

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Nineteenth Legislature

Wednesday, April 1, 1981.

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.
Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you, to the members of this Assembly, 28 grade 8 students from the town of Rosetown. They are accompanied today by Ron Ford, Jake Wiebe, and Mrs. Hanson. I'd like to welcome them to the Chamber. I hope that your day is going to be a pleasant one and that you'll find the time you spend with us here educational. I'll be meeting with you a little later. Would you welcome them to the Chamber.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you, and through you, to all the members of the Assembly, 14 grade 12 students from Lestock High School. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied by Mr. Barry Kayter, their teacher, and their bus driver, Vince Leonard. May I just say, Mr. Speaker, that I think Mr. Kaytor has brought a grade 12 class to this Assembly each year since I've been coming here. I congratulate him for doing so. I think all members will wish him and his class a very educational day here in the Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Saskatchewan Constitutional Position on Court Action

MR. LANE: — A question to the Premier. In questioning you yesterday, you refused to give a commitment that you would support the other six (to use the phrase) fighting provinces, on their argument that there should be unanimous support of the provinces when their rights are being taken away. In my view, your refusal to support that position is going to mean that you are going to support one of the federal arguments, which is that there shouldn't be such unanimous support. You indicated as well yesterday that this was a policy position you are going to argue.

In light of the fact that you've had a history of losing policy arguments — I'm referring to Bill 42, potash prorationing — would you be prepared to table in this Assembly the legal arguments that you or the Government of Saskatchewan is going to present to the Supreme Court of Canada, and advance the arguments so that members of the Assembly may be able to take a look at them and, frankly, so that the other six provinces can take a look at them and see whether in fact you are going to be a detriment to them as we suspect?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. member doesn't have much confidence in the governments of the other six provinces but I think that you can be assured that they will make judgments about the conduct of their legal case in their best

April 1, 1981

interests and they don't, I suspect, need any assistance from the member for Qu'Appelle in advancing their cause. We will clearly be working with the governments of the six other provinces because we are arguing the same case — that the resolution and the proposed method of proceeding with the resolution is outside the constitutional law of Canada.

We continue to believe that the case is stronger with two arguments rather than one. The member for Qu'Appelle takes the view that seven people arguing one argument is stronger than six people arguing one argument and another arguing a second line. I do not agree with him. My experience as an advocate has been that when you wish to oppose something the more arguments you can mount the better and if you can get more counsel to put more arguments rather than each reiterating the same argument, you have a stronger case. And what we want is a stronger case before the Supreme Court of Canada, and not some political points in the legislature of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — I am struck by the Premier's logic because if he says that you have more arguments, that's precisely what the federal government wants too, and it wants more provinces arguing its position.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. Does the member have a supplementary?

MR. LANE: — It's not the other six provinces I'm concerned about; it's the province of Saskatchewan. At the time of the constitutional crunch in the winter, you were holidaying in Hawaii, and I noticed today at your press conference that you seem to be going off to Disneyland as we get down to the constitutional crunch at this time. Do you not feel, given your track record to date of sitting on the fence, that perhaps it would be an idea to stay at home and keep in close contact with the other six provinces and go back to taking the single case that we advocate?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I hardly think that alleged question requires an answer. The reasons I have already given (and I suspect are familiar to everyone in the House but the member for Qu'Appelle) are that we propose to make an argument based upon the need in the Canadian constitution for a provincial consensus, as well as a federal decision, before the constitution can be changed. The member for Qu'Appelle may not agree with that legal argument; it is a credible legal argument that ought to be put. It is an alternative legal argument which does not require such an act of faith on the part of the supreme court to accept as they may require in order to accept the proposition that all 11 governments must agree.

The proposition that all governments must agree certainly is one which can be argued, but there would be some practical difficulties in arguing it. We think that we are better off if we give the supreme court two alternatives to choose from if it wishes, and it reaches the conclusion that the federal initiative is beyond the constitutional law of Canada.

With respect to whether or not I am talking with investors in San Francisco or I am here in Regina, our consultations with the premiers have been by telephone. I will remind the hon. member for Qu'Appelle that in California they are up to date and have telephones.

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier then be prepared to table the arguments that legal counsel representing the province of Saskatchewan will be using before the supreme

April 1, 1981

court? If you had such confidence in your position, why did you not take it to the Court of Appeal of Saskatchewan, as we had urged for some months?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I can, I suppose, undertake to file in the House the factum which counsel will use before the supreme court. I certainly won't do it before the time for filing factums is in, unless the member is able to obtain for us a copy of the factum that the federal government will argue. Perhaps the hon. member for Qu'Appelle will be able to use some old connections to get us a copy of the federal factum, but until he does, I am certainly not going to provide him and the federal government (for that's what he's asking) with a copy of the factum in advance. We will provide it to members of this House when it is available in the court.

Delay in Televising House Proceedings

MR. ANDREW: — My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in early December of last year, this Assembly unanimously endorsed the idea and the concept of having television in this Assembly. I am now advised the whole question is still hung up in cabinet or in treasury board, and that there will be no television debate in this House, probably, until the 1982-1983 session. My question to you, Mr. Premier, is this: what is the reason for the delay by the treasury benches? Was it so television will be delayed another year in this Assembly? Or given the position of you and perhaps your seatmate of being opposed to television, is this in fact your way of trying to kill the whole program.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has asked a question based upon a statement of fact which I say is a statement of fiction. I have no knowledge of any tie-ups by cabinet or tie-ups by treasury board, no knowledge of the entire factual basis of his question. Accordingly, I am not able to respond to it.

Priorities re Health Care Program in Saskatchewan

MRS. DUNCAN: — My question is to the Minister of Health. During the estimates, Mr. Minister, the opposition made some very credible suggestions as to how to improve the health delivery system in Saskatchewan. You agreed in principle with the majority of them, but the bottom line was always the priority of your government as to whether they could be implemented. Would you not admit now that decisions, as they pertain to the health delivery system in Saskatchewan, are based mainly on NDP political expediency and not on the actual need of the people?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — No, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I have a government memorandum which was circulated this morning and which, for want of a better word, inadvertently came to our desk. It was written by one Michael Costello, assistant deputy minister of finance. With Mr. Speaker's indulgence, he was criticizing the Nova Scotia provincial auditor's annual report for criticizing the Nova Scotia government for having too many hospital beds. He goes on to say, and I quote:

It is the perfect case of a legislative auditor passing judgment on what is essentially a political question and not an auditing question.

Does that not confirm, Mr. Minister, that when you sit in cabinet trying to get through your budget requirements, decisions are made purely for political expediency?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, let me categorically and unequivocally say to the member that she is dead wrong. Those decisions are not made on political grounds. But I would want to indicate to the member that I happen to be a politician, so absolutely politics do enter into my decisions. I want to indicate to the member that we set our priorities on needs as they are perceived by the people of this province, the Department of Health, and the Government of Saskatchewan.

We put before the people of this province, in the last election, a program, and part of that program was a health care program. The former minister of health, the Hon. Walter Smishek, put forward many new programs while he was the minister of health. I intend as I have indicated, to influence this government and the Department of Health that more moneys ought to be spent in the area of preventive health services, and I intend to pursue that. I indicated to the member during the estimates that certainly one has to draw up a list of priorities. But I think the people of Saskatchewan have endorsed this government for a number of years on our priorities, and I am confident they will continue to do so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MRS. DUNCAN: —Final supplementary. Then what you are saying is that the assistant deputy minister of finance was wrong when he said the placement of hospital beds in a province is a political decision and not an auditing decision?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, it may well be that in the particular province which she is referring to (whether it was New Brunswick or Nova Scotia. I am not certain), they make their decisions purely on political grounds. I believe they are Conservative governments, and it may well happen. You asked me whether we make our decisions here in Saskatchewan clearly on political grounds. My answer to you was no. If you want to find out whether those political decisions are made purely on political grounds in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, ask your colleagues in the Conservative government in that particular province.

Non-Payment of Overtime for Employees at Correctional Camps

MR. HARDY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to address to the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, I have a copy of a letter addressed to the Minister of Labor advising him of non-payment of overtime to SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association) members employed in the correctional camps which are situated throughout the province. Would you advise this Assembly what action has been taken to ensure that these employees (numbering between 30 and 40) are paid their overtime, which is long past due and amounts to about half a million dollars?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — The issue, Mr. Speaker, which the member for Kelsey-Tisdale speaks of, has to do with correctional workers 1 who work at such places as the White Gull camp, which he will be well aware of. The problem which arises is that the people who work as correction workers 1 in the camps work four 10-hour days each week. They stay in camp; they take their meals there and sleep there. As a result of that they are paid a regular wage and they get a bonus of \$20 a day. The appeal from the workers is that they be paid overtime for extra hours while they are in camp, but while they are not on active duty. The question has been brought forward through a grievance by the employees and has gone to arbitration. I think to debate whether or

April 1, 1981

not one side is right or one side is wrong would be a mistake at this time and, therefore, further comment is not appropriate.

MR. HARDY: — A new question to the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, last Friday, March 27, I asked you if you were aware of this situation at the correction camps in Saskatchewan — that workers were not being paid their overtime. I quote from your answer:

No, I am not aware of that information. Whether or not overtime has been paid to each individual in the department, I am not sure. I am sure it is the policy of the department to pay overtime . . .

Mr. Minister, I have a copy of this letter and it was dated March 12, 1981, by the SGEA, which is 15 days before I asked this question. Are you now prepared to acknowledge that you misled me in this Assembly (intentionally or otherwise) and are you prepared to apologize for having done so?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, no, I am not prepared to apologize to the member. I was questioning the numbers he had quoted. I said in the statement I made that I wanted to check on the numbers. I am pleased to say that I have reported on that matter to the member in the previous answer which I gave, and I will stand by that.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Your words were, "No, I am not aware of that information." The letter which the member for Kelsey-Tisdale refers to indicates at the bottom that a copy was sent to D. Lingenfelter. Are you telling us that you did receive this letter?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that I didn't receive the letter. No, I did not say that, and if the member reads the record as it is written, what I said was, "I want to check the numbers." Having done that, I have reported to the House the situation regarding overpayment to correction workers 1 at White Gull, and I will stand by that.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, in past cases, as the Minister of Labor indicated the other day when this question was brought up, if an employee is allowed to be on the premises and is allowed to be called for services while he is on the premises, that is contention for overtime. I cite the Turner case in Saskatoon — for 10 years they had to pay back overtime for an identical situation to the one you are referring to. The city of Saskatoon employees in recreation, in the same type of camping situation were paid all of the overtime. Is there a different set of rules for your government employees and all other employees in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in a previous answer, the grievance has been referred to arbitration and I am sure that the best interest of the employees will be served in the statement made by the appeal board.

Grants For Seed Cleaning Plants

MR. SWAN: — My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. The last few years you have had a program through the family farm improvement branch to provide grants to co-operative seed cleaning developments. I would like to know, are you now prepared to extend that program beyond just the co-operative seed cleaners to include situations where only a couple of farmers, or even one farmer, wants to develop a seed cleaning plant for use by the community? Would you provide grants in those circumstances?

April 1, 1981

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will note that the budget provides for continuation of the existing program, which is the co-operative program. I can report to the hon. member that the government has asked the Department of Agriculture to review the policy. Since it just doesn't seem to be providing the kind of service that is needed out there, that policy review is going on within the department. We hope to hear from them shortly as to the alternatives that can be considered.

At the present time the existing policy is in effect, Mr. Speaker, but that is under review.

MR. SWAN: — A supplementary to the minister. In my own constituency, I guess I could list for you about 18 plants at this point that would proceed to develop in different communities to provide that seed cleaning service, but they're finding that the costs are heavy. If, in your consideration, you could take a look at providing some grants (perhaps not as much as you did in the co-operative program, but lesser grants to individuals), I believe we could meet the needs of Saskatchewan in a short time. Will you take a serious look at that process?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, may I indicate to the hon. member that the serious look is now taking place. I think the issue to be addressed is that if you go to much smaller plants for use (the best term I can think of), how much smaller do you develop in order to retain quality cleaning? I think that is really the issue to be addressed, as well as the issue of how they will be organized out in the rural community. Can they be organized on a continuing co-operative basis or on a municipal basis, or some other basis? I think these are the items to be considered.

Coin-Free Access to Telephone Operator

MR. HAM: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister responsible for Sask Tel. Recently Sask Tel issued a press release in which it announced it was proceeding with conversion to coin-free access to the operator on 113 and 114. You are probably aware of it.

Since most jurisdictions in North America today are serviced by third-party direct dialing (and I think the minister is probably aware of that also) why has Sask Tel not initiated the same service in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. CODY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the member should go to most of the telephones in Saskatchewan and he will find that he can do exactly that. I'm not suggesting that you can do it in a pay phone, but you certainly can do it in many hundreds and thousands of other telephones.

MR. HAM: — A supplementary, Mr. Minister. Obviously, you are not aware of what I'm referring to. The fact is that you cannot, other than in Saskatoon, phone through a credit card operator today. To my knowledge it is the only jurisdiction in North America where you cannot do this.

In view of the fact that your government has spent millions of dollars in fibre optics, and has made profits that are significant over the last five or six years, can you justify to the people of Saskatchewan why they do not have this service today?

HON. MR. CODY: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we certainly can justify it, because after all, I think when you put in new types of equipment, you have to make certain that the equipment

which is there is no longer able to carry on the service that is necessary. Surely you are not going to suggest to me that just because we have an analogue system in one area, that we should then convert it to digital which would cost us many thousands and possibly millions of dollars. We have to look at the situation at each particular exchange area. As soon as there is no longer any capacity or the equipment is in such a state that it cannot handle the situation, then we will convert to a digital system. Before that, I think it would be very foolish for us to convert on a whole scale basis from an analogue system to a digital system just because you want to have zero-plus dialing.

MR. HAM: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Are you suggesting, Mr. Minister, the people of Regina are not entitled to this service, which every other city of Regina's size in North America is entitled to today?

HON. MR. CODY: — No, I'm not suggesting that at all. I'm just suggesting that I think it's only good business sense to wait until such time as the system which is presently in place can no longer handle the capacity which may be available. We're surely not going to spend millions of dollars in this province just to get a brand-new system, when the system we have in place is quite adequate. That's not to suggest that we're not going to do it. We are presently budgeting for a new digital system in Regina and some of the other exchanges. I believe Weyburn and Estevan are on the list now. But, I certainly couldn't possibly go to the people in Saskatchewan and say that we are going to press forward with a system, when the one we have in place is still quite adequate.

Transportation of Hazardous Chemicals

MR. KATZMAN: — A question to either the Minister of the Environment or the minister responsible for EMO (emergency measures organization).

The federal government, as of September 1, will have regulations requiring the signing of hazardous chemicals which are being transported across Canada. To this time the Saskatchewan government has not indicated if they are going to adopt that policy of unifying signing for dangerous chemicals. Could you give your government's position?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Presently, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General's department is reviewing what legislation may be necessary for us to co-operate with the federal legislation, or whether we should have legislation of our own dealing with transport in Saskatchewan, or whether there should be a combination of both. The matter is now being reviewed, as I have already indicated, by the Attorney General's department.

MR. KATZMAN: — Supplementary, I understand this code will be a numbering system which will allow chemicals, travelling from one province to another across Canada, to be quickly identified so the firemen and the professionals who are handling them know which type of response to use. My concern is that if you decide to have your own system, that will be totally confusing to the individuals who are getting national recommendations. I would hope you would accept the national recommendation. If you decide to do some other things, fine.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have adopted the national code for the identification of chemicals; we plan to do so. The point I was trying to make in answer to your first question was concerning the piece of legislation which needs to be implemented or enacted in order to coincide with the federal jurisdiction as well as what we want to do within the province of Saskatchewan. But, we'll adopt the national codes.

Assistance to Move Farmsteads

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. I'm sure the minister is aware of the several millions of dollars which were spent on the Souris River basin study. I am sure he is also aware that there were several recommendations made by that particular study, including one to provide assistance to move farmsteads out of the flood plains. We also know that the minister announced, I believe last year, an \$80,000 program over three years to assist these farmers to move out of the flood plain. There has been \$10,000 granted to date to move one house out of the flood plain. There has been an assessment on another farmstead that would indicate it would cost over \$40,000 to move that one farmstead. In light of the fact that the farmers in the Souris valley are quite anxious to oblige the recommendations of the Souris River report, would the minister now indicate whether he is prepared to adjust that \$80,000 over three years, so that in fact the several farmers who are prepared to oblige the minister and the recommendations of the report can, in fact, do it.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question, in light of the program's only being introduced last April, it would obviously need to be subject to continuing review. It is a new program. As I recall, while there was \$80,000 allocated over a three-year period, the program was to pay half of the costs of moving to a maximum of \$20,000. I think that was the program. It may well be that we'll have to review that ceiling in light of experience with the program. I think, yes, a review is obvious. I would assume that will be taking place.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

MR. BERNTSON: — I rise on a point of privilege. I would ask Mr. Speaker to review the record because there was no time for notice on this particular point. I would like Mr. Speaker to determine if, in fact, the Minister of Social Services inadvertently or otherwise did mislead the House on March 27, when he responded to the member for Kelsey-Tisdale. I refer you to page 1495 of the *Hansard* of March 27. I would also, Mr. Speaker, like to file with you the letter which came into our possession today (and you can appreciate this was our earliest opportunity to raise it) addressed to the Hon. Gordon Snyder, from one Larry Brown. It was dated March 12, 1981, and a copy of this letter was sent to the Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter. At this time I will provide you, Mr. Speaker, with a copy of the letter, and the reference to page 1495 of the *Hansard* for March 27. I would ask you to bring in a ruling at your convenience.

MR. SPEAKER: — Since a matter of privilege is a matter of great importance in the House, I will do as the member suggests and take an opportunity to look at the question he raised under the heading of privilege. It is, of course, a matter that should not be raised lightly, nor considered lightly. I welcome an opportunity to look at this. I will report back to the House at the earliest opportunity.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW

ENVIRONMENT

Item 1 (continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We are dealing with the Department of the Environment.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I understand that last evening we gently touched on the chemical plants north of Saskatoon, with the agreement of your department to allow the expansion without any environmental study. I was not here to hear your response. If you could respond to that first, then we'll get into the issue.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Chairman, last evening the hon. member for Maple Creek was also wanting me to provide them with a date. I have a sheet of information which I could hand to the member, but let me just give the dates to the hon. member and they'll be on the record so that we'll know that they have been provided.

The Saskatoon Chemicals sodium chlorate expansion project proposal received by Saskatchewan Environment on September 17, 1980; consideration by review panel began on September 25, 1980; exemption from The Environmental Assessment Act granted on October 29, 1980. Calcium hyperchloride developments project proposal received by Saskatchewan Environment on September 22, 1980; review panel considerations began on September 30, 1980; exemption from The Environmental Assessment Act was granted on November 13, 1980. The review panel for both proposals included: the departments of industry and commerce; urban affairs; mineral resources; labor; rural affairs; the environment; water pollution control; air pollution control; water management service; and also contacted were the city of Saskatoon, the Meewasin Valley Authority.

Rationale for the exemptions were: no review panel agency identified a need for an environmental impact assessment; no impact for endangered features of the environment were considered as being important to this; no provincial resource substantially utilized; no waste products not already regulated were being placed into the environment; widespread public concern was not apparent; no new technology which would induce environmental change; there were no adverse impacts controlled or limited by existing regulations.

Licensing: no licences issued as yet for the expansion. Licences on existing operations include: permit to operate; Air Pollution Control Act; the chlor-alkali plant expiry January 1, 1982; permit to operate; Air Pollution Control Act; sodium chlorate plant expiry May 31, 1981; approval to operate Water Resources Management Act; chlor-alkali plant expiry April 30, 1981; approvals to construct industrial waste disposal works before resources management act have been granted.

Mr. Chairman, I think that that is probably the information, or as much of the information as the hon. member had asked for. I'll send this across to the hon. member, so that they may have it and refer to it if they wish in further questioning.

MR. KATZMAN: — On that whole list you read, I didn't hear you say the R.M. of Corman Park, which is where this particular plant falls and I didn't hear you mention the citizens who are living around the plant. There was no mention of private citizens at all — even those who are within two miles of the plant.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, this wouldn't ordinarily be the process that we would go through even in environmental impact assessment, so there's no change in that

April 1, 1981

respect. What I was generally trying to say to the hon. member last night, during the questioning, was that we could see nothing different or nothing that would be different in terms of the proposed expansion than what has already existed. True there were some apparent problems with the administration and management of the plant in the sense that they hadn't been keeping up to the requirements.

We were in the process of issuing, I believe, some legal actions there but it was at the time when there was a change in hands of ownership of that particular plant. We have subsequently pursued our intent to pressure the company and the management into cleaning up their activities. They can do that. With regard to the administration or the people moving in close to the plant, the city by-laws take care of that, or the zoning orders take care of that so that if the city wants, it can decide that there will be no further development in that area. So it's a matter of the city deciding what its planning programs or zoning orders will be. I would suggest (as I did) that if there were a wide public interest expressed even today, we would seriously consider whether or not it may still be prudent and wise to have an environmental impact assessment but we don't think environmental impact assessments should be used for that purpose.

I am quoting from a letter directed from my own office:

In this regard, my officials have advised the city of Saskatoon and the R.M. of Corman Park of the desirability of a plan for a minimum buffer zone of one kilometre between the plant and the residential areas. I have also asked my water pollution control branch to not approve water and sewer extensions to residential subdivisions within the buffer zone.

We have taken an action so that they can't move in closer to that plant than within the parameters that we have set.

MR. KATZMAN: — Okay. If I read you correctly now, you are saying, yes, you can expand this plant but if we give you permission, both the city of Saskatoon and Corman Park are aware that no residential area can be built within one kilometre of this plant. Am I reading you right?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, it isn't a rule that we can issue. What I am saying is that's the advice we are giving them, and under the zoning order and the by-laws which they can implement, they can accept or reject our advice. But if they do reject our advice, obviously we're going to have some unhappy residents. But if at that point community planning is asked to approve or disapprove subdivision plans, obviously this will be taken into account.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, what's very interesting about that statement is this: originally, the jail now being built in Saskatoon was planned to be directly across the road from this chemical plant. It was moved. I suggested at the time the reason it was moved was strictly that the chemicals involved in this plant were health hazards. Now I notice that that has come true, and you are now suggesting in a letter to the city of Saskatoon and Corman Park that one kilometre is the area which is controlled. I don't know if that is public knowledge in Saskatoon at this point. I am really concerned. I don't think it is public knowledge in the R.M. because the ongoing development in that area would indicate it is not.

So, I think that yes, we need that public review to make all the facts available to the public before we allow the plant to expand. Yes, this chemical plant has had a bad

record. The pollution of that particular plant over the history of its existence is probably one of the worst. People have concerns when you talk about any chemical plant — be it a uranium refinery, which is a type of chemical plant, or be it an expansion of this chemical plant.

Mr. Minister, I think you've totally ignored your job and your responsibility to the citizens in that area by allowing this to go forward without a hearing. It is interesting to note that your department and other people have been paid money over concerns about their water wells and so forth. There are newspaper clippings in Saskatoon in which they interviewed people on this issue. We know this particular plant has caused problems over its history, and yet, without an impact study where you lay out the conditions very explicitly, you are allowing them to expand. My first concern was obvious. It's a typical government situation. You now own the plant but you don't follow the rules yourself; you make them for everyone else, which has been your past record. Now, Mr. Minister, you made an offer here. I challenge you to deliver on that offer which is an impact study on this situation before you allow it to go ahead. You made the offer; I challenge you now to produce and go ahead with that.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I did indicate to the hon. member and to others last evening that if there was sufficient public interest we would reconsider the position which we've taken. We haven't closed any gates with respect to that. However, I say that if the hon. member wants to review the legislation with respect to environmental impact assessments I can send it over to him. Fine, you have it.

What we did is follow the guidelines that are set out in the legislation for deciding whether to carry out an environmental impact assessment or not. We decided, on the basis of the information which I have sent over to the member, that it was not within the legislative requirement. Whether or not you have an environmental impact assessment is not going to have anything to do with the administration and management of a plant after it has been approved, even with an environmental impact assessment.

What the hon. member says with regard to the operation and management of the plant, I am inclined to agree with. I think that it has been poorly managed, but that doesn't mean to say you should go out and hold an environmental impact assessment. What one needs to do is to implement the legislation and to require that the plant meet the standards and the obligations of the environment. That we are prepared to do.

The hon. member makes a point that the plant is owned by the government. It was not owned by the government at the time the problems were occurring. It is now truly part of the Prince Albert Pulp Company purchase, but not at the point in time when the problems were being experienced because of the management of the plant. We have now moved, and I think management has responded accordingly.

We think we can control this. We think the legislation is there. We don't think there's anything we can't solve as a result of the legislation which we have at hand, or that cannot be solved in terms of the by-laws and the authority which the city and the R.M. have at their disposal if they want to use it.

But I suggest to you, it's similar to a situation where we say that an anhydrous ammonia tank shouldn't be set up within one kilometre of a residence. But we can issue the authority for it to go ahead and somebody can move in alongside it, less than one kilometre away. We can't prevent that if the municipality permits it, or if the city permits it, or if the city grows out to the anhydrous tank. We don't have that legislation nor do we

April 1, 1981

think it's our responsibility to deal with that area. We give the advice: we set out the guidelines; and we think the urban and the rural municipalities should respond accordingly.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, would you be prepared, first of all, to send me a copy of the letter you referred to, which you sent to the city of Saskatoon and to Corman Park indicating the one kilometre? Secondly, I agree with you that the bad management was prior to your buying the plant. It was prior to the government's taking over the plant. I agree with you there.

My concern is now henceforward. My concern is that the citizens who have to live around that plant have had trouble for years. Every year, in environment, I've stood up on my feet and spoken about what we call a green cloud that floats through the air on damp mornings. It is always caused by the letting off of chemicals from the two plants. Only when the wind is correct and the two of them mix, do we have that little cloud. That cloud (and we have documented proof) two years ago damaged a garden within a half-mile. You could see the way it flowed across; you could see the discoloration of all the vegetables in the garden. Fortunately, we had a rain three days later which washed it off. Therefore, it can be cleaned up.

What I am saying, Mr. Minister, is that it's not simply one plant; you have two plants, side by side. By allowing the one plant to grow, I think you're going to compound the problem.

You referred to controlled releases. Well, those haven't worked too successfully in the past. Call it bad management if you want. I won't argue. I don't have the right, as an opposition member, to go in and demand operating manuals to find out what they have done and when they released or did not release. You have that right. I don't.

I talked to the employees of the company and they suggested some very strange things happen there which are against the environmental rules, and they haven't been caught doing them. I have asked these employees to notify me the next time something like that happens so I can have your department move in very quickly, hopefully, so that we can stop those improper practices.

Now, Mr. Minister, I still say, and *Hansard* will show whether I am right or wrong, that you offered an environment impact. You now come back and say, "If there is public interest." Does the word public interest mean 50 letters, 100 letters, or 1,000 letters? What do you want before you will give a hearing?

What if the R.M. of Corman Park says to you, "Mr. Minister, we are not going to cancel approval of expansion, which we gave, but before it goes hence would you mind having an environmental impact study?" Is that sufficient?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I tried to explain to the hon. member that that is not the objective of an environmental impact assessment. That's not the purpose. I can send the guidelines to the member; he says he has them. If he wishes, he can look through those, and he will see that there is nothing in the legislation (with that particular criterion, or the subject with which we are dealing), which should, out of necessity, have an environmental impact assessment. It has to be a judgment which we make.

So, on the basis of the information which we had coming to us, on the basis of the assessment which we did in terms of the proposal put to us by the proponent, the

April 1, 1981

review panel did its assessment and indicated that this was not a project which needed a full environmental impact assessment. Therefore, we did not believe it was necessary to put the company to that expense, nor was it necessary to put the public purse to the expense of going through the hoops of an environmental impact assessment at the public hearing process.

We believed there was legislative authority which could control the situation and that there were by-laws in zoning which could deal with the matter of constructing of homes in relation to the plant. We could take the initiative in terms of the Department of the Environment to deal with the question on a legislative basis. That we've done.

As I indicated to the member earlier, we were prepared to take legal action against the company. The company has responded favorably. There has been a tremendous increase in its maintenance of the plant and in its management skills. While there likely will be some problems occurring in the future they will be dealt with because the legislation is there to deal with them.

There are going to be emissions into the air, as there are at any chemical plant. We have them at the pulp mill in Prince Albert. My farm is 35 miles away from the city of Prince Albert. I can smell the pulp mill, if the wind is in the right direction, at my farm.

Obviously there have to be some particular trade-offs. That will be one of them, I suspect. Now, that doesn't mean to say that they should be such that people can't live with them. I think the standards that will govern the Saskatoon Chemicals plant will be such that these emissions or releases which have occurred in the past (and I indicate to you that they were a result of poor management) will not continue. It will be our objective to see that they don't.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, January 13, 1981, there is an article by Bill Cleverley. The first line of the article says:

The Saskatoon Chemicals Ltd. admits it paid \$5,000 in compensation to a market gardener for damage to his crop.

Mr. Minister, there is the first sign that something has gone wrong. That is public, and your people have admitted it by paying the \$5,000. Well, Mr. Minister, are you suggesting to me that when their applications come in 1981 or 1982 (whatever the dates are that you referred to in the statement you made earlier), you will have an environment impact study to decide if you are going to allow them to continue to operate?

What is the final hand? What is the final situation that says, "Fellows, if you don't clean up your act, you can't keep going?" Because in the past, the act has been bad (and I refer to their performance when I say the act). At sometime you seemed to say that they were allowed to do their project until certain dates. Is there a time when the public is allowed to have its input, or is the only way the public can make input through the R.M. of Corman Park, MVA (Meewasin Valley Authority), and city council, or is there a method by which you are willing to give the citizens a chance to comment? You don't want to give us a public hearing because you said there isn't enough interest. You have made the decision in your mind by the legislation that you don't think it is necessary.

Now it says (the member has just pointed out to me) under no. 12 in your environment

April 1, 1981

assessment that it would be available to the public. But my concern, Mr. Minister, is this: you indicated that if enough input warranted it, you would give us an environmental impact study. To this point, you don't believe there is enough input. I am asking you: what do you want to see to prove that the public is concerned enough for you to have an impact study? What do you want? Do you want them knocking down the doors of this building? Do you want them dying in the area? What do you want? How do we get you to change your mind?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, I have to indicate to the member that there has to be some genuine public interest, a broad basis of public interest. There is no question about the fact that we have received letters from particular environmental interest groups, but there hasn't been (in my recollection of the letters I have received) any broad basis of public interest. It has been a subject of media information (he quotes from the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*). It has been talked about in Saskatoon; the city council was aware of it. Corman Park has been contacted and is aware of it. There have been other people who lived in the area, and they are aware of it. The environmental groups have been aware of it. What I am indicating to the hon. member is that there has not been a broad basis of public interest coming to our office saying that an environmental impact assessment should be made, or a statement should be written or a public hearing held.

There has been interest from the groups that I indicated, but the point the hon. member seems to make is that he somehow connects the operating methods, techniques, and standards with an environmental impact assessment. We don't have environmental impact assessments if the operating standards are not being met. That's not what an environmental impact assessment is for. What we will do is deal with the operational standards of that plant and that industry on the basis of the legislation which is there. If the plant doesn't meet those standards and those requirements, then we are prepared to close it down. If necessary, we are prepared to issue those instructions and close it down until they can clean it up or close it down until they can operate in a manner which meets the objectives and standards that we have in the legislation now.

Part of the expansion of the operation at Saskatoon Chemicals was that it would incorporate in the expansion environmental techniques which would help to assist in overcoming some of the problems which it was having. That's part of the expansion. Well, that would be an asset and assistance to the people there. So in the consideration (as I have tried to point out to the hon. member before), the review committee, when it went through the information and proposal which was available to it, decided that an environmental impact assessment was not necessary, but that we could do all of the things required of us in meeting the obligations of the legislation by enforcement of the Act and of the regulations.

He wants to know what would be a broad basis of public support, and I would indicate to the hon. member that we should have a fair number of inquiries from a group of people who have a broad basis of interest: Corman Park, city council, Meewasin Valley Authority, individual citizens, maybe even the member of the legislature for Rosthern. You know, this is the first time I have heard from the hon. member for Rosthern with respect to this. He has never written a letter to say he wanted an environmental impact assessment. Why do you leave it for the House? Why do you leave it for the House if this is your constituency?

I will acknowledge that the hon. member has raised this matter in the House, in the estimates, on previous occasions. but not with respect to this particular issue.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I think we are back to the old days of paratrooping and stomping big boots. Let's get at it if you want to get at it. But let's be straightforward, Mr. Minister. You suggest that I haven't written you a letter; I will agree to that, but it wouldn't do me any good. The only way I am going to get any action out of you (and you have proved it in the past) is to stand up in this House and show you where you have gone wrong. Then you will take some action. That's a fact. And to the baloney member, I say that he won't be here very long anyway so we won't worry about baloney.

The fact is that there are people who are concerned. I have talked to councilors on the Corman Park council. They said they won't reject the permit, but they would be agreeable to your doing a review.

Let me ask you another question. When you granted the expansion, what conditions did you put on for changes and improvements to clean up the environment messes?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I can say to the hon. member that there have been no detailed objectives or standards which have been added to the existing legislation. We believe that the existing legislation can meet the objectives of legislating the standards and clearing up the management practices of the operation. They have, however, in the expansion, as I've said, put in those kinds of facilities which will improve the air emission standards. They have introduced, and will be incorporating, into the plant water pollution kinds of devices which will control some of the spills and some of the hazards related to the spills. Let me just again quote from a letter which I quoted from earlier.

Improvements to the plant over the last 19 months have reduced the likelihood of an emergency chlorine release in the chlor-alkali process as a result of a malfunction. If a chlorine overpressure situation develops the chlorine is to be discharged into a water solution tank where it will be absorbed rather than discharged directly into the atmosphere. Also, there is an automatic process shut-down system in the event of an emergency discharge so that the formation of a chlorine is discontinued. The company will be installing a new chlorine drying system which will eliminate the possibility of chlorine discharge in that part of the process.

So there are ongoing communications and ongoing discussions between departmental officials and the plant management to incorporate these in order to meet the objectives of the future. I want to repeat to the hon. member that it isn't really a job for environmental impact assessment to deal with this matter. It's a subject which we think we can deal with in the carrying out of legislation.

MR. KATZMAN: — You read from, I assume, the document which says they are going to install new equipment in the expansion?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I am reading a letter here that I have directed to a person who has written to me asking about this situation — a private individual. I don't think it really matters, but I haven't asked the person whether I could release the information. But the same kind of information I'm giving you here I can provide you with if you want.

MR. KATZMAN: — Where do you get the information on this new system you are referring to? Is it in place now, are you trying to tell me, or is it after the expansion that this will be in place?

April 1, 1981

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — The material I read to you . . . That has been incorporated over the past 19 months, as a result of our officers going to the plant and saying, "Look, you are not meeting the standards, therefore, you've got to do something and if you want to expand this operation you've got to assure us that you can meet new standards." So in the process of doing that the things which I read to you are incorporated already, or are in the process of being incorporated. There will be other things which I suppose we will be requiring. I'm reading here from a letter directed to the manager of project development of the chemical plant we're talking about. It's from my official, Mr. Kellow, and he's indicating to the chemical plant some things which have to be done. I'll read that to the member.

1. Saskatoon Chemicals must obtain an approval to operate under The Air Pollution Control Act. In addition to normal requirements of the air pollution control branch, the company will be required to submit plans for an emergency collection system to handle situations where the chlorine must be vented.

2. Saskatoon Chemicals must obtain an approval for effluent discharge under The Water Resources Management Act. In applying for this approval, the proponent must address: (a) the mercury content of the wash-down effluent and its handling; (b) the plans for disposal of any material containing mercury that is excavated during construction; (c) the capacity of the transformer located outside and the type of the dielectric fluid used in it; (d) leakage, spill, and neutralization contingency measures both for the rail transport of sodium chlorate and for the outdoor transformer.

I could go on and list some more for the member but I think it shows you that we do have and are continuing to insist that this plant meet the objectives of the legislation.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, would you send that over (I think that's a legitimate document), as well as the one that indicates the one kilometre? I asked earlier if you would send the document which referred to no residential development within one kilometre.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is asking me to send this over. I can send it over if you promise to send it back. It's our file. Well, okay, you can make a photocopy. What I'm saying is that I would photocopy it and send it to you but this is our file and I . . .

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, that includes the letter which has the one kilometre distance to the city — if you could have that photocopied.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — This letter is not the one which was directed to the city. I don't know whether we have that here or not. We don't have that one here, but this one we could release to you.

MR. KATZMAN: — Would that be the one that indicates the one kilometre, because I have never heard that from any source before.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — It's not here. We have it in the office.

April 1, 1981

MR. KATZMAN: — I will let one of the other members speak. I would like to read the documents and then I'll come back.

MR. PREBBLE: — I would just like to ask the minister for clarification on this one kilometre question. Is this the position of the department that residential development must not take place within a kilometre of the plant?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I tried to express to the hon. member for Rosthern that we have no legislative authority in this respect. What we're doing is advising the R.M. council and the city to adjust their zoning orders to follow the objective we set out to them, which is one kilometre. We have no control over the city zoning by-laws so at some future time (as I indicated we have had experience in the approval of certain anhydrous ammonia installations) the cities may well develop closer than our recommended standards would allow. So it's not a must; it's a proposal which we make to the city.

MR. PREBBLE: — Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that I think the Department of the Environment ought to be (and clearly has the power) setting standards with respect to how close residential development can take place to a plant such as this. The department has the power under the Act to do that. The minister knows that I have called before for the Department of the Environment to set one kilometre as the maximum distance that residential development should be allowed to this plant or any other chlorine plant. I would maintain that this is not just the responsibility of the city of Saskatoon, but is also the responsibility of the Department of the Environment.

The Department should be setting standards for all such chemical plants right across the province. The minister knows that I've objected from the very beginning, when the announcement for this plant was first made, to the fact that this development was proceeding without an environmental impact assessment being done.

I agree with the minister's view that he has not violated the Act and the Department of the Environment has not violated the Act by not undertaking an assessment. I think that the Department of the Environment has overlooked the spirit of the Act by not agreeing to an assessment on this matter.

I'm sure that the minister has had more letters on this issue than he has on many other areas on which an assessment has been approved. I think there are a number of special circumstances which justify an assessment. One is the close proximity of the plant to the city of Saskatoon. In the event of a serious chlorine accident at the plant, if residential development continues to proceed out toward that plant, there could very well be a number of serious deaths and injuries. That is why the minister should have attached, as one of the conditions to the plant proceeding (if it indeed was to go ahead), a restriction that commercial and residential development could not take place within a kilometre of the plant. He would have been in a much stronger position to do that, Mr. Chairman, if the department had carried out an assessment under The Environmental Impact Assessment Act. Then conditions could have been laid down.

I have said to the minister before, and I say again, the plant is located right along the river, as everyone knows. The province and the Meewasin Valley Authority are committed to upgrading the water quality of the river. We are also committed, Mr. Chairman, to the principle of increasing recreational activity along the river. It seems to me to make no sense at all on the one hand to have those objectives in mind, and on the other hand to allow the expansion of this plant without any strict regulations in place

April 1, 1981

with respect to future water quality objectives which must be met. I am not aware of any detailed review being done on what the final pollution impact of this plant will be after the expansion has taken place, and a comprehensive review of all the mitigating measures that must be in place to make sure that the current standards are met.

Mr. Chairman, I have pointed out before, and I point out again that the two chemicals that this plant is going to be manufacturing are both on the Industrial Biotest Laboratories list. We now know that 94 per cent of the tests, which have been reviewed so far of chemicals on the IBT list with respect to cancer, have been found to be invalid. I would be interested to know if any new information has come forward to show that calcium hypochloride no longer needs to be on the list. It seems to me that is an additional reason for having an assessment.

The pollution record of this plant has been bad in the past. This is the plant which has polluted the South Saskatchewan River with very substantial amounts of mercury. It is no longer using mercury, as mercury has been dropped as part of the process. But there have been over 40 violations of The Water Pollutions Control Act between July and September of this year, including violations for chromium, which everyone knows is a carcinogenic substance, over 20 violations involving residual mercury, acidity violations, and a whole series of other violations. One of the great weaknesses of The Environmental Impact Assessment Act we have now, (and it is good legislation and greatly improved over what we did have) is there is no provision for looking at the past history of a company when making judgments as to whether or not an assessment is required. I would argue that surely, if the history of a company in the past has been poor, that should be one reason for deciding to conduct an assessment, and that provisions for an assessment on that basis should be made under the Act.

I want again to urge the Minister of the Environment to undertake an assessment on the plant before an expansion takes place. I would like also to ask him to lay down as a requirement, if development does proceed without an assessment, that residential development will not be allowed within one kilometre of the plant, that the Department of the Environment will lay that down as a regulation in the same way as we do for anhydrous ammonia plants.

Finally, I would like to ask him for the precise details with respect to the most recent record of Saskatoon Chemicals. There is no urgency in providing that to me, but if he could send me the latest reports for the period since January 1 that would be useful.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong the discussion on this particular item. However, the hon. member suggests or thinks it may well be the case that I have received more letters in this case than I have in a number of other situations. I have to advise the member that is not the case. If it had been, I probably would have changed my mind. I say to the member that I probably received somewhere between six and 10 letters, and that's an indication of the public interest. I suggest to the hon. member that the letters basically came from a particular interest group, not from a broad and wide public. So, I say that is one of the criteria on which we made the decision.

I think I reject the notion and the suggestion proffered by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Sutherland that the Department of the Environment should somehow be responsible for regulating in all of these situations.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why not?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, the hon. member for Regina South says, "Why not?" I think that cities have zoning responsibilities. They know what their citizens want to do in their particular areas. They know how they should respond. Why should the Department of the Environment move in on a community and say, "You can do this; you can't do that"? Why should they initiate all of these legislative kinds of things? The people know; we have advised; we do advise; we send the information to the R.M. councils and the urban councils. We say to them, "This is what is taking place, and you have community planning and zoning by-laws within your jurisdiction. You deal with this matter."

There was a comment made by the hon. member, as well, that we somehow control the one kilometre distance objective in cases of anhydrous ammonia. We do not; we only make recommendations and the cities again decide whether or not their by-laws will move their citizens closer to the plant.

I want to say that the plant has existed in that place for some period of time. I would suspect for 15 years, over 15 years. It's not a new plant; we're not going to do anything new. What the plant is doing is expanding its capacity. There is no question that the history of the management of the plant has not been good. We would admit that. We were prepared to take legal action on the basis of their non-well-managed plant. I have indicated to the hon. members that we would be prepared to do so again if the operations of that plant do not meet the standards which are set out by us. We would have done that whether there was an expansion of the plant or not. The expansion would make no difference in that case.

Again, I don't know if I accept the notion proffered by the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland that the history of an operation should be part of the environmental impact consideration. I think if a plant has been operating while regulations have been in place and they haven't been meeting those regulations, then there is a problem with the department or with the management from our point of view in administering the Act or the full intent of the Act. I don't know whether that should become part of the environmental assessment process or not.

I am prepared to consider that point of view, but I think that if you want to broaden the scope of the environmental impact assessment, I think we could go to limits which would make the process more complicated than it presently is. I'm not saying it is presently too complicated; I'm saying I think it does a good and adequate job. I think it does a job which is beyond that which is being done in some of the provinces of Canada and other places in North America. I think that that doesn't mean to say that we can't improve upon it. I am prepared to do that.

But in the case of the Saskatoon Chemicals plant, I think we have made the right decision in this respect. I say again as I have said before that if there is a broad representation from the public which shows a broad basis of interest out there, we're prepared to consider whether or not an environmental impact assessment is necessary. Now, if the hon. members go back to their constituencies and drum up a letter-writing campaign and try to get us involved just to prove a point, I think that we'll be able to see through that one and our decision will be based on whether or not that was being carried out.

MR. KATZMAN: — Just a further point to Mr. Prebble's point. I assume what you are now admitting is that your department was at fault in the past with this chemical plant in

April 1, 1981

allowing them to dump mercury and several other things as they did. I assume by the comments you were making in winding up, your department is now taking the blame for not enforcing the regulations as severely as you should have in this case. Am I correct?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — No, I think that the member is trying to put an interpretation on what I said and trying to direct it in detail to the department. What I said was in response to the notion that the history of the operations of the company should somehow become part of the environmental impact assessment. Those members who have been in this House will know that there have been a number of new pieces of legislation brought into this Chamber which would govern situations like that. They were not in the Act. They were not part of the legislation. They were not part of the authority that the Department of the Environment had in past to deal with this situation. It has it now. It was taking the actions to clean it up. It was in the process of initiating a legal action against the company. There has been, in my judgment and in the judgment of the officials, a major improvement in the whole management and operations process in that plant.

MR. KATZMAN: — A question on this area. Mr. Minister, you indicate that The Water Resource Management Act must give them an approval. In my involvement with the Eldorado hearings, it was noted all through the hearings that the water going back into the river or any source must be what is considered drinking quality. Is it a requirement of this plant as well that the water put back into the river has to be of drinking quality?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — No. That's not the case, Mr. Chairman. There is no industrial effluent standard which we set that says that the water must be drinkable. Yes, there is a standard. There is an effluent water standard which we ask industries to meet, but it's not a standard which means that it will be potable for drinking.

MR. KATZMAN: — A further question. The uranium industries say that they must return the water in drinkable standard. That's what they told me all through their hearings; the water they return to the river must be of drinking quality. Obviously I am concerned because downstream the town of Rosthern and other areas may have to soon go to the river for water. If it's being polluted at this end and there isn't close enough control, then of course it is going to be more expensive for them to clean it up if they have to for the consumption of their residents. That's why I am a little concerned on that issue as well.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I just have to say to the hon. member that again the industrial standards for water emissions are not standards which would have to meet drinking water standards, potable water standards.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, I have a series of questions regarding the Cold Lake heavy oil project or the proposed project I guess, because it certainly hasn't become a fact yet. I have asked you in the House just recently about your short-term plans this year and so on. But can you give me your plans either on the short term or on the long term or both regarding the possibility of a water management study for the Beaver River watershed and that whole area — Beaver River, Waterhen River, Cold Lake, all that area — as it relates to that project.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I was trying to get some sort of overall response for the hon. member for Meadow Lake. When you say an overall water management study, I take it what you are really referring to is a water quality study, or were you talking about whether or not there were any plans in terms of water use from Cold Lake and Beaver

River and so on?

Let me try, then, to deal with the matter of water quality. There is a water quality task force that has been established to deal with this matter of water that would be used or be implicated in some way because of the tar sands development and oil development in Lloydminster, Cold Lake tar sands area of Alberta. There is also a Prairie Provinces Water Board which should deal with that subject, which has been looking at it and has been making certain proposals both to Alberta and into which we, the Department of the Environment, have some input.

There is an Alberta-Saskatchewan water quality study under way, which will take into account water quality in terms of what the implications will be with industrial development on the western side of the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. So there are those studies going on.

With regard to water management in terms of the use of water (rather than water quality or the quantity of water), there was a consideration, I believe, by Esso resources, which was proposing to use water from Cold Lake and, in turn, put water back into that system. That, I understand, has been discouraged and I think they have moved away from that. My information is that they would move away from that proposal and consider the North Saskatchewan River as an alternative water source for that particular project.

I can't tell you definitively whether there is a final conclusion with respect to that. But it's my understanding that if they have moved away from their earlier objective to use water from Cold Lake, they have therefore complicated the member's concern, complicated the whole Beaver River-Cold River water drainage system, Waterhen River, and so on, and therefore may pollute it or add some pollutions to it. Now I can't give the hon. member anything more than that, other than that I believe there are alternatives in the wings. The fact that there has been a slow-down in the pace of development up there has given us some advantages in terms of being able to address this situation more fully than we would have otherwise been able to do.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, your last comments were about the slow-down in development. Certainly that's the case and we hear things about the impact of the national energy program and so on, and how it affects our western provinces and western energy concerns. It seems rather ironic that after I've been raising this thing in this House with you since 1979 — it's two years ago in March since I raised the same issues — now you say there's a slow-down. Maybe we have time to catch up. Certainly you had ample time then. In fact, my information is that there was a request of your department from Alberta, or probably several requests from the Alberta Department of Environment, your counterpart, to enter into a joint water management study with them. I'll get into the details of that in a few minutes.

I want to pursue some of the things you gave in your answer. You say there's a Prairie Provinces Water Board which has some input from your department, and I would presume also the Department of the Environment in Alberta. But I think your answer would indicate that's a very general thing, and the amount that board has been studying this particular watershed of the Beaver River . . . We'll leave it at that. Would you give me any information you have regarding how much that water board has been studying this particular issue?

April 1, 1981

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — The Prairie Provinces Water Board has a very firm and complete mandate to deal with this particular subject. I think I'm giving about the same kind of answers as I have been giving to the hon. member for some time. The studies and the investigations and the assessments that are being done by the Prairie Provinces Water Board have been going on for three or four years. They have had a very intensive kind of assessment in the sense that there's communication well established between Saskatchewan and Alberta. There is a firm commitment, in my understanding, that the water quality at the border will not change or will not be greatly different as it leaves Alberta to come to Saskatchewan. So it's a matter of when the industry gets going and then how you deal with the question.

I think the mandate is there. Until something happens, that is, until the industry begins, you can't deal with precise measurements. But I think there has been a firm commitment by the water board to say to the responsible provinces that quality must be maintained, and it must be assured. Now having said that, what do you say? It's kind of like dealing with the question of Saskatoon Chemicals. Once the industry is there maybe it doesn't meet those standards, so therefore it requires some action on the part of the department or on the part of the provinces to assure that the objectives are being met. But I can't say to the hon. member anything more than that I believe the commitment is there. I believe the will is there. I believe the understanding and agreement is there, both by Alberta and ourselves.

The Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board has recommended some things with regard to development of these industries in their own province. That's a good sign in the sense that they are feeling responsible and committed to maintain the requirements, as provided by the water board.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, that's precisely my point. Certainly, I agree with you from the point of view of what their mandate is. Certainly, they were in place on that board. The co-operation between different departments is certainly something that people in all provinces would hope to be the case. That was the case before this budget was proposed, and it doesn't deal specifically with that particular river. I understand that.

What I am saying to you is that departments of environment from the respective provinces should be involved in a board like this, as they say they should be. It would indicate to me that you are operating in good faith with your membership. I think that anything that affects water flow, water quality, or the environment in general, on our side of the border (from an industry that is in the other province), would make it incumbent upon your department to do studies.

Now, you mentioned the Alberta Energy Conservation Board and some of their former recommendations. One of their recommendations, and you alluded to it very briefly, was the fact that they would not allow water to be taken from Cold Lake. Subsequently, the water and river system (that goes through the Meadow Lake Provincial Park) would be required to come out of the North Saskatchewan River. That will be a fact, apparently. That's good.

My point is this: that same Alberta Energy Conservation Board said that it would not recommend that the effluent from that plant (from that steam injection process) go into the Beaver River until studies (I am just paraphrasing here; I don't have the actual quote in front of me) were done on the Saskatchewan side as to the impact that would have on the Beaver River and its water flow, and on the agricultural area with the hay flats, and subsequently, the Churchill River.

April 1, 1981

As you know, this is a new project; it's a big project; and it's a massive project. The thing that amazes me, probably more than anything else, is the number of times it seems necessary to mention this to you and your department before you admit that this project is larger than just your average little oil plant. This is a huge and massive project, as people involved in the energy industry up there know. The people there are just coming to realize the size and impact that it will have.

I understand now, from what you said two or three times here, that your plans in the short-term are nil — as they were last year and the year before.

I know this budget year is here, and it looks as though the budget is not allowing for any study this year. Perhaps the delay that the energy program is forcing on that project will give you an opportunity to do that study.

But, will you at least commit yourself to do that study on our side of the border, have your department enter into a water management study in conjunction with the province of Alberta's Department of Environment so that we have an extensive study that covers that river on both sides of the border?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I don't fully understand what the member is asking for. He is asking that I assure that a study be done. I don't know what study you want us to do. What study can we do? What study is there that you think should be done that we haven't done? I guess what I need to provide to the hon. member (and I am prepared to do that) is a scenario or a calendar of events of those things that have been undertaken in the area, so that he will know what has been done. I don't fully understand what the member is asking us to do.

We are engaged in studies on the basis of the potential for acid rain. We are involved in discussions with (and are part of) the Prairie Provinces Water Board, where for the first time there have been water quality objectives established for the river. The Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board is considering the project. We have made interventions into public hearings in this regard. I don't know what else the hon. member is asking us to study now. I will, as I have said, have the department put together (and I will send it to the hon. member) a list of events and actions that we have undertaken and are presently involved in. I won't be able to have it for you today, but I will provide the hon. member with that information. We will try to give you as much as we can of the details. Now, that still may not satisfy the hon. member.

I think I heard you say that I had firmly indicated that water from Cold Lake would not be used, but that the alternative Saskatchewan River water would be. Let me clarify. It is my understanding that the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board has recommended to the industry (not that firm a commitment or objective) that the Saskatchewan River be an alternative to Cold Lake. That doesn't mean to say that the final decisions are made. So I wouldn't want to misinform the hon. member.

They also recommend that the concentrated, waste-processed water should not be discharged into the Beaver River without further investigation into alternative means of disposal. That doesn't mean to say that there is a firm commitment out there. I don't want to leave the impression that they are not going to use the Beaver River. I am saying that that has been the recommendation of the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board, and I believe that that has been brought about because of the interventions our officials have been making to the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board, and

April 1, 1981

because of the communications we have had with these people in impressing upon them our concern. This is in addition to the influence of the Prairie Provinces Water Board on this particular public hearing process. So these things will be considered. I understand that that is part of the recommendation of their public hearing — that the North Saskatchewan River be used as an alternative, that there be an alternative discharge rather than into the Beaver River, and that subsurface disposal of water waste process into the MacMurray formation not be allowed unless disposal into the water Cambrian formation is practical.

So what they have said to the companies and to the industries over there is, "You have to take account of what is going on."

MR. McLEOD: — My information is that water will not come from Cold Lake, and will come from the North Saskatchewan River. That's one change made on the basis of recommendations by the Alberta Energy Conservation Board, whose recommendations the Alberta cabinet has taken into consideration and will use in order to approve the project (along with some other considerations, as we all know, from the energy pricing point of view).

The interesting thing here is that also (and I mentioned this a minute ago), one of the recommendations that the Alberta Energy Conservation Board has made is that they will not approve outright the dumping of the effluent into the Beaver River from that Esso resources project until the biological (and I am sorry I don't have that quote right in front of me) study of the flow path of these things. Now, all of your responses have been in terms of water quality and so on. There are some other concerns that people have, people who know that river, and who have their agricultural leases along there, and have their own agricultural land along there. These concerns have to do with flow patterns. The Department of the Environment has experts in the field — certainly not in the area because we have not seen any of them — and we're asking you to send some of them out there. We may be off base on this and I hope we are. If these approximately one million barrels of water per day are going to be pumped into the ground by a steam injection process, certainly some of it will be lost there.

The water management study — how is that going to affect the ground water? How will it affect the flow patterns of the river if you pump that amount of water from the North Saskatchewan River? If it goes into Beaver Lake in the form of effluent, then the flow pattern will be changed. There are flooding problems there which have been ongoing anyway. What controls will be in place during what period of the year — what months, and will they be able to discharge the effluent into the river? We have all those kinds of concerns.

Now, Mr. Minister, the water management study that has been committed by the Alberta Department of the Environment . . . I believe it was in November of last year that the Alberta Department of the Environment contacted your department and asked your department to enter into a joint study with them so that a comprehensive study of the whole Beaver River system could be done. Certainly, most of it is in Saskatchewan. The headwaters are in Alberta, but we are not dealing with very much on the Alberta side. They're going into a very extensive study and dealing with test wells to check the quality of ground water, and all of that sort of thing, so that they can check it at a later date and monitor it as the industry grows and progresses.

As for my other information with regard to the response from your department, I'll just

April 1, 1981

give you a quote here from the newspaper in northeastern Alberta, the *Cold Lake Sun*, March 3, 1981. Here is the headline: "Saskatchewan Trusts Us to Keep Water Clean." I quote:

Ray Pentland, head of investigation of the hydrology branch, Saskatchewan Environment, told the *Sun* his province would rely on monitoring by Alberta Environment to assure discharge from a new, \$10 million regional sewage system . . .

This goes into some other concerns they have regarding urbanization, and all of that, and the anticipation of this project, and the population increase in Grand Centre and in Cold Lake.

. . . and a new \$3 million Lac la Biche system won't pollute the Beaver River.

Now, regarding the water resource study which I have just mentioned:

Saskatchewan Environment has decided not to participate directly in the study, although it was invited to do so by its Alberta counterpart. His department, which has its budget for 1981 established, may also decide not to participate in the 1982 budget year. They have said they will keep us informed. "I think eventually there will be a similar study on the Saskatchewan side, but it probably won't be for several years."

Certainly your official was saying what you're saying. "In several years we will have to look at it after the project is in place and things are moving. It's much like the answer you gave to my colleague for Rosthern a while ago, and to the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland: "Well, there hasn't been a broad base of public interest expressed. We haven't received all of those letters yet, so we haven't seen the necessity to react."

I'm saying you have a responsibility to anticipate some of these things when the projects are announced. Certainly you have anticipated to some extent (and I give you credit for at least showing up at the hearings which were held in 1979), but your responsibility is to do a lot more than just react to public letters and public interest.

People aren't going to get up and react to the thing before they have seen the results of it in the river, before they have seen the flood patterns changing and so on. You have a responsibility, first of all, to study the plans and to assess the impact it will have on the area, and then inform the public as to what this impact will be or what to anticipate it will be, at least.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Again, I don't know how to respond to the hon. member in terms of what he is asking us in Saskatchewan to do in this case. We can go out and study the flow, and I suppose we already know a good deal about the flow of the Cold River and the Waterhen and the Beaver and so on, but I don't think that is what he's talking about. I think he's relating it to the potential industrial development on the Alberta side.

It's true. If we were setting up the same kind of an industry over on the east side of the province, certainly it wouldn't be the responsibility of Manitoba to get itself involved in paying for a study we would have to do for Saskatchewan or, on the basis of the agreement we have with the Prairie Provinces Water Board, to assure the quality is maintained when the water hits the Manitoba border. Surely that's not a responsibility

April 1, 1981

you're asking us to now study? The Alberta government is involved in that kind of a study now on the Alberta side.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Are they studying our side of the problem?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — It's their responsibility under the provisions of the Prairie Provinces Water Board to ensure that when the water they propose to use in this industrial venture hits the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, quality and quantity and flow and all the rest of these kinds of things you have been talking about are assured to us.

I don't know what kind of a study you want us now to get involved in. They have to make their projections on the basis of what they propose or what the industry proposes to do. It seems to me (unless I have it wrong) that we have been constantly involved, and are currently involved, in communications and in keeping ourselves updated with respect to the process in Alberta. When something is proposed or being proposed, then certainly the Department of the Environment will become directly involved. It has been involved already and has, in fact, been successful in getting some proposals changed, some of the systems changed and getting some consideration of the Saskatchewan point of view.

It will be another couple of years before the study in Alberta will be completed. It will be current information to us, because as the study progresses (I would suspect we have that kind of a working relationship with Alberta), we will have the communications continuing and ongoing, so that we will know what the process is.

As to how you would ask us to get involved in measuring that on the Saskatchewan side of this particular point of view (and that will be part of the Alberta study), I am not sure: I just don't understand.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, I don't profess to be any kind of an expert in the area of doing studies and I guess you don't either. But I would say this: if, in fact, the professionals in the Department of the Environment in Alberta, if in fact those people thought it was a reasonable thing to ask the Department of the Environment in Saskatchewan to enter into a joint water management study with them so that you could study the whole area . . . We know that the border is aligned there, and very little of that river runs through Alberta after it leaves that project. Let me tell you — very little.

You have demonstrated that you know very little about it. I suggest to you that you go up there and have a talk with the people in Esso resources, and the people on the citizens' advisory committee which has been established and to which the Alberta government contributes. The citizens' advisory committee is certainly not only made up of people from the Alberta side of the border, but includes interested people from our side of the border, as well. Inform yourselves about what is happening up there. I would ask you, at least, to do that. I brought this point to your attention before and I would like to do it once again.

I will just give you a little background on this community advisory committee. I said 'citizens,' but it is a community advisory committee. It includes citizens in the area, a board of directors, and so on. It is funded by grants from municipal districts, town councils, and the oil companies involved in the leases up there. All of these grants are matched by the Alberta government in terms of monitoring the situation and new things which may come to light regarding the possible impact of this project.

April 1, 1981

We have one representative on it who (as I mentioned to you before) is the secretary-treasurer of the R.M. of Beaver River and who lives in the community of Pierceland, which will be affected by this. It is in my constituency. The lady's name is Miss Coral Johnson. Her function on the CAC (community advisory committee) is to monitor potential problems presented to the CAC and advise local municipal governments of possible impacts. Miss Johnson has also been informing the Government of Saskatchewan of the concerns of this area of Saskatchewan.

Requests were made to the province for active participation on their part, since expenses for monitoring these problems should be shared by the province and not just by two or three municipalities. These requests were turned down by Saskatchewan Environment, the Department of Rural Affairs, and the Department of Urban Affairs, although they have repeatedly assured the R.M. of Beaver River that they wished to have Miss Johnson continue to inform them of CAC activities. So you have given them out your stock form letter from all the various departments. I probably should add tourism in there, and agriculture, which should be concerned there, as well. All departments said, "Please keep us informed." But meanwhile this lady is representing the concerns of the local citizens there who have no expertise in this area at all. As I said before, I don't profess to have any, either.

I am asking you (the people who have some expertise in the area) to at least go up there and inform yourselves about it. Your answers here have indicated to me that you don't know the difference between Cold Lake, Waterhen River, Beaver River, or whatever. Sure, it is a part of the province that you may not know about and you have indicated, in other areas in your government, that your attitude is, "So what, it is some place stuck out in northwestern Saskatchewan." But I will tell you that with the size of that project now, the possible impacts which it will have are going to be serious.

All I am asking you to do is to anticipate some of these things. Go in there and do something about it and don't just react to some public outcry that you say may happen in two or three years. Certainly, let's be on top of the situation. Let's not worry about public outcry, but do something ahead of time.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member seeks to leave the impression that the Department of the Environment somehow doesn't know about what is going on up there. I've tried to impress upon him that we are completely involved (maybe not to the extent that he thinks we should be). I don't think whether or not you see anybody up in that country is particularly important. It is whether or not we have been there. It is whether or not there have been people from the department there, whether or not we have the contact with this project and whether or not we do understand. I am suggesting to the hon. member that we do.

He disagrees, I guess, and is suggesting that we have not gone far enough. That may well be a valid point. Certainly, we will take that into account. But we are constantly aware of the project at Cold Lake, the implications or the considered implications of that project and what impact it is going to have on parts of Saskatchewan in that particular area. I indicate to the hon. member again that my officials tell me that they are not aware of any particular or specific application or request by the government officials in Alberta that we should participate in that study. We have agreed to co-operate with the study and to do and provide whatever information we can to assist in the assessment of the project. But he's indicating that the environmental officials in Alberta have made some formal request to the province of Saskatchewan to participate in that study, and that we have responded in a negative way. That's not the case. My

April 1, 1981

officials tell me that, in their judgment, there has been no official request made to the Department of the Environment to participate in that study other than what I've indicated to the hon. member already.

With regard to the person who is located in the particular area, and whether or not we are going to participate, I would indicate to the member, fine, we were aware that there has been a person appointed in that area. We are aware that that person is supported by the local community as the person they wanted for a contact person to do some monitoring in the area. We'll certainly consider that. We are aware of it. We know that that's the case. We know that the citizens there are interested in that kind of an objective. I'm not so sure whether we can fulfil that objective or the request that's being made. I think if the matter is going to be monitored, we should have somebody with professional acumen to be able to monitor some of the associated problems. So I'm not sure whether we can respond favorably to the request. We certainly will consider it. I

MR. McLEOD: — Just very briefly, Mr. Minister, you indicate that there has been no formal request from the Alberta Department of the Environment. My information is that on November 26, 1980, a request to your department was made by a Mr. Matlock who is the project manager of the water management study that's under way in Alberta. The answer came back to him, I believe, on December 17 from an R.S. Pentland in your department, refusing the request on the basis of other priorities at the time, other areas of the province that you felt would demand our priorities and so on. You said that you would send me a package of all the events as they relate to this project and its impact from your department, in chronological order, listing everything that you've done. I would ask you to send that and, also, could I have a copy of correspondence between your department and the Department of Environment in Alberta specifically relating to this project? Could I have copies of all correspondence from when the project was announced in 1977, I believe, or you know, thereafter? Could I have all of that as well as the list that you said I could have of the events? I would appreciate that very much.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I'm not sure that we would provide all of the correspondence. I don't know what is there in terms of correspondence, but certainly anything which is public, useful, informative, and helpful to the situation. I have no objections providing to the hon. member as well as the information which we indicated we would send — the scenario of events and the current situation as we know and understand it. We'll try to set that out for the hon. member.

MR. HARDY: — I see in your annual report that you have mentioned beverage containers, and it seems ironic that in my area that's a contentious issue. I just wonder what part your department has in reclaiming of beverage containers, or in the related regulations?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — The provisions of The Litter Control Act, as I understand it, is the legislation which governs that particular thing and there is a requirement in that Act with regard to recycling of bottles, pop bottles, beer bottles, and so on. And it's a program where there is a deposit and there is a refund and this type of thing. I could go into the legislation in detail, but that's generally what governs the soft drink bottles and beer bottles.

MR. HARDY: — Has your department taken into consideration that there are other bottles such as wine bottles and all types of liquor bottles and other containers which I am sure litter our ditches and roadways a great deal? I will ask two questions here. Are

you responsible for the bottle depots which are located across the province or have you any input into them?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Your first question is with respect to hard liquor bottles and wine bottles. When the program was set up to deal with soft drink bottles and with beer bottles, it was considered then (and I think it still is) that liquor and wine bottles do not have the same impact on the environment as do soft drink and beer bottles. The usual situation is that when people sit down to take on a 26 or a 40 of whiskey or whatever it is, they are usually in a house or they are someplace where the bottle ends up in the garbage and goes out to the landfill. So, the majority of bottles — wine bottles, liquor bottles, in this case — are not pitched out the window to end up in the ditch. There are some — no question about that fact — but the cost of bringing those back is a problem. They, as you will know, are not a common bottle. In other words, depending on the particular brand of whiskey or gin or wine you drink, you will have a different style of bottle. It is very difficult to send those back to distillers to have them used over again because some of the distillers are not in this country. So, that is a little problem associated with wine and liquor bottles which is not the same when it comes to soda drinks or beer bottles. They are a common bottle and they can be used over and over again until such time as they are worn out. They can be recycled.

The only depots of which I am aware are the brewer's association depots. The province doesn't run any depots. We are not aware of any depots which are officially or otherwise set up except in the stores. The merchants have their own depots and they deal with the wholesalers in that respect. But the government doesn't operate depots either for beer or for soft drink bottles. There is a glass recycling plant at Moose Jaw which buys glass but, again, we have nothing to do with that.

MR. HARDY: — With regard to canned soft drinks and anything which was carbonated in cans being banned a few years ago, I wonder why the other containers coming on the market with non-carbonated drinks (which are probably doing the same thing), haven't been taken into consideration also?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — There is no question of the fact that it is of some growing interest — this matter of fruit juices and so on which are in cans. One can go into a fridge to pick them up as opposed to a carbonated soft drink. And what you are saying is, "Well, seeing that we are getting a greater abundance of these kinds of cans, why don't we open up soft drinks or carbonated drinks to be put in cans as well?" The point is that up until this point we had thought that the cans — small drink cans, fruit juice cans, and so on — have not become a litter problem to us. We are obviously facing a situation where it may become that. It is not at the present time. There is some concern about this but we have not reached the point where we think we have to move in with some kind of legislation with respect to it. Maybe we should, I don't know. It is our objective not to do this in the immediate future. We will leave it until such time as there comes to be more pressure with respect to it.

MR. HARDY: — One more question on that. I notice you had 32 complaints on the failure of vendors to comply with bottle regulations. Would you like to elaborate a little on that?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — You will know the regulations in place there. If you are selling carbonated soft drinks or whatever, you then have to be prepared to take the bottle back and give a refund. There are some cases where vendors won't do that. They refuse to pay the kids the dime or whatever it is for the bottle. The kid goes home and

April 1, 1981

says, "They won't do it." Mother or the child writes a letter to the department and complains about the fact that that merchant didn't live up to the regulations of the Act. We contact that merchant by registered mail and suggest there has been a complaint and that if it occurs a second or third time, we would have to take action under the Act. So those 32 complaints would be in that general area.

MR. HARDY: — I want to follow that up a little bit. I am a retailer, so I am aware of the situation. I want to bring to your attention that the dealers across the province (and there's a great many of them) are forced under your legislation to buy these bottles back again. Ultimately it is the same price that they had been given for them in the first place. There is really no pay for handling these. It is a necessary thing, and I agree with you, they should be picked up. But I feel that the department should be responsible for having depots and not have the bottles go back to the retailers. In reality what you are asking the retailers to do is pick up the cost of handling the bottles on their own. There really is no outlet for the people to take them back to other than to the retailers. I think it is time the government initiated a depot plan rather than having the bottles go directly back to the wholesalers.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I have some sympathy for what the hon. member says. My officials will indicate to you (in some quiet place) that I have had some interest in that. I have felt that perhaps the merchants were not getting a fair shake out of this. However, it is a matter of ongoing debate between the bottlers and the retail merchants' association. We are trying to resolve it. We would much prefer — and I think it is much more efficient — that the merchants handle the refunds in the way the system works now, rather than have the government set up depots. We would never in the world be able to set up as many depots as there are merchants in the province. I think the merchants should be duly compensated and be part of the compensation process.

There is a debate going on, quite frankly, between the bottlers and wholesalers of carbonated soft drinks and the Retail Merchants' Association of Saskatchewan. We have been part of that debate; we have been bringing the groups together to try to find some solution to this situation. My officials tell me there was a meeting of those two groups as recently as a couple of weeks ago in Saskatoon. So the retail merchants' association to whom you pay your membership dues is undertaking some action on your behalf. The bottlers obviously have their point of view. Hopefully, these two groups will get together and work out a compromise which acknowledges and recognizes what I think is generally a good system. I think it's a good program, and it's working relatively well. We'd like to continue that and I appreciate the point the member makes from the merchants' point of view. About 90 per cent of the bottles which are going out are coming back, so we think that's pretty good. It's a fairly good system and I think we would only complicate it if we tried to get the government into setting up depots. It would be costly and, as you know, it probably wouldn't work as well.

MR. HARDY: — I have one final question or remark. Was there any study done on this before this regulation was implemented? I get the feeling, as a retailer myself, that all of a sudden this was just shoved onto us, that it was said, "Here's the situation; you guys are going to have to handle it." I don't disagree with the idea; I think the bottles should be out of the ditches. I think it's a great thing as far as that part of the regulation goes, but I just wonder if it's the sort of instance where the retailer has just been pushed on and been told, "Here's the situation; you have to look after it. We've made the regulations and it's your responsibility."

I think it should be part of your responsibility as minister responsible for the

environment. First, maybe there should have been a study done on it to see what the actual reaction would have been. Then, you could have come forward with a plan which would have been acceptable to both the wholesaler or manufacturer, the retailer, and the Department of the Environment. I urge you to assist with, or help, these two groups to get together and get this thing resolved, because it is a contentious issue for every retailer across this province.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I have some feeling for what the hon. member points out, but I suggest that the principle involved here is that the people concerned in this business of drinking, selling, and manufacturing carbonated drinks should be the people involved in seeing that the bottles are picked up and recycled. So what do you have? You have a merchant who sells, a wholesaler who manufactures, and the kids and public who drink the contents, throw the bottles out the window, and pick them up and bring them back.

Now the argument which is going on between the bottlers and the retail merchants concerns what part of the cents are paid in terms of the purchaser in the first place. I am a purchaser who makes a deposit on a bottle, so I am involved. When I throw it into the ditch, somebody picks it up and brings it back to you, who sold it to me. So, you have an obligation to pick up that. The bottler has a responsibility to come and pick it up at your gate. It's a matter of trying to work out, within that principle, a fair and equitable, responsible and reasonable income for the merchant who is handling the bottles, as well as for the bottlers, who have some advantage because they are getting bottles that they can recycle rather than having to buy new ones. The problem is in trying to work that out.

We think that is best worked out between the merchants and the bottler. We'll be a referee, but we think we should not be interjecting ourselves between these two groups.

MR. HARDY: — I have one more question and then I'll drop this subject. You say it should be worked out between the retailer and the wholesaler or bottler (whatever you want to call him). The thing is that there is no differential in pay allowed within the regulations to permit the dealer to add another 5 cents onto the cost of the bottle, for example, charging 15 cents and giving back 10 cents. That would be breaking the regulations, and that is the part which I feel is the contentious part of the issue. I think there should be something in the regulations to allow for that situation.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Yes, again, you are in control of the markup and if you feel you want to up it by a penny or whatever it is, you can do that to cover your cost. You involved me because I'm buying from you; I'm paying the penny for your handling costs. Now I know the argument. The argument is: "Well, if I do it, the merchant down the street doesn't do it, then I've got this little conflict going on. I can't stand the heat so I have to get out of the oven."

All I'm saying is: we think the solution to that problem is better worked out with the bottlers and the merchants. We'll listen to the recommendation and if it's not fair and equitable the way it is and the merchant is not getting his fair kick at the cat on this and the bottlers are getting a better deal, then we think they should get together. And they are getting together and working this out. We'll listen to the joint recommendation and if it means a change in the legislation, we will be prepared to come forward with a change in that legislation, if that's what it requires.

April 1, 1981

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to raise a point with the Minister of the Environment which I quite frankly think should have been raised by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. That is the whole question of the coal-fired generators going into the Gravelbourg area. My question is: where is the involvement of the environment department? Is this another case where basically Sask Power is going to call the tunes; it's going to make the decision as to whether it builds that plant in the hon. member's seat? I think even you would agree that Sask Power is not as concerned about the environment as, perhaps, other departments, as much as they probably should be. What involvement have you had with your department, Mr. Minister, with regard to the question in Gravelbourg?

Sask Power is going to build or is proposing to build a coal-fired generator; it is going to take up to 6,000 acres of prime farmland, which will never be able to be replaced in this province. Something that the world is going to become increasingly short of is fertile farming land which can produce the food which, by all projections, is going to be in very short supply 10 years down the road, if not sooner. And yet Sask Power (and I suppose with your blessing) is proceeding to build a coal-fired generator there. It could go into another area where there is marginal land, but no, it's proposing to roll in there. That's where Sask Power is going to put it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The members now are suggesting that's in fact where you want to go. What is the Department of the Environment going to do with that question?

Is the Department of the Environment ensuring that, in fact, there will not be acid rain emanating from the proposed site, and scattering its by-product down the line (as the state of North Dakota is indicating is happening from the other coal-fired generators), and reducing the production of durum and reducing the production of barley? What is your department going to do about addressing that question, Mr. Minister? Or are you going to do the same thing you've always done, and let the decision be made, in fact, by the Sask Power Corporation and not by the Department of the Environment?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Again, it would be valuable if the minister for the Sask Power Corporation were here. He's not and I'll not try to answer on his behalf, but I will try to answer the hon. member's question.

Because of future power demands, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, as the power utility in this province, has to make some plans (it has what it calls project 2000 or something like that). and so it's out looking at potential areas for the development of power for the year 2000. One of them happens to be the site the hon. member refers to: Gravelbourg. One is on Lake Diefenbaker and another one is up on the North Saskatchewan River at the forks.

Now there are three projects. The Sask Power Corporation is not committed to any one of them.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I don't buy that.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I know that the hon. member doesn't buy it. I know he wants to misinform the people of Saskatchewan. He wants to misinform this House. You really do. You're not even prepared to accept the facts. All I'm telling you is that, on the basis of the power corporation's need for planning, it has selected three potential sites. It's not committed to any one of them. So what I'm suggesting to the hon. member is that they're attempting to do now, because of the requirements of the Department of the Environment, an environmental impact assessment if, in the future, it is decided that that is the proper place to go.

Now, in order to be able to do an environmental impact assessment, they have to drill some holes, tell us what the implications are, what kind of soil they're going to disturb, what the value of the land is, and so on. Then we have to have a public hearing. The farmers and the other people in that area (probably on the basis of the words and coaching of the hon. member for Kindersley) are getting upset about the belief that this is a committed project. It's not committed in any way.

I can't speak for the minister responsible for the power corporation, but I suggest that if the hon. member insists on suggesting that this is a committed project, he is going to prevail upon the minister responsible for the power corporation to decide that that is not an area to be considered. The people of that area may, in fact, find themselves without that possibility happening. If it's not wanted, if they absolutely oppose it, if they won't even allow an environmental impact assessment to be made — then what's the sense in struggling? What's the objective of the struggle? You might as well make the decision to pull out now. That decision isn't mine to make. The minister responsible for the power corporation would like to go ahead with an environmental impact assessment and have a public hearing, at least, to inform the people in the area of the facts and not the fiction of the matter. But, if he is not able to do that, then I suppose what he should do is make a decision to cease and desist, and say to the people of that area. "It's all over. Amen. We'll go on with something else."

MR. ANDREW: — All right, Mr. Minister. If I could perhaps correct a couple of the facts in what you've been saying. I believe there are 200 farmers in that organization who are absolutely opposed to that proposed project in Gravelbourg. You're the one who indicated that if they're absolutely opposed to it, the corporation might as well stop now. These people came in to see me and the member for Bengough-Milestone. The main reason they did that is they couldn't talk to their own member. That is the problem they face.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Objection, Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible) . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order! Are you rising on a point of order?

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Chairman, I suggest that the member withdraw that statement. He said that they absolutely couldn't talk to their member. I visited a meeting on Wednesday before they came in here. I met with them, and I listened to their concerns. They can't say they can't talk to their member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! I think the hon. member is raising a question of debate and not a question of order. You certainly have an opportunity to debate that question.

MR. ANDREW: — The problem, Mr. Minister, is basically this. What you're saying is that those people are absolutely opposed to that program. If they are absolutely opposed to

April 1, 1981

that program, then you shouldn't proceed. That's what you said. Now, I can give you the assurance that that's exactly what those 200 people are saying. They're saying, "We do not want that program; we do not want our farms displaced; we do not want the potential of acid rain flying down into our neighbors' and relatives' land; and we absolutely do not want that program sitting in the town of Gravelbourg, or in the Gravelbourg area." That is what their concern is.

Now, you can go through all this procedure if you want, Mr. Minister. The problem is that these people are going to fight that program. They are going to fight it until they get it stopped, unless they are going to be steam-rolled by Sask Power.

Has your department been out to check with those people? Have they heard the concerns of those people? If they haven't, why don't you go out and do that? You could save money on the whole project because, if those people are opposed to it (and you even admit that) you're not going to force it upon them. So, why don't you deal with the question now, before you spend several hundred thousand dollars on your other stuff, only to have to throw it away in the end and move the project somewhere else?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Well, that's a nice Mr. Clean approach that the hon. member takes. There is one fact he left out. Apparently he informed those who came in to see him that the power corporation was going to steam-roll them into submission. I wonder if he asked those people what they will do when there is not sufficient power to serve all the needs of the province of Saskatchewan. Would they like to be the first to have the switch turned off?

It's a question which, not only the people of Gravelbourg, but we, as the people of Saskatchewan, need to deal with. If we can't build a power project in Gravelbourg, if we can't build one on the Churchill, if we're not going to have a nuclear power plant, if we're not going to dam the rivers, and we're not going to build power projects that are generated by steam and coal, then how do we generate electricity?

Does the member suggest that we have the sun? Yes, you can take some solar heat and energy, perhaps. But, what does the hon. member suggest? If we're going to have industrial development in the province, and if we're going to have consumer use of electricity (and we think that is commensurate with our standards in Saskatchewan), how are we going to do it?

The point is that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has no commitment. It has absolutely no commitment at all. I can't speak for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. But, if you are asking me, as the Minister of Environment, I'll tell you what the process is.

The process is to select a number of sites, which they have done. One of them happens to be the site about which the hon. member has spoken. The objective would be to go down there and to present those people with facts, not fiction, to do some environmental impact assessment studies, and then, before any project would be built, to have a public hearing.

But, you want to cast that to the wind. You just want to say, "Well, no, there isn't going to be any development in that area because there are 200 people down there who have signed a petition," or whatever they have signed. Are you suggesting that those 200 people should decide the future power needs of Saskatchewan? Yes, I think they need to be consulted. Yes, I think they need to be heard. Yes, I think they should base their

decisions on facts and not on fiction. That is the proposal.

There is no commitment by the power corporation to build a power plant there. There is no proposed power plant for that area. What they are attempting to do is consider a number of options — a number of potentials. Therefore, in my judgment at least, that is a sane, responsible, and reasonable approach to take.

I know the hon. member would like to whip up the emotions out there and get people upset about this power utility in Saskatchewan. He doesn't really like the government all that well. He would like to get himself elected and be on this side of the House and have to answer those questions.

I wonder what the hon. member would say, if he were sitting on this side of the House, about the power needs of Saskatchewan and the power corporation. Maybe he would sell the power corporation and let somebody else make that decision. Maybe that's what he'd like to do, so that he wouldn't have to answer those people who live in Gravelbourg. He wouldn't have to deal with the question. He'd slough it off. All I'm saying. Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member is there is no commitment by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to build a power plant at Gravelbourg.

MR. ENGEL: — There are a couple of questions I want to raise with the minister publicly that we've discussed privately. And there are also a couple of things I'm going to raise and set the record straight. First, the member said that there's no consultation or I'm not available to that committee. I met with the entire surface rights committee by their request and he's drawing this into the political arena which, I think, is what they want to do down there. Now, Mr. Chairman, I think this House should know that the Tory caucus invited some people from Gravelbourg into . . . (inaudible) . . . I went upstairs and I'll name the person that came in. One person came in with his wife, met with you at your request, and I said, "Listen, would you like to meet with the minister and the Minister of the Environment and discuss the true issues here?" He refused to meet with them, and if you read the *Assiniboia Times* this week, I put an ad in about that same story, and I tried to present the facts. They are trying to raise a political question.

Mr. Minister, did we dig any test holes in the Gravelbourg area already? You know there are two parts to the story. SPC had a proposal to do a project at Cooper Reservoir. Have any test holes been dug at that site? That's the first question. I have a second question after that.

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: —I wouldn't have the precise information with respect to what the member asks, simply because it's not a matter for the Department of the Environment to know that now. The minister in charge of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, if he were here, would probably be able to answer the question. I don't know if they've been out and dug any holes or not. It's not for the Department of the Environment to know that. I do know that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has chosen three possible or potential power sites for future development of power in Saskatchewan. One of them is the one mentioned by the hon. member for Kindersley. There are two other sites: one at the forks of the North Saskatchewan River out of Prince Albert, and the other one is on Diefenbaker Lake. But as to whether or not there is any actual work being undertaken by the power corporation at this point in time, I don't know.

April 1, 1981

MR. ENGEL: — The second aspect of that, Mr. Chairman, is that some test holes were dug on the east side, and all that Sask Power was asking of the surface rights committee was to dig some more holes on the west side, because apparently they ruled out the idea of building the plant on the east side of the proposed dam. Now they want to dig some more holes on the west side. This is when they had a vote and the surface rights association said, "No, we don't want you on the land to do further tests." My position is clear. I think that an environmental study should be made to see whether they are going to go ahead or not so that a decision can be made, because to keep the thing in abeyance and up in the air for a long time, I think, is frustrating. If I were farming in the area I'd want to know if it's possible to put it there or not and to weigh the facts versus Gravelbourg or the other. I'm not saying that we'll move it all into another area, and don't you dare develop power in our area. I think it can be done. A power plant was built in Coronach. Sure, there were some political implications. You can't resolve the environmental impact. I am glad there are some controls and that SPC has to make some tests. Once the tests are made, then they can decide whether to go ahead with it or not. Until they dig the test holes, they don't know if they are going to do it or not.

MR. ANDREW: — I see the hon. member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has endorsed the position being taken by SPC. I guess that's fair enough; that's his position on that. I guess that is fine.

Your question, Mr. Minister, was: "How are we going to get power in this province in the next 10, 15 or 20 years? We are short on power; therefore, should we be developing uranium so that we can have uranium-fired power plants." I don't think anybody in the province wants that. I don't think you or the Attorney General do. I am sure he doesn't. The people in Gravelbourg are saying, "Why do they not proceed with the western grid?" That's the concern they brought to me. That's the concern they brought to various meetings way before the matter was brought into the House. I think your position on the western power grid is perfectly clear. What you are concerned about, of course, is that you don't want to have to buy power from Manitoba. That's what your concern is about. It makes a lot sense.

If I can just take a bit of the time of the House, Mr. Chairman, to talk about the power grid question, what happened is that during the administration of the Hon. Ed. Schreyer, the province of Manitoba overbuilt its power system.

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . . federal environment.

MR. ANDREW: — I'm coming up to that, just bear with me. The Hon. Mr. Schreyer overbuilt the hydro program . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll come to it, if you just hang with it. When they overbuilt, of course, they were generating far too much power. So they had to look for a market for that power. The Lyon government came in and tried to clear the problem up. Well, the only available market at this point in time was to go into the United States.

Of course, the Americans were sitting there like the Americans always do and said, "Okay, you can either sell it to us, or you can dump it. Therefore we are prepared to pay you half or less than half the price that power is worth." That's the situation Manitoba finds itself in. They have no basic bargaining position. They can say, "Well, either we dump it or we sell it to them at half price." So a logical solution would be to develop the western power grid, supported by the province of Alberta and the province of Manitoba. It makes a lot of sense economically, and it makes a lot of sense ecologically

for the province of Saskatchewan. Here's the problem. If we were able to do that, of course, Manitoba wouldn't have to dump it at half price to the Americans.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! I think we are getting into some pretty intricate power corporation stuff that should probably be raised in Crown corporations committee. I have let it go too far really both with the hon. member for Kindersley and the hon. member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I did so for the member over here, because he was rebutting what you said. I think we should get back to the estimates for the Department of the Environment.

MR. ANDREW: — I would like to continue with the question to the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. The *Leader-Post* of Thursday, March 19, 1981 said (it certainly has something to do with the environmental study): "Farmers Won't Allow SPC to Conduct a Study."

Here's what the hon. member had to say about the environment study (I'm just reading from the paper):

Allen Engel, NDP MLA for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, would not criticize the proposed plant site despite questioning from people at the meeting. His role isn't to lobby against the site but to help provide information for the group and to present the view of the provincial government.

That is his function. That is your function, to present the position of SPC and the Department of the Environment (with no concern about your constituents) and to present the position of the government. My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this (and you haven't answered the question from the start): are you going to delegate that entire program over to SPC? Is it going to check the environment and check whether it is going to proceed, or is your department going to become involved in it — either in a consultative way or by actually getting in there and looking at the problems today — to stop the problem and get on with the new project? I understand the Central Butte program is not opposed by the members in the farm community around there, as it is in Gravelbourg. Why does it make any sense not to move up there?

Could you not intervene as Minister of the Environment and use your good offices and your good graces to show the people in Gravelbourg and the people of Saskatchewan that you are concerned? Can't you get on with getting it to a site amenable to everyone and get on with the program without getting into the other question of developing the power grid, which I think is an excellent idea for the province and a pretty good way to ensure electrical energy for this province in the future?

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Chairman, it shows the obvious position of the members opposite. They operate exactly like their first cousins in British Columbia when it comes to a study on whether they should mine uranium. In the middle of the study they said, "No, we are not going to go, no matter what the study says." Now, what the hon. member is proposing is that we don't even study this matter. We don't even study whether it will be feasible, whether there needs to be power, whether the particular site in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has any merits or whether it doesn't have any merits. What you have proposed to me, as the Minister of the Environment is that I walk in there and shut it down. Why? Not on the basis of the merits, not on the basis of any assessments which have been done, but on the basis of a political argument which you put forward. That is exactly what you are asking me to do.

April 1, 1981

Then you try to buttress your political argument on the basis of what is going on in Manitoba. The most obvious political position was when you raised the Manitoba issue. What you are trying to get us to do is to bail out your colleague over in Manitoba. You want us to buy his power. So you say, "Well, he can't deal with his neighbours to the south because they only want to offer one-half of what it is worth." If you want to try to support your provincial colleagues in Manitoba, who are going down the tube now, go ahead but don't ask the people of Saskatchewan to do it.

There is no question about the fact that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has three potential sites in mind. It is committed to none of those sites. All it has attempted to do is to go out there as a result of projecting the power demands or needs for the province of Saskatchewan in the future. SPC will be considering, as well, the power grid. That is the fourth one. But in consideration of the power grid and the three other sites, including the one we have been talking about at Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, it is seeking to go ahead and do an environmental impact assessment. Now, it is going to have to do the same when it comes to the power grid. The expert across there for Kindersley says he has already made up his mind with respect to them. "It's environmentally satisfactory," he says, "and it's economically feasible." All of those decisions in his little mind have been satisfied and solved.

"Don't ask anybody else," the hon. member says. "Don't ask anybody else. Don't have an environmental impact assessment with respect to the power grid; just go ahead and do it. Don't have any assessment with respect to the economics of it. Just go ahead and do it. It's good, because Alberta agrees with it; therefore it must be good. Manitoba wants to sell it; therefore it must be good. Now that they can't sell power to the United States, at least not for the price they want, it will have to be some lesser price. But, you folks in Saskatchewan, you and the Government of Saskatchewan and our power utility corporation, should just grab onto this without any assessment." That's what you're advocating. That's what you've said.

You've said: "You shouldn't even go down to Assiniboia-Gravelbourg now and do an environmental impact assessment. Regardless of whether you're committed to the project or not, you shouldn't even look at it." Why? Because I've had some people come into my office, and not only my office but some people went over to the office of the member for Milestone and they said: "You know, politically we don't even want it down there; therefore you shouldn't do it. You shouldn't do it!"

That's the basis of your argument. I think that's fallacious. I think it's irresponsible of the member to be advocating that kind of approach. I say again to the hon. members, there is no commitment by the power corporation to a power project in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I hope we get that message across to you. But it would like to do an environmental impact assessment. SPC would like to do some assessment work down there as to whether or not it would be feasible; as to whether or not there are some reasons for future consideration of that power project into the year 2000. If there is, then there will be, so far as we're concerned as the Department of the Environment, a public hearing, and those people will have an opportunity to express their opinions.

It will be like the situation at Warman where the people decided they didn't want it. So, obviously the public hearing process recommended against it. Now, that's the process we would go through. That's the environmental impact assessment process.

MR. ANDREW: — The question, of course, is like proposing to build a nuisance ground across the road from a residential part of town. And you could say, "Well, we're going to

go ahead and develop that. Then we'll have an environmental impact study on it." The only problem is that you might as well scrap it right off the start because it doesn't make any sense. I'd like to quote, Mr. Minister, and have your comment with regard to March 16, 1981 *Hansard*, page 974. This is dealing with the very question of amendments to The Water Power Act. Here's what the minister has to say:

The generation of electricity from water power is much more desirable than the generation of electricity from combustion of coal or other fossil fuels. These are not only non-renewable, but they are expensive in terms of required energy to mine the resources necessary to establish the steam for the turning of turbines. They obviously add to the pollution in the atmosphere.

Therefore, we must encourage further harnessing of water power to generate electricity in our province: we must do this in an environmentally as well as a socially acceptable manner.

The problem, Mr. Minister, is that you're really not even addressing that question, other than through words. You have absolutely delegated the question of Gravelbourg to Sask Power. That is exactly what has happened, and you are going to let Sask Power make their decisions the way they are going to make those decisions. The only thing I can say to you, Mr. Minister, is don't think the farmer in Gravelbourg, who has been on that farm for three generations and who has received a heritage award (as perhaps you have, I don't know) is going to sit there and go along and say, "Oh, well, we'll have your environmental impact study. Maybe you can convince me that it's best that I get rid of my farm that's been handed down for three generations — nice farm." I think the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg will acknowledge that we're not dealing with scrubby farms; they are nice farm sites.

You're going to say to that guy. "Sure, wait for the whole program to get through." Then we'll maybe see when the study comes that, perhaps, in fact, you are right and that I should give up my farm, and that includes the other 6,000 acres which will probably be affected — 6,000 acres of good farmland.

It doesn't make any sense, Mr. Minister, to take that good, highly productive, fertile land out of production so that you can create your coal-fired generator. The words of the Premier were, I believe: "We have to develop these because we have to develop jobs in the province of Saskatchewan." I say there are lots of jobs to be created in the province of Saskatchewan. We don't have to create jobs by building coal-fired generators in farmland areas where the people are against it.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, if you would intervene on behalf of those people and the people who have that environmental concern, and stop that project. Find a suitable site where you don't have that opposition, and get on with the job.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — In light of the fact that the hon. member for Kindersley stated his belief in the western power grid, probably he wants Saskatchewan to buy power from Manitoba. Do you think that might be because of the damage to the Manitoba economy that the Conservative government has done in that province? I wonder if you could reply to that question for me, Mr. Minister, and I may have a comment . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. While the question was certainly interesting, I think it was out of order.

April 1, 1981

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:57 p.m.