will you work toward stopping the use of tax dollars to finance abortions? He said, yes, and signed it. If elected, will you work toward stopping government funding of any agency which directly or indirectly counsels women to have abortions or engages in abortion referrals? If elected will you work toward ensuring that the provincial health minister discharges his responsibilities under the Criminal Code of monitoring the activities of therapeutic abortion committees?

Mr. Premier, the same question was posed to you. We were informed that you did not sign and did not answer yes to these questions. However, what is your position today with respect to these questions? Your Minister of Health, who replied an unqualified yes to all of those questions, is not taking that position today since he has been elected and has become the Minister of Health. So it is an about-face that he has taken. What is your position, Mr. Premier?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I would have to see the questions; I don't have them before me. You can hand them over if you like. One of them, for example, I find rather startling — if elected will you work toward stopping the use of tax dollars towards financing abortions? Let us take that now. Every medical association of which I am aware takes the position that there are cases where abortions are necessary in order to save the life of the mother. That's point number one. I am not aware of any recognized Canadian medical association or Saskatchewan medical association which has ever said otherwise. With respect to that particular type of abortion, which is a recognized medical practice, recommended by appropriate medical people, I would not know why one would take the position that procedure should not be paid for when other procedures to save people's lives, recommended by physicians, would be. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Here we go into the gray area. No, no, it's absolutely . . . But now we are moving it gray. Here is an acknowledgement that it isn't quite as absolute as it was before. It is now . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's your position.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Were you suggesting (as I thought that I took the hon. member's point), that some of them were necessary? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . His position then . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 1 per cent of what?

As I say, here we go into the gray again. In my judgment, where the procedure is one which is lawful, recommended by the appropriate medical authorities and designed to preserve the life of the mother, I would take the position that it would not be appropriate for us, for the Government of Saskatchewan, to single that procedure out as one for which we would not pay.

As far as I am aware, our position is the same as every other government in Canada. I am not aware of the Government of Alberta or the Government of Manitoba taking a different position. When the hon. member rises, as I'm sure he has indicated he would, I wish he would tell us what the governments of Manitoba and Alberta are doing on this matter, both of which have higher abortion rates than Saskatchewan.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Premier, you did not do a very good job of avoiding my question because you did not reply to the question I put to you, and that was referring to your Minister of Health, who took a very black-and-white position at the time of the election. You didn't answer that.

Secondly, you indicated that you would favor abortions in the case of saving the mother's life. I did not. You said that. What I suggested to you now is that even if you took that (and I'm not saying that I would favor that), what would you do with the balance of them? Would you still pay for it and do you support the idea of paying for it through our medicare system?

I want to ask you this question, Mr. Premier. Do you support the policy of the NDP, which is the repeal of the present abortion laws and abortion on demand?

MR. BLAKENEY: — So far as I am aware, that is not the policy of the NDP and I do not support that policy.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, I think one of the things that is very disconcerting to people in this province is the increase in utility prices. That seems to be rather a pattern

by your government. This year, of course, we are in a downturn in our economy and we see announcements that Sask Power is going to be building some more buildings; you have quite a record for building.

We have urged, on this side of the House, and put forth motions for, a utilities review board, which your government has failed to allow us to pass. What guarantees do we have that there will not be increases in some of your utilities? We have talked a lot about rural gasification and the need for that, and I'll be discussing the tremendous costs that there are for rural gasification. Right now I'd like to find out from you about power, for example. Will you assure us in this House this afternoon that because of the drought in Saskatchewan and because the power rates are applicable to everyone out there (you can't escape them; they're a regressive taxation, and a good percentage of our population in this province is over 60 years of age) there will not be a power rate increase during this fiscal year?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I am not in a position to give assurances on that. I am not the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation; I am not a member of the board of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I am sure that these matters have been pretty well canvassed in Crown corporations committee or when the vote with respect to the power corporation was before us. And I don't have anything to add to the answers which I am sure my colleague gave when the power vote was up. I wasn't here but doubtless these questions were addressed to him and I don't have anything to add.

MR. PICKERING: — It would seem the Premier got himself off the hook because the Minister of Mineral Resources isn't here. But I notice the minister in charge of Sask Tel is here. Mr. Premier, it seems to be a common practice of your government immediately following a session to raise the rates of Sask Tel, SPC, and SGI.

Given the drought and financial hardship facing the province of Saskatchewan at this time, would the Premier promise today that no utility rate increase will be announced unless it be announced to the Assembly so that members can debate such an increase before it comes into effect?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, it has never been the practice to provide (at least not that I am aware of) that utility increases would be debated in the Assembly prior to their being introduced. I do not think that is the way to set utility rate increases. I gather from hon. members opposite they don't think that's the way because they have been proposing some sort of an independent utilities commission, which would mean that you wouldn't be able to debate it before or after the event in this Chamber. We have an opportunity to debate Sask Power and Sask Tel both in the Crown corporations committee and in this committee.

Sask Power's vote has been voted. I'm sure you could have asked all these questions then, but I'll be happy to try to answer them. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, when it comes to utility rates, the Crown corporations and the boards have a good deal to say about it, since they are obviously attempting to see that the Crown corporations run in a proper and businesslike way. I know members opposite wouldn't want us to run them in other than a proper businesslike way. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I don't know when Mr. Messer's vote for power was passed but it couldn't have been that long ago.

At any rate, you're asking for a commitment. I will not give a commitment with respect to power rates, telephone rates, insurance rates, bus rates, or other rates. They will all be

considered at the appropriate time. With respect to power, as a matter of fact, it has been traditional to raise the rates in the summertime, or to adjust them (that has been the situation for some time) when the least amount of power is being used. I think that will continue to be the case. I don't know what Sask Power has in mind.

MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Premier, you indicated it isn't a common practice for them to raise utility rates immediately following a session. I would like to relate back to last fall. We had a two-week session and immediately following we had increase in all three of the departments that I raised earlier. Would the Premier not admit that to announce an increase immediately following this session, which we as members on this side have indications is going to happen with Sask Tel, would be a cowardly way of placing them on the people of the province rather than bringing them before the Assembly?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No I would not so admit.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Premier, last week I asked you a question about a building for Sask Power for which you took notice. I am still waiting for that answer. I wonder if you passed the information on to the minister in charge of Sask Power?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I believe it was passed on to him. I do not know for sure. I now have the answer from my officials. The answer is yes, it was passed on to him; I do not know whether he yet has the answer.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — You still don't know whether you're going to be building it or not yourself?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No, I have no idea.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, this morning . . .

MR. BLAKENEY: — I keep telling you that we try to run these businesses in a businesslike way and whether or not a building is built is really not something that would be ordinarily checked with the Premier's office.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Premier, if that is a businesslike way when the chief of the party doesn't know what is going on, then I don't think that is very businesslike at all. You are the Premier of this province; you are the chief executive officer of your corporations (if you like). You are the man who should know what is going on and what your ministers are doing.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am happy to have that perception of how a provincial government operates from the member for Regina South. I will tell him that our boards make decisions which should be made by the boards; our ministers make decisions which should be made by the ministers, and I make decisions which should be made by me and they do not include all the matters that hon. members opposite seem to feel should be made by the Premier of the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Premier, this morning in question period I asked for an assurance from you that your government would not be using land bank land as collateral to borrow on the money market to buy land during this drought when the farmers are in a tough position. You would just be grabbing their land away from them and what would

they have once the money had been spent on that – no land, no money. Now, I didn't get a very definite answer from you so I am going to rephrase it the other way. I'm going to say: is it the intention of your government to use the land that they own through the land bank commission as collateral to borrow so they can buy more land up during this summer?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The answer is no.

MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Premier, I would like to discuss with you, for a few minutes, the irrigation project on the west side of Diefenbaker Lake. We talked about it in agricultural estimates but we were not able to get any definite answers. What is the policy of your government with relation to irrigation on the west side of Diefenbaker Lake?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The broad policy, Mr. Chairman, is to put a hold on the irrigation on the west side of Diefenbaker Lake until we see whether or not irrigation on the east side of Diefenbaker Lake is economically viable and satisfactory to the farmers who are carrying it out. I think it is fair to say a good deal of time elapsed before farmers on the east side of Diefenbaker Lake felt comfortable with irrigation. There have been levelling problems and there have been problems associated with whether or not it was simply economical to irrigate when dry land farming was profitable. I think the broad policy is to see whether we can make the east side work before we launch very far on the west side. I'm sure the Minister of Agriculture would be able to give a good deal more information on that but that is certainly the broad policy.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Premier, I think the east side of Diefenbaker has been irrigated for a considerable number of years now and the irrigation has gone forward and has been productive. I believe that especially in a drought year you are seeing the benefit of irrigation to the Outlook district, but I think more properly to the districts around which are able to get feed supplies and grains from the Outlook district. I think we should be looking further than just the livestock area of it; I think we should be looking at the vegetable area which I think is in production to the extent now that it could be proceeded with on the west side. The people on the west side that I've been able to talk to over the past number of days are anxious that we proceed, and I believe it's time that your government should be making a very firm decision to go ahead with that program. Now, will you take this to your cabinet and discuss it, and make a firm decision on the irrigation on the west side in the very near future?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I can't remember when the freeze was put on; I would believe '73-'74, or '72-'73 perhaps, and I think it's significant that since that time we have had not very much pressure from the west-side farmers to get into irrigation until this year, which indicates that it is kind of something that arises out of the drought rather than out of the conviction that they wish to engage in irrigation farming each and every year. If, in fact, the west-side farmers think they can make a go of irrigation farming, and don't want very significant subsidies from the Government of Saskatchewan so to do, then I think we'd be more than happy to promote that. If in fact a very high level of subsidy, either in the operation of the system or otherwise would be called for, then obviously we would have to have a further look at that. I don't know quite what the situation is.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Premier, can you give me some indication of how many farmers will have to tell you that they are anxious to go ahead before you'll make the decision? Can you give me an idea in numbers?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think the question is not whether they are anxious to go ahead but on what terms, and if we go, let's say 50 said they wanted to go ahead without any further assistance from the Government of Saskatchewan, then I think we would begin to make time. If the proposition is that they want the government to provide very, very substantial capital inputs, then we would have to review the situation.

My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, suggests it would cost \$100 million to align the trenches and get the project going. I simply don't know that, but obviously on that basis we would need rather more than 50 farmers.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Premier, I think that when we look at agriculture estimates this year and we see only \$55 million in agriculture estimates, it shows that you haven't got a very high priority for agriculture. When you relate the \$100 million that it would cost to get the irrigation underway, and compare that to the \$2 billion that you talk about for potash expansion, it's not such a tremendously large figure. Now if I go out and get 50 people who say they are willing to proceed and irrigate their land, if you'll go ahead and put in the pumps and the initial ditches that are necessary, I'd like a firm commitment because I think that I can get those 50 people in a very, very short time. I believe that I could have them back for you in a week.

MR. BLAKENEY: — As I say, if the terms are right. Now with potash it is carrying its full cost after three years without any subsidies from the taxpayer of any kind. If you have a proposition like that on irrigation, you've got a say. If, however, the proposition is that the taxpayer puts in all the capital, and that the farmer pays, let's say, only for the water or partially for the cost of the water, then of course it's a more problematic thing. I'm not rejecting it because I don't suppose any irrigation project has ever paid for itself in direct terms. It may have. I can't give you the commitment although I invite you to take it up with the Minister of Agriculture who is much more familiar with the economics of irrigation projects than am I.

I would say that the suggestion that, let us say, an expenditure of \$50 million or \$55 million on the grain hopper car corporation is not an expenditure for agriculture is not entirely fair since I think there are other expenditures directly related to agriculture which are not listed in the operating budget of the Department of Agriculture.

MR. SWAN: — Well, Mr. Premier, when I gave the \$55 million, that included the \$6 million being repaid by the Department of Agriculture. Over the long haul, that \$50 million is to be recovered that way. So you can't count it on both sides. You either count it in the agriculture estimates or you count it in the grain car corporation. But you can't count it both ways.

I'd like you to be a little more specific when you state that the people can't expect you to pay the capital costs. If you're going to put in a pumping station, the farmers really can't go ahead and do that, can they? They can't build the main canals. I'd like to know to what point you feel the government is willing to go to establish irrigation and what you expect the farmers to pick up. Then I have a definite statement I can take to them and they will know what portion of the costs they're expected to bear.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm sorry I cannot give the hon. member the information he asks for. I simply do not have with me the officials who can give me the economics of irrigation on the west side. Nor, frankly, do I think I should be expected to have them here when you had a full opportunity to address all of these questions to the Minister of Agriculture. I

really am unable to help the hon. member when he is asking such specific questions as who will pay for the pumps, who will pay for the canals and under what circumstances would we enter into this or that agreement with the farmers.

I can say as a general proposition that if the proposition is that the farmers will carry the costs, then obviously we can very much find a basis for going forward. If the proposition is that there are going to be continuing and ongoing subsidies, then of course we will have to review that a good deal more carefully.

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — I'm pleased to finally hear the Premier tell us just what this government's priorities are as they relate to agriculture or where agriculture sits on your priority scale. Irrigation is great, providing the cost is borne by the farmer, and there's no subsidy from government. That's just what you said. It's wonderful stuff, except we don't want to have to subsidize them in any way. You're looking at just a short term cost to government without any thought to the long term benefit of the project.

Now this morning we raised in question period the potential cost to the domestic product in Saskatchewan as a result of the drought. The Premier was a little concerned as to the accuracy of our figures. This morning I said that Saskatchewan stands to lose up to \$6.8 billion from its gross domestic product this year. The Premier took issue with those numbers. I wonder, has the Premier put his armies to work to come up with a figure of what we stand to lose from the current drought situation?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No, I have not. We simply have not taken the time to attempt to estimate. Nothing would particularly flow from the estimate we might arrive at, since it is highly conjectural and highly problematic in any case.

May I make a comment on the earlier comment by the member. We have not said, and I'm sorry if I left that impression, that if the matter required subsidization we would not do it. What I said was that if it didn't require subsidization we would do it and if it required subsidization we would look at it, as we have. The east side has required subsidization consistently and it has still gone forward. It is not the policy of our government that we will never, never subsidize irrigation. It is the policy of our government that I will not give a commitment that we will proceed on the west side, when no one can tell me what the level of subsidization might be. I said parenthetically if the level of subsidization was zero, we would go ahead. If it is more than zero, which it will be, then we can consider it, but obviously I can give no commitments and a commitment was asked for.

MR. BERNTSON: — I think if the Premier looks at the cost benefit, a significant subsidy would be in order just to get the thing off the ground. The Premier has also said he hasn't put his armies to work because it was highly problematic, etc. We did. We asked the University of Saskatchewan to run a model through its computer based on Statistics Canada figures. They did. We have those figures back. I just want to relate to the Premier the impact of this serious drought situation in Saskatchewan on the Saskatchewan economy as set out by Dr. Tom Johnson, an economist at the University of Saskatchewan, based on Statistics Canada figures.

Firstly, the direct effect of a \$1 loss in farm sales is a 68 cent loss in value added industries from farm agriculture — 68 cents is a direct effect of a \$1 loss in farm sales.

Secondly, the indirect effect of a \$1 loss in farm sales is:

1. A \$1.03 loss in non-farm household income. All other households would lose \$1.03. This would be a big impact on labor and subsequent unemployment;
2. A 30 cents loss in capital cost allowance and depreciation in all other sectors;
3. A 17 cents loss in indirect taxes, that is, taxes on things as opposed to taxes on people – property tax, sales tax, etc.

A \$1 loss in farm sales in total results in a \$2.18 loss in sales, taxes, income tax, etc. throughout the economy.

Admittedly, this morning when I said Saskatchewan stands to lose \$6.8 billion from its gross domestic product, that is the maximum we could lose. That is assuming we didn't grow a bushel of wheat. It is not far from that, for the giggling member for wherever. Assuming we grow a 50 per cent crop, which I think is stretching reality considerably, that is still a \$3.4 billion loss to the Saskatchewan economy. That is almost two years of our total budget (well, it is not almost, but it is better than one and one-half years of our total budget here in the province of Saskatchewan). To suggest that agriculture doesn't play a very, very significant role in the economy of Saskatchewan is false economics for sure.

Another thing they broke up for us at the University of Saskatchewan was the sectors hit the hardest for the loss in farm income. The first was finance, insurance and real estate. For every dollar lost in farm income, they were hit 40 cents; wholesale and retail lost 24 cents; transportation and storage lost 9 cents; communication, 6 cents; petroleum, 7 cents; machinery, 6 cents; dairy processing, 4 cents; petroleum and gas wells, 4 cents; other petroleum and coal products, 3 cents; services to business, 2 cents; food services, accommodation, 2 cents; miscellaneous food, 2 cents; feed manufacturers, 2 cents; metal fabrication, 2 cents; vegetable oil, poultry, etc., 3 cents. The people who get hit the hardest and first are the wholesalers and retailers, the small businessmen of the province. Well they get hit second; the farmer gets hit first, because he doesn't have the product to sell. When that income is lost, it is reflected right back through the whole economy. The wholesalers, retailers, small businessmen are hit first.

In light of these figures, put out by the University of Saskatchewan based on Statistics Canada data, I wonder if the Premier would now admit that agriculture should hold top priority in this province; that we should be looking at such things as irrigation on the west side and such things as deepwater wells across the south? Your whole thinking on that side should be restructured to get agriculture to the position which it deserves.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't think we have many differences with the hon. member. I just heard his recitation. I was rather surprised that all those figures would impact the Saskatchewan economy in the way he has suggested, as opposed to the general Canadian economy. There is no doubt if farmers are not selling grain, they are not buying machinery. Part of the impact is felt at Brantford or elsewhere. I am not sure whether those were all with just Saskatchewan economy or general economic effect. But I leave that aside because it is peripheral in any case.

I agree with the hon. member that Saskatchewan is the agricultural province; agriculture is the top priority industry in this province. No one denies that; I would be surprised if we had any difference of opinion among members of the House on that issue. We may have small differences as to whether deepwater wells are the answer or

whether they would make any significant impact on a drought of the kind which we have this year, whether additional irrigation on the west side would have made any significant impact. We know what the irrigation on the east side has done. It has come about largely since the last drought of this kind, the '61 drought. It has had some impact admittedly because we have some alfalfa cubes and the like which we may not have had otherwise. I am not sure that west side irrigation or deepwater wells would have made any significant impact upon the economic effect which the drought will undoubtedly have in Saskatchewan this year.

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Chairman, just by way of information, the model used was the model that reflects the Saskatchewan economic situation and not the federal economic situation. There are other strains felt further down the line in Brantford, etc., but the model used was the Saskatchewan model. The multiplier for grain in Saskatchewan is 2.2. The multiplier for the beef industry is 2.65. The beef industry certainly has a very significant impact on the total Saskatchewan economy. All the experts that we've been able to gather, some of them from within your own ranks (I'm talking specifically about the Saskatchewan Research Council), all of the people that we've been able to talk to who are presumably experts in these areas, say, particularly as it relates to the livestock industry in Saskatchewan, west-side irrigation and a deep well system across the South would indeed make us more drought resistant.

I think that the government is obligated to take a serious look at these things and get them in place. There's really not a lot we can do in dry land country to make it rain, to make the wheat grow, but we can sure cushion the effect in those areas where we have some control. I think deep wells for municipal purposes and livestock watering is a step in the right direction. As it relates to supplying feed for domestic purposes, we can grow it on irrigated land on the west side. I think that if the Premier would direct his thinking in those areas, we would in fact be more drought resistant in Saskatchewan and we would be better able to stand the impact of the drought situation in Saskatchewan.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't want to engage in a debate with the hon. member on this point. I'm sure that deep wells or any kind of water would be of some value. I think we can assess pretty well what the value of the west-side irrigation would have been by assessing what the value of the east-side irrigation has been. It has, by and large, not produced a great deal of fodder crops, although here I'm subject to correction.

AN HON. MEMBER: — But it could.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Oh, it could but you don't know about the drought in advance. There's a good deal of alfalfa there, admittedly.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You can gear up for it very quickly.

MR. BLAKENEY: — You can't gear up now. You can't gear up in June. You could have geared up in April and I suppose we knew about a drought then. But it may well be that, for example, on the east side we're growing a great deal more alfalfa this year than we did last year, but I would doubt it. We grow what we're growing. Maybe there are a few potatoes over there and that sort of thing. That's not of material assistance to the cattle industry. I'm not downgrading it.

I'm just saying that it's not a panacea and I think we shouldn't assume that irrigation is going to be a panacea. I think we should assume that there are some things that can be

done, and the hon. member for Souris-Cannington is quite right in raising some of the things that can be done. We should pursue them. We should not, however, think they are going to be a complete answer or even a significant answer to problems which will arise when we have a serious and deep drought such as we had this year.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Premier, you referred to the fodder crops grown in the Outlook area. You know, we have a fairly good alfalfa pelleting plant there that could not have existed before there was irrigation. We also have a considerable amount of alfalfa grown as hay crop that is not pelleted. That particular area of the province, prior to the time of irrigation, would have had a very difficult time to have supported hay of any description on the sandy type of soil that they have. So to say that it hasn't materially increased is wrong. It has increased and it has increased significantly. Now it will increase more, I think, as time goes on, but it hasn't at this point in time. It's just growing and it has taken a long time, I think, for people who are not familiar with irrigation to learn how to handle irrigation to the best advantage of the area. I believe the people on the west side will be able to take advantage of some of the pitfalls which the others experienced and would likely be able to avoid some of them. But they can only do it if there is water. I believe the time is now.

I might suggest to you that people from the area where I live have, for the last number of years, bought a good portion of the hay that is produced in the Outlook area. Some of them have bought up to 1,000 acres of alfalfa again this year. It is meaningful to quite a large area. If we get into irrigation and intensify the agricultural industry, you are going to see jobs starting to be available to Saskatchewan people. There will be far more jobs available than will be available on grain farms because as the workload increases there is need for people. I would hope you would take a more serious look at irrigation than your government has up to this point.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't have any quarrel with what the hon. member has said. I didn't mean to suggest the alfalfa production there was not considerable. I mentioned earlier the cubing plant up there. We know that alfalfa from the area makes its contribution and we can assess (because of the contribution of the east side irrigation) what additional west side irrigation might do. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture will be considering that in the course of making a judgment as to what we ought to do.

I think the member for Rosetown-Elrose makes a good point. People are becoming more familiar with irrigation and as they become more familiar with it and more comfortable with it, irrigated land is going to be more valuable to the whole agricultural picture in Saskatchewan.

MR. G.S. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Premier, the Minister of Agriculture this morning in question period was asked by me about the 6,000 to 7,000 head of cattle which could be pastured in northeast Saskatchewan. Now this to me, Mr. Premier, came from an honorable man, but it has to be a mistake. It will panic the public. When you are talking about 6,000 to 7,000 head of cattle, I know that it takes at least 60,000 to 70,000 acres to pasture them. The public, Mr. Premier, will panic over this.

Since I have no way to address any more questions to the Minister of Agriculture, I am asking you to request he make some retraction. When moisture conditions were better in the Northeast, he made this statement at the stock growers' convention in Moose Jaw:

The Northeast had better reserves of moisture going into the spring and has

been able to help out by offering space for additional animals. It is anticipated that there is room for about 1,800 head in these pastures, with 200 head already moved in and 400 committed.

In my constituency the grass situation is getting most serious and we have, on our own, phoned almost every pasture foreman we can make contact with and they say they don't want any more cattle and that the drought situation is getting serious up there.

For the minister to come out yesterday and say on a hot line program that we can handle 6,000 to 8,000 head of cattle – there are not 60,000 acres of excess grassland in the whole province of Saskatchewan. So I am asking you, Mr. Premier, what your views are on this statement and if you would ask the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to say something publicly to retract that statement. It has to be a false statement. Well, I don't mean to say false; there has to be some misunderstanding somewhere. Perhaps the minister has been misinformed or he has plainly made a mistake because it cannot be and is an impossibility.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I represent the constituency of Elphinstone . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We have some grass in the Dewdney park which I opened last Sunday; a fine park it is.

But I'm responding to a question from a cattleman, addressed in essence to a minister who has raised more cattle than I've ever seen, and accordingly I don't think I'm going to be able to intercede successfully on the question of whether or not there is enough pasture land to pasture 6,000 or 7,000, or 600 or 700 head. I will pass on to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture the comments of the hon. member for Arm River. I am sure that the Minister of Agriculture heard them and I will ask him to issue such public statements as may be called for in all the circumstances. I suspect that's all that I can do, because I don't know how many head of cattle can be grazed on the pastures which may or may not be available in northeastern Saskatchewan.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Thank you. Mr. Minister, I have prepared a few words which I will say now. I am especially pleased when Executive Council estimates occur, because the Premier is required to be with us, which is a switch, and is responsible for answering questions on a variety of subjects as they relate to both himself and various functions of the Executive Council.

These estimates should prove and are proving interesting in that I intend to pursue subjects I know are of as much interest to the Premier as they are to me and the public. At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that the Premier's image makers and propaganda artists have been frantically attempting to build a myth that the Premier is a statesman.

I should like to point out that John F. Kennedy once wrote and I quote:

Men are not great statesmen merely because they happen to have held great offices. They must present better title deeds to eminence.

Mr. Chairman, this is the case with the present Premier. They will include, Mr. Chairman, questions on one of the offspring of the Blakeney years – the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, and all the things that it has done to (and you will note Mr. Chairman, that I said to and for) the people of northern Saskatchewan and continues to

do today.

We will pursue, Mr. Chairman, some more questions on the perennial topic of Service Printers, better known as the bucket shop affair, and the awarding of government contracts to this company. I know the Premier always enjoys talking about that topic and of course, while we are on the topic of patronage, we will pursue the appointments of a few of the party faithful to positions within government and government Crown corporations.

This, of course, Mr. Chairman, relates intimately to the estimates of Executive Council because as we are all only too well aware, Executive Council is usually the training ground, the springboard really, for various party workers to enter the senior levels of the Saskatchewan public service; it's sort of like sneaking in the back door, I would say. And speaking of sneaking in doors, Mr. Chairman, it gives me a great deal of satisfaction to know that at least during these Executive Council estimates, the Premier cannot sneak out the back door as he does when issues that might reflect on him badly may arise.

I find it truly amazing to watch the great lengths that the NDP House Leader and his caucus go to to protect the Premier from any negative publicity, to give him a knight-in-shining-armor image before the voting public. The Premier is proudly displayed during election campaigns. Vote for Allan Blakeney and the NDP, the banner reads. Then the NDP propaganda machine begins the sales pitch on the voting public of Saskatchewan, attempting to convince them all of the great things that nine years of Blakeney government has brought to this province.

But let us stand and observe one of the Blakeney government departments, DNS. Let the public discover that all the media broadcasts in Saskatchewan are being taped. Let it be discovered that the Blakeney government won't allow television cameras in committee meetings. That doesn't allow the public to see their elected members in action. Let blatant examples of political patronage by the Blakeney government be unearthed. Let any of these incidents occur, Mr. Chairman, and what happens? The Blakeney of the 'Vote Allan Blakeney' NDP banner disappears.

If something good appears to come from a situation, Allan Blakeney appears magically from the woodwork. But if it is something bad, the Premier becomes a shadow. Then the shadow's shadow takes over. For those who do not recognize this description, I am referring of course to the Attorney General, the man who must ensure that the Premier's armor retains its polish.

The Premier and the Attorney General would like the people of this province to believe that the Premier should only have to claim the responsibility for the good things done by his government. The bad can be attributed to others. That is not the way things work in the real world.

The person who leads the government must ultimately accept responsibility for all actions of his government, the good with the bad. The Premier must accept the responsibility of the weakest link and goodness knows you have lots. He must be ready to answer questions and accept criticism for the actions of those people who work for him.

It is time, therefore, for the Premier to begin to answer some of the questions he has been avoiding for too long. I should like to point out to Mr. Blakeney that when a person

has been Premier for nine years, his name should go down in history for some great accomplishment in his province.

So when Mr. Blakeney gets to his feet, I would like to have him inform this Assembly of his views as to what he has really done for the people of Saskatchewan. I know what Mr. Blakeney will say when he arises. He will go on to say all the wonderful things he has done for this province. But I wish to inform the Premier not to try to fool this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan with a fancy speech of his accomplishments.

Mr. Chairman, my remarks are my own words, my own views of Premier Allan Blakeney's political realm. The Premier has done a fantastic job, a sensational job of conning the people of Saskatchewan into believing he has their interests at heart. What the Premier has done is to feed the bureaucrats, the numbers of which are ridiculous. Most of the government programs have been designed to buy votes. The government grants and the give-away programs, coupled with the welfare system, especially in large urban centres, have brought thousands of votes for the Premier and his colleagues.

During the last nine years some good legislation has been introduced but a large majority of important bills brought into this House, especially in the last two or three years, are bills which take power and authority away from people and give it to the government.

I should like to point out to the Premier that during the two sessions I have sat as a member of this Legislative Assembly, I've seen bills passed through this House that are of a dictatorial nature, the same nature as the type of mentality which exists in other socialist and communist nations. Mr. Chairman, when I see a government present a bill and pass it, I want it to be the will of the people.

For instance, I look at legislation of the many bills which have gone through, like Bill No. 13, land bank bills, bills regarding potash and hog marketing boards. I could go on. In each of these bills the Premier did not consult the people; he just pushed the bills through. Consult the people, Mr. Premier.

One great accomplishment the Premier takes credit for is the potash program. But I could assure him the majority of the people of this province did not want to see this province put into debt for potash mines to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

One of the Premier's accomplishments, for which I give him credit, is putting this province into a debt situation which will take the next Conservative government years to clear up. Debt situations are typical of many governments, but especially the government of this province, and the federal Liberal government in Ottawa. They are using taxpayers' dollars to buy votes.

Mr. Chairman, another accomplishment of the Premier is to fool the voters with his whitewashed image. The Premier is never seen and is seldom available for comment when this government is in trouble. He is like an antique knight in shining armor and his armor is kept polished by his top man, the Attorney General. If the Attorney General is not receiving double salary he should because he is the protector of the Premier. If the Attorney General were to leave the government it would fold in very short time.

And one of the press, Dale Eisler, must agree because he writes:

He is the man who takes over when the going gets rough, a shield so to speak for Blakeney, who at all costs must maintain the statesman image which has taken so many years to cultivate and is now in full bloom. All that work would be wasted should the Premier get involved in the nasty ways of the legislature. It is Romanow's job to take care of any battles that could cast a cloud over the Premier. That is why not long ago, when Colin Thatcher, of the Conservatives, asked the Premier why Teletheatre, the closed circuit network, owned one-third by the government, was going to show a movie about childhood prostitution that had been banned in the province, Blakeney turned it immediately over to Romanow. Getting involved in such topics is potentially damaging.

Mr. Chairman, what is the public going to think of the Premier as a man when my colleagues and myself spend between now and the next election campaigning with the following statements: Premier Blakeney refuses to put moratorium on use of public funds for uranium development in Saskatchewan; Premier Blakeney allows developers to answer his mail; Premier Blakeney refuses to have investigation into the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; Premier Blakeney would rather gallivant around the country like a travelling gypsy than stay at home in Saskatchewan and face the real problems of his province; Premier Blakeney rarely ever participates in the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly except for the occasional question he answers in question period; Premier Blakeney refuses to take the sales tax off children's clothing; Premier Blakeney tolerates political patronage while at the same time pretending it does not exist in this province; Premier Blakeney heads coverup on the cemeteries back in the '50s; Premier Blakeney heads coverup on conflict of interest in the Service Printers; Premier Blakeney heads involvement with the securities commission and Department of Finance in the 1950s, thus directly involving him with the Hon. C.M. Fines.

Mr. Chairman, what can we think of anyone involved in any way whatsoever with C.M. Fines, who everyone knows bled the taxpayers of Saskatchewan for a figure that no one knows, except perhaps the Premier? Perhaps he knows. Mr. Chairman, I was going to call Mr. Fines a crook but I would much rather use the words of Robert Tyre, the author of Douglas in Saskatchewan. Now these are his words; these are not my words.

And that was Saskatchewan's Rawluk case. Allore resigned his post as general manager of the Government Finance Office and left Saskatchewan. On his way out of the province he was pinched for speeding. Rawluk, who brought the charges and put through the CCF mangle, found work of some kind in Regina and was heard from no more. Hon. C.M. Fines continued to grace the office of the provincial treasurer for another seven years and then he stuffed his bonds and bankbooks into the saddlebags of his Cadillac and like Allore left the province. Mr. Fines was a young adventurous Regina school teacher when he boarded the merry-go-round of political fortune in 1944, and forthwith became provincial treasurer. He showed an aptitude for handling money, was not dismayed by large transactions or steeply rising budgets presented in successive legislatures.

His personal affairs prospering sufficiently to permit early retirement and travel abroad, Mr. Fines resigned his portfolio and his seat. He has shown a partiality for tropical climes and if Saskatchewan people's problems still concern him it is not outwardly apparent.

The last report on his exile placed him in Jamaica where he is supposed to be

planning the construction of a multimillion dollar resort.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Blakeney knows as well as I do that the majority of the people of Saskatchewan knows that the charges against Mr. Fines are true. The only reason he escaped from this province is that the sweet little man of the cloth, Tommy Douglas, overruled in this legislature and kept the case from getting to the courts. I will quote another paragraph. This is a quote by Robert Tyre, a legislative reporter:

An impartial hearing investigation by the committee was a joke.

Mr. Premier, you know this happened, so this makes you a party to this.

It was too heavily loaded with CCF members, among them Mr. Douglas. The Premier turned in a fine versatile performance as judge, jury, and Crown prosecutor. It was obvious that he very badly wanted to play the role of executioner too. He seldom was quiet and never partisan. His tongue gave poor Rowluk a bad time. He threatened Rowluk with court action. He made frequent mention of what he called Rowluk's emotional mental instability and said Rowluk was suffering from a persecution complex. He suggested Rowluk was suffering from delusions that his telephone was being tapped, that he was being followed and that he thought he must carry a gun to defend himself.

He did his best to suggest that Rowluk was a bit insane. He suggested that Rowluk be injected with truth serum. Mr. Douglas seemed more interested in destroying Rowluk than in getting at the truth. There were a number of people in the audience who took a strong dislike to Douglas after that performance. They declared it was vindictive not . . .

Douglas interrupted the hearing on numerous occasions to assist witnesses who were giving testimony favorable to Fines and Allore and to interfere with witnesses whose testimony he did not like. He threatened once to expel Rowluk's counsel from the hearing with still important evidence to be heard, some of it considered damaging to the defendants. Douglas demanded that the investigation cease and the report be produced.

The committee rendered its report. It has since been referred to as the Douglas report. It displayed all the bias and prejudice exhibited by Douglas during the hearing. It found that the Rowluk charges were wholly unwarranted and unfounded. It played up sections of the evidence which were most unfavorable to Rowluk that ignored or lightly dismissed evidence of charges made by Rowluk.

It was a good heavy coat of whitewashing. Mr. Chairman, I want to make it quite clear in this Assembly that the Premier disgraced himself.

The reason why I am bringing this up, Mr. Premier, is your actions of 1979. I want to make it very clear that you have disgraced yourself as Premier and your government by bringing back that scoundrel Fines and making a hero out of him by naming the SGI building The Honourable C.M. Fines Building.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier was involved directly with C.M. Fines in the 1950s and bringing him back for the occasion makes him just as guilty by being a party to it all. The

Premier knows as well as I do there have been some under-the-table deals with SEDCO and being the captain of the ship makes him completely responsible.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier should explain the 1973 Hammersmith letter. These are only a few of the involvements of the Premier that should be explained to this Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, we on this side of the House have been eagerly awaiting the day when Executive Council estimates come before this Assembly. Because from the actions of the Premier in recent months, it would appear that unless the matters at hand are of a national or international nature, he isn't really concerned. If he had shown as much concern for Saskatchewan in the last six months as he has for people out of the province – he showed no concern about the drought or about the DNS scandal – he would have seen that some of the money spent on nuclear and uranium development (\$500 million) could have been spent on irrigation as the member for Rosetown-Elrose stated today. Then perhaps we wouldn't be in a situation, without hay, as we are in this province today.

The day to day grass root problems of Saskatchewan citizens are secondary to his national and international image building program. I remember one occasion when I put a question to him regarding approval of commercial cemeteries and he replied that he really didn't have to answer to this House for any actions he may have taken as a civil servant. Other than on that occasion, anytime I addressed a question to him, I was out of order or it was answered by one of the boys – either the Attorney General, the Provincial Secretary or someone else.

Mr. Chairman, my interpretation of Executive Council and the responsibilities related thereto is this: the Executive Council is the Premier and those delegated by him to act as ministers of the Crown, and other officials who come under the jurisdiction of Executive Council, (which we all know are for the most part, order in council political hacks). Mr. Chairman, I believe it is quite in order, and quite logical, that we as the opposition should be able to direct any and all types of questions to the Premier when we are receiving the estimates of the Executive Council and we should be able to obtain clear and comprehensive answers to our questions. After all, you are the captain of the ship so you must know exactly what is happening in every department or agency of government. If the Premier doesn't have a crew that keeps him well-informed and keeps the ship on an even keel, then he should replace the crew, either by promoting some or demoting some.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that there are at least a couple of ministers over there who know what I mean by demotion, like the ex-minister of agriculture, the ex-minister of finance and oh yes, the ex-minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Of course in the case of the ex-minister of northern Saskatchewan, we on this side are not quite sure whether that change of crew was to keep the ship afloat or the purpose of his replacement was to keep from having mutiny aboard the ship. Now the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan, we don't believe was a promotion or was the captain's real choice for his present position, but after he won the nomination and was elected, the captain had no alternative but to put him aboard and give him a position on the Executive Council.

Mr. Premier, I apologize for making these accusations against you but my reasons for doing so are because I have sat in this House for this whole session and you, the Attorney General and many of your colleagues have stood in this House, for no reason

at all, and knocked our leader, Grant Devine, right into the ground. We all know in this province, Mr. Premier, that you have done everything you could to try to destroy him before he has even started. You are not going to succeed, Mr. Premier, because Mr. Grant Devine happens to be a man who is clean. He has not been involved in any situations such as those which you have been involved in, Mr. Premier.

Now, Mr. Premier, in dealing with the statements I have made to you involving SEDCO and the statements about Mr. Fines (all of the statements I have made which are insinuations upon you), all you have to do is call inquiries into this House to prove yourself innocent and I will take back everything I said and I will make it public. Until you do so, you are guilty, Mr. Premier.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't think I need to stand in this House and defend the record or the reputation of Mr. C.M. Fines or Mr. T.C. Douglas. They have served in their own way the people of Saskatchewan and their record of service is there for all to see and it is not in any way sullied by any comments made by the member for Arm River.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I simply want to make two other comments and then I will sit down. First, as to whether or not the government has done well or ill in its nine years, nothing that I say is going to materially affect the opinions of the public on that point. The record is there for nine years with all its successes and all its failures and people can judge, as they have on two occasions. For all I know they will judge equally well, at least in my judgment, next time. But who knows? All men are mortal and all governments are mortal. We may prove to be vulnerable the next time. I do not think that to be the case but at least the people will make a judgment. As to whether or not I'm inaccessible, I have a weekly press conference. So far as I am aware, I am the only Premier in Canada who does. Certainly my colleagues in my neighboring provinces do not. I am available for people to ask questions about the conduct of the government and I attempt to answer the questions. Whether or not I do that well or ill is not for me to judge but for the taxpaying public to judge. The reporters report as best they can, and one way or another, we respond to the questions as the press sees them.

I am here for most question periods and attempt to respond. I am not able to answer all questions, but attempt to do my best. Having said that, I won't burden the House any more with the defence of our administration.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Solomon, just be thankful Whelan wanted to make more money on pension than staying as a backbencher, otherwise you wouldn't be here.

Mr. Premier, earlier on in the session I asked a question of you, and you suggested that you would see what the answer would be and get back to me. While the Attorney General was up on his estimates I was booked elsewhere and didn't have a chance to ask him. Last evening I spoke about it again with the Provincial Secretary. My concern is the special group convention grants with a maximum of \$3,000 and the policy of your government. I am informed by the protocol people that either a senior cabinet minister or a high ranking official must be present at those functions, otherwise the grant will not be available to that organization. You indicated to me during question period that you didn't quite think it was correct either and that you would come back with an answer to me at a later date. Seeing that the session seems to be winding down, I'm

wondering if you have an answer to what you're going to do.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Maybe I have misconceived the policy of the protocol office. When there is a convention grant we certainly do attempt to have somebody from the government bring greetings or be the speaker or as the case may be. I am not aware that it was a condition. It seems to me that I have been made aware of grants and the like which have been paid to conventions where there was not a government speaker. But I confess I am not sure of that. I said to the hon. member that I would try to run that to ground; I'm sorry if I haven't done so. I will attempt to do so and will ask members of my staff to see whether I can't do that. I simply don't know the answer as to the policy of the government with respect to what are the requirements for getting a grant for the government's sponsoring a banquet at a convention.

MR. KATZMAN: — Just one further part to that, Mr. Premier. The information which I have received, and a concern in my constituency is that it had to be a cabinet minister, or a senior official, or they wouldn't get the grant. I thank Reg Gross for making a special trip on a Sunday to fly up, otherwise they would not have qualified. But the problem is, Mr. Premier, they allow backbenchers from your side constantly to make the grants legitimate. Yet in the constituencies of the opposition members, they either suggest it has to be a cabinet minister or the grant is no good. I suggest that should be corrected.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I take the point.

MR. J.W.A. GARNER (Wilkie): — Well, Mr. Premier, I think it is about time we brought you into the debate on Bill No. 13. You have stayed out of it until now. It is going to be a messy one, which it has been. I would like your thoughts on it. This is a letter sent to Premier Allan Blakeney, from the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce:

Dear Mr. Blakeney: Delegates to the 35th annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce which recently concluded its session in Prince Albert, unanimously approved a motion requesting that Bill No. 13, amendments to The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act, be tabled in order that discussions surrounding the impact of the bill may be held with the business community.

This contentious issue surfaced during many of the discussions in question period throughout our three day annual conference. We strongly urge the provincial government to reconsider its actions and directions in this area until it can be conclusively proved that there is a necessity for such a move. Without solid input from the business community, this area will continue to be a problem. Sincerely, J.R. Sneath, Immediate Past President.

This was sent to you, Mr. Premier. Next, we have from the Leader-Post, June 9, 1980:

Constitutional challenge. Meanwhile, the Leader-Post has learned that the federal government is studying Bill No. 13 and may challenge its constitutional validity.

George Hazen, Saskatchewan regional director of the federal industry, trade and commerce department, said the bill is being discussed by the two governments because it may be a restriction on interprovincial trade. He said it probably will be challenged soon after it is implemented.

Also, Mr. Premier, I noticed in the paper today (Bill No. 13 hasn't just died out) the Swift Current City Council passed unanimously a request to have Bill No. 13 tabled. I don't think it is asking too much to table this bill and put it out for public input throughout the summer. I would like to know why your government is so strongly opposed to listening to the people of Saskatchewan regarding Bill No. 13, if it is going to cause problems between the provincial and federal governments? Representation is being made to you, Mr. Premier, from all over. The people are not happy. They are just asking for a chance. Will you at this time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I hear an hon. member yelling hogwash! I take the hogwash from where it comes.

Mr. Premier, will you at this time tell this Assembly that you will table Bill No. 13 to give the people of Saskatchewan a chance to voice their opinions? If you can sell the idea to them, fine. But if they are unhappy with it, let's hear from them. I would like your comments on that please.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think our views on Bill No. 13 have been well put by the minister. We really feel that the reasons for Bill No. 13 are the same reasons as has caused Sask Tel to have substantially the provisions of Bill No. 13 in its conditions for service for many years, and the same reasons which have caused the Government of Alberta and the Government of Manitoba to pass very, very similar legislation.

The Government of Alberta's legislation is to just about precisely the same effect. Anyone who suggests otherwise, I think, has not read them. The Government of Manitoba's is framed slightly differently, but in a sense it is wider. It says the utility can set out by regulation what can be attached, and can change the regulation from time to time. In that sense of the word, it is a wider provision.

I think the reasons for that are the same. All the three prairie utilities (and I know other utilities) wish to be able to prevent attachments to their system which may cause deterioration in the quality of service and wish to be able to retain the integrity of the system so they can average rates and provide low-cost telephone service to people in isolated areas, in areas like Wilkie. I think those reasons are the same in Saskatchewan as they are in Manitoba or Alberta.

We note that the Chamber of Commerce of Saskatchewan has raised an objection. We would have wished that they would have attached the objection which the Alberta Chamber of Commerce raised with the Alberta Government, but we suspect that didn't happen. We suspect that the Chamber of Commerce views the matter as being one where if it is done by an Alberta Government, it is all right, but if it is done by our government, it is not all right. That would not surprise us particularly. Basically, we think that the reasons which have moved the three prairie governments to act in this way are sound reasons. We think they are accepted in the other provinces and will be accepted in this province.

MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Premier, then what you are saying is you are going to be totally in agreement with whatever the other provinces do, whether it be an oil price or anything else? No, just a minute, I am not finished, Mr. Premier. I mean the thing is that the people of Saskatchewan have asked to have input into this. Now, you, as the Premier of Saskatchewan, are telling them, no, just the Premier knows best. You do what we want you to do. We know what is best for you. Mr. Premier, that is wrong and you know it. Now, why not (for the sake of six months or four months or whenever your little, happy, wonderful government decides to call a fall session) put it out to public hearings, meet with the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, send a couple of your

joe boys to their convention. No one showed up at their convention. You didn't show up. You didn't get into the debate until today. I think you are running a slack government, a government totally in control of the people. You don't want to let them have input into it.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am happy for the hon. member's views as to whether the government is slack or not slack. I point out that the bill is very, very similar to that condition of service which the hon. member (presumably he has a telephone) has accepted for these many years — that no person shall attach to or use, in conjunction with any part of Sask Tel's communication system or property, any unauthorized electrical, mechanical or other device, whether connected to such system or property or not, for any purpose whatsoever. Now, the member has accepted this for many years and he has without protest. I have certainly seen it and I am sure he has.

I think we are having a debate in this legislature. That is surely consultation with the people. I suspect the member for Wilkie suggests he represents his constituents; I certainly suggest I represent mine. If we do a little head count we'll find that everybody in Saskatchewan is represented, with the possible exception of some people in ... oh, I don't know which constituency. Perhaps Last Mountain-Touchwood is the one I had in mind, that was on the tip of my tongue. Possibly it was that one.

And accordingly I think all the people are represented here. They are represented here in a way that the issue can be debated. It has been debated. There will be differences of opinion; that's what makes legislatures and horse races. Accordingly I don't think we should regret the fact that there are differences of view, but we should assume that we will make a judgment in our collective wisdom for what it's worth. We will proceed to act on this judgment as our fellow westerners in Manitoba and Alberta have done.

MR. LANE: — Well, on the matter of Sask Tel and television, there are two differences. There are big differences between the supply of telephone services and access to television. What you've done with telephones is extend the service, so the act says. But with television you've restricted it. You've shut down the telecable in Saskatoon, or you've jammed it. You withheld cable television while you jockeyed for CPN which turned out to be a stupid decision of the government opposite. I suggest that the comparison is not relevant.

For example, in northern Saskatchewan one of the communities had the opportunity to have cable TV. Someone from Whitehorse came in on the survey and offered to put in the satellite dish and supply the cable television. The Government of Saskatchewan said no. There's a big difference between your actions on telephones and access to television. In fact, you've done the opposite with television; you've used Sask Tel as a political tool to stop the people of Saskatchewan from having access to television. So I don't think the analogy is a fair and proper one.

I have a question for the Premier. In Executive Council, the social planning unit — I would like first of all to know whether the social planning unit is the same planning unit you had used in which reference was made to a cultural planning unit. Is this one and the same body or are they two different secretariats?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No, the cultural planning unit was a couple of people who were doing a survey of the broad area of cultural programs in Saskatchewan. They were sited in the Department of Culture and Youth.

MR. LANE: — O.K. Now what is the social planning unit then? What's its purpose and what projects is it involved in?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, the social planning unit, or secretariat as it is sometimes called, is in the Department of Municipal Affairs and is under the direction of my colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs. When I say municipal affairs I should say Department of Municipal Affairs (Urban). It is under the direction of my colleague, Mr. Smishek, the member for Regina North-East.

He is attempting to devise some policies to deal with the social problems dealing with native, non-native relations, primarily in major cities. He is attempting to deal with whether or not our educational programs are responding to the needs of some people who have been moving into our cities. He is attempting to ascertain whether or not there are job opportunities for some people at the lower level of the socio-economic ladder (if I may call it that) in our cities and whether there are those opportunities in government for some of those people and for employment in government. That's the role of the social planning secretariat and, as I say, it's under the guidance of my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Urban).

MR. LANE: — I apologize to the Premier. I made the mistake of taking the April government directory and, of course, that's where these items are listed. It's kind of like the shell game, find out which department the pea is under in order to try to keep up.

I would like the Premier to supply to me, if he would, the salaries of his officials and the travel expenses total for the previous fiscal year for his officials. I would like to know, particularly, about the travel of the special assistants to the Premier — how much, in fact, was spent and how much was spent on lodging, whatever; that is all expenditures for those. I'm prepared, if the Premier wishes, to just have that forwarded, unless he's prepared to read the totals into the record. I would like to know the salaries of all the officials. I'm not, at this point, concerned about the secretaries.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, we can provide that. I could give the salaries quickly. I could not give you the travel expenses that quickly and I will accept the offer of the hon. member that I forward it to him.

MRS. J.H. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Premier, I'd like to spend just a very few minutes talking about the health care system in Saskatchewan. When the present minister was named to his new portfolio, there were quite a few write-ups in the paper that he was going to take a preventive health approach to medicare and that he was going to place emphasis on preventive health care programs. To date, no new programs have been announced and they don't appear to be initiated. Not too long ago, the three field health educators who worked in rural parts of Saskatchewan were taken out of the rural setting and brought into Regina, which I would say is probably a regressive step rather than a progressive step.

During health estimates, the Minister of Health admitted that your government has, and perhaps will always have, a rather confrontational attitude toward the medicare profession. I think it's evident that confrontation is there, considering some of the highly qualified and highly trained people we have lost this year. One, in particular, is Dr. Mathias. It's my understanding, from what was reported in the paper today, that we knew Dr. Mathias would be leaving a couple of months ago but the Department of Health has not yet advertised to fill that particular position. It is known that

Saskatchewan, with our population, should have at least five genetic medical people. We're down to two, and one of them is leaving very shortly to go to Edmonton where there is a rather elaborate \$300 million research facility available.

I just feel that your government, which uses the medicare issue in every election (and I would venture to say probably wins elections on the medicare issue, with the little rumors and whatever that are spread door-to-door around the province really) is not placing much emphasis on health care. I believe statistics released this year show that out of the four prairie provinces, Saskatchewan spends less on health care than any other province per capita. The Minister of Health also feels that lengthy waiting lists are indicative of a well-run health care system. But my question, Mr. Premier, is this. In the Debates and Proceedings of March 24, 1970, on a motion by Mr. Smishek which you seconded, it states:

That this Assembly strongly disapproves of the successive modifications to the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan which have changed it from a plan which paid all hospital operating costs . . . leaving the balance to be paid partly by those requiring hospital care and partly by municipalities or religious orders; and, further that this Assembly calls on the government to consider restoring the plan to its original intent by abandoning deterrent fees and by abandoning its attempt to shift part of the hospital operating costs onto the local ratepayers.

Now deterrent fees were removed. But 10 years ago you were complaining about the shift of responsibility to the municipalities and to the ratepayers. Hospitals are accruing ever-increasing deficits. This is the tenth year since you put in that motion, yet we see very little attempt by your government to go back to the original intent of the medicare plan to pick up the costs. Can we expect grants to be eliminated and operating costs to be picked up?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think a look at the estimates this year will indicate the estimates for the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan have been very, very markedly increased from \$265 million to \$301 million — a \$36 million increase or in the order of 13 per cent. This is a good deal more than the average in the budget and a great deal more than the 5 per cent or 6 per cent which tended to be the amount which some of our in-house programs received. I think this indicates a desire to fund hospitals more fully.

As the hon. member indicated, we did eliminate the deterrent fees. By and large I would think that hospital deficits, as a percentage of the amount spent on hospital care in the province, have dropped and I would think dropped fairly sharply since 1970. Now I don't have those figures before me but I would be quite surprised if the total of hospital deficits, as a percentage of the total amount spent by hospitals, is as large in 1979 as it was in 1970. I would be quite surprised because for one thing the deficits seemed to be not too dissimilar in dollar figures than they were six or seven, eight or nine years ago. Since the hospitals are spending twice as much the percentage is really dropping significantly.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Not in real terms.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, we obviously cannot eliminate all hospital deficits because whether a hospital has a deficit depends upon whether or not the board wishes to have a deficit. But if every hospital is running a deficit then we probably know that the budgets are too tight. I think, by and large, looking at the picture, we will see that

deficits are not as prevalent as they were (again as a percentage in 1970) and I believe the 13 per cent increase is going to make a significant difference this year.

MR. LANE: — I understand that there was some controversy a year or so ago about SGI going out of province to have its logo and visual identity program designed by a Toronto firm. Would the Premier confirm that it is the same firm which did the province's visual identity program, or that the same individuals were involved?

MR. BLAKENEY: — SGI went outside for visual identity and was it the same as the one who did the province's? The answer is yes, I believe SGI did go outside. I'm now speaking from memory and this is something that the board handled. I can assure you that the cabinet did not and as far as I know, the minister did not, but the management of the board arranged for the visual identity program. I acquired some information about it later.

With respect to the government's visual identity program, the stylized wheat sheaf and all of the other things that you can see — that is done in-house by some people . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The stylized wheat sheaf is terrible? I know the hon. member wouldn't want us to emphasize the agricultural nature of Saskatchewan. What should we put on it, a piece of potash or something? Well, at any rate it was an effort to make the point that agriculture is our chief industry — a point which I am sure we all share whether or not we like the way it's done. And it was done in-house; it was done by our people.

MR. LANE: — Well, I would like to know — and again not immediately if the Premier is prepared to undertake to supply the information to me — the initial cost of the program. And I would like to know the cost at the outset. I frankly have difficulty believing that the figures given by SGI for their program are accurate. I say that because it's an ongoing program and the costs are going to be continuous.

I note, for example, that here we have a visual identity office; we have a visual identity consultant. These all add, I assume, to the identity program that was developed. Now those are ongoing costs that in my mind should have been considered at the time the program was devised so we would be able to determine the total budget. I'm asking if the Premier would undertake to give us the total cost of what was projected for the program?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think the visual identity program is something which you do keep at for a number of years. There are a good number of aspects of it which are not yet in place. There are all sorts of government signs which still have the coat of arms and all that sort of thing which will in due course give way to visual identity.

I see this year the estimates have given way. By and large it includes those aspects of it — the particular way in which Saskatchewan is printed, the stylized wheat sheaf, the particular typeface which is chosen for various typing, etc. Hon. members have expressed a preference particularly for the color of the estimates this year. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, that's right.

It is an ongoing program. I can find out what it is costing but I raised the same questions with you fairly early in the game. If we take on someone who is a specialist in this area, surely that's only a one-year project. That's what I was assured at the beginning. Oh no, it won't work out that way; it will be three or four or five years before all of this is worked in. If you're going to get the full economies in buying stationery in large lots, in getting a

large number of things done in a uniform way so as to get the economies of scale, it's going to take you some time. I was assured of that, so it didn't come as a surprise but I can find out roughly what the figures are.

MR. LANE: — Of course, I just grabbed an example of the lack of uniformity. The Crown investments are in purple and gold; there is no use of the logo. And then you go into the budget so perhaps your statement is right but all I'm suggesting is that I have difficulty believing that when the program was first sold to the government that the actual costs were in fact laid out. I have a belief that the same thing applies at SGI because the same group of people are doing ongoing audio-visual presentations to groups around the province, which I know has to cost money. I don't think they're doing it out of the goodness of their hearts. For that to be all within what was said to be a \$60,000 to \$70,000 cost at the outset, I frankly have difficulty accepting.

My next question to the Premier is would the Premier supply to the opposition the names of those officials who accompanied him on his recent trip to Europe, the costs of that trip, the amounts expended, and who organized and planned that whole trip? I'd like the answer to the latter part of that now, if you would.

MR. BLAKENEY: — The question I'm asked to address myself to now is who organized and planned the trip to Europe. I'll try to recall that. Jack Kinzel, who was then in the employ of the government, was with me as my principal secretary throughout and was the only one who went everywhere with me. He did a good deal of the planning. Michael Jay of intergovernmental affairs did a great deal of the planning by way of making the arrangements with the Canadian embassies in Paris, Bonn, Stockholm, and Moscow, and the Canadian High Commissions in London, Canberra and Wellington. He did most of that. Mel Hinds did some planning on the media work.

Those who went with me, at government expense, were Jack Kinzel, Mel Hinds, Michael Jay and Mr. Merv Johnson whom we picked up in London. He went with us to Paris, Bonn, Stockholm and Moscow and then went home. I intersected Mr. Lloyd from the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation at London and he went around to France, Germany and Sweden. Some of the potash people were with me in Moscow (a Mr. Monker). Just Mr. Kinzel and I went to Australia and New Zealand. By and large the planning was done by Jay and his associates in intergovernmental affairs and Kinzel and his associates in my office.

We can come up with the expense figures which were of the order of \$46,000 in total. I have a breakdown here which I'll give the hon. member. That covers accommodation, travel costs, and miscellaneous expenses, and before he asks, it does not cover the costs of inserting advertisements in papers.

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier advise me which travel agency was used to book the trip, if any?

On a totally different topic, how much has the Premier's office budgeted for research surveys in this fiscal year, if any? I'm assuming all governments are doing political surveys or surveys with regard to constitution or for whatever reason. I am asking, how much is budgeted in Executive Council, if any, for surveys? If it is not in Executive Council, which department is it in for next year?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Basically, there is nothing in the budget. There is an item of miscellaneous for \$2,000 which, I think, was thought of as – if a survey is done and if

Executive Council hangs on a question(as they say), or if they need to do any for the purposes of some economic question, it is there.

The other question asked by the member was if there are other survey costs and where are they. They are not anywhere in a lump sum. If an agency wishes to direct a particular question to be asked (and I take it he is referring to things like Gallup surveys), then the agency which asks the question puts up the money. So if people are asking, do you prefer four-lane highways to the paving of class 5 highways, that would be in the Department of Highways. Obviously, that is a hypothetical question.

MR. LANE: — The next question is dealing with the tapes and the tape recording system in information services. Now, the Premier has indicated those are merely to keep in touch, that it is similar to a clipping service. And of course, there is a fundamental difference, the fundamental difference being that newspapers are generally stored either at the place of printing or in the public libraries or wherever. The public and members of the Assembly can go through and check. But with the tapes that is not the case. With the tapes, the sole depository of the tapes and the information will be information services after 30 days, because the media outlets are not required to maintain the tapes. So I ask the Premier, is it the intention of the government to destroy these tapes after 30 days, as the media outlets are required to do, or are you keeping a permanent record of the tapes?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Firstly, I dispute the hon. member's assertion that the media are required to destroy their tapes after 30 days.

MR. LANE: — No, I said they are only required to keep them for 30 days.

MR. BLAKENEY: — That is a far cry. We are not required to keep them at all, but I will try to find out what our practice is.

I am advised that the practice is to destroy the tapes to reuse them; it's not a case of destroying them. It has the effect of destroying them, but the purpose is to reuse them before 30 days. Occasionally, we might keep a tape that long. Mr. Hinds advises me that he's unaware of tapes which he currently has which are over 30 days old. On occasion, transcripts are maybe prepared from the tapes and the transcripts may well not be destroyed in 30 days. In fact, they wouldn't be destroyed unless there was a reason for destroying them. But the tapes are reusable, and, in fact, are reused.

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier undertake to supply the opposition with a copy of the transcripts made of each tape that is, in fact, transcribed?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think I would want the same sort of proposition from the opposition of any taping and transcribing they do using government funds. I think we have to make it pretty clear here. I think we can make an agreement but I will not give an undertaking. We'll see what the agreement is.

MR. LANE: — I'd be quite prepared to make that commitment because we're not doing any taping.

MR. BLAKENEY: — That's what the hon. member says but he's not the leader; he's not even the ostensible leader. It may well be that there are other arrangements.

MR. LANE: — If you're prepared to make such an agreement, I would suggest that the

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correspondence come from leader to leader then. That's what you're suggesting. Is that correct?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm just suggesting that we will consider any propositions which move in that direction. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to be in touch with me, that's fine.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 and 3 agreed.

Item 4

MR. LANE: — I'd like the name of the travel agency used on the trip, if any.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I understand that for me only, for Allan Blakeney — which was evidently booked by my office — it was done through Wide World Travel. My secretary will have done that. For the others, I gather they were all done through the Canadian embassy. As far as I am aware, they did not use a travel agent, or, not one in Saskatchewan.

Item 4 agreed.

Items 5 to 9 agreed.

Vote 10 agreed.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL – SUPPLEMENTARY – CONSOLIDATED FUND – VOTE 10

Items 1 and 2 agreed.

Supplementary agreed.

LEGISLATION – VOTE 21

Item 1

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Chairman, I have one question to ask the Premier on this item, and one only. I would assume that if there are changes of any kind necessitated by various agreements pertaining to research officers and the like, that the Premier would look favorably upon any supplementary estimates which are put through subsequent to the passage of this budget. Am I correct in that regard?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, I think we can assure hon. members of that. The estimates you see for '79-'80 are not in fact the sums which were spent because we made some other arrangements thereafter, and I will assure all hon. members that supplementaries will not be a problem.

MR. COLLVER: — The Premier is saying that if there are certain arrangements which have been made with reference to research and the like, that those arrangements would be retained for all members and not just for some. Is that correct?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, I think, if I understand the question. I don't think there is any suggestion that where there is a research amount available to a member, that this would not be available to all members, whatever may be their party affiliation or

independent status. I think the amount available to members is available to members, so I think I can assure all hon. members that it will be available to all hon. members who are elected to this legislature.

MR. COLLVER: — There have been changes since the preparation of this budget; changes have occurred which affect one group as opposed to another, so if there is the necessity to bring in a supplementary estimate in that regard, you're saying that wouldn't . . .

MR. BLAKENEY: — If I may put it this way, if the sums are payable for any given period, however short or long, to members in this House, by reason of the fact that there was, let us say for example, third party status, and it is not budgeted for and legislation which then goes through provides for that payment for, let us say, a short period or a longer period, it will be paid and there will be supplementaries. I think that covers the point.

MR. COLLVER: — Well, it doesn't quite cover the point but I'm sure the Premier will be aware that there are other arrangements which have been made with reference to caucus research and that kind of thing, which is the legislation and is not affected by Bill No. 105. The Premier will be aware that has changed since the preparation of this budget so I'm just getting your assurance that what are the rules for one are the rules for all. If the rules for one are the rules for all, then the Premier will look favorably on any grants which may have to be made.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am taking some advice here. If I can be as specific as I can, so that we are not waltzing around the tulips, there are some payments payable to caucuses which are not affected by Bill No. 105, but which are not provided for in the estimates. If Bill No. 105 is passed, leaving the legal entitlements to those payments intact (and I have no reason to believe that it wasn't — I am not assuming anything here) then they will be paid. If supplementary estimates are required, a special warrant will be forthcoming. I think that covers the ground.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 11 agreed.

Item 12

MR. COLLVER: — The Premier will be aware that this is the area we are talking about.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes.

MR. COLLVER: — Thank you so much.

Item 12 agreed.

Item 13 agreed.

Vote 21 agreed.

LEGISLATION – SUPPLEMENTARIES – VOTE 21

Items 1 to 4 agreed.

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Supplementary agreed.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.