

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

April 17, 1984

EVENING SESSION

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, we will stand the balance of the items – motions – and then we'll move to motions for returns (debatable). So that we're all understanding the procedure tonight, if I may, Mr. Speaker, after motions for returns (debatable), there'll be a little flexibility there, I gather, and then we will move into committee of finance, starting with the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development. And then if we finish that we will move into Advanced Education and Manpower.

MR. SPEAKER: — The member has asked leave to stand items down to motion no. 15. That will require leave to move down that far. Is leave granted? Agreed.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Where are we moving to?

MR. SPEAKER: — To motions for returns (debatable).

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 1

MR. LINGENFELTER moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. Blakeney, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 1 showing:

With respect to each aircraft operated by the executive air transport service of the central vehicle agency of the Department of Supply and Services for the period May 8, 1982, to December 7, 1983: (1) the total number of trips made by each aircraft; (2) the starting point, stopping points and destination for each aircraft on each trip; (3) names of each passenger on each trip on each aircraft; and (4) costs charged to any Saskatchewan Government department, board, agency, commission, or corporation for each passenger on each trip on each aircraft.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 1 showing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 2

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no 2 showing:

With respect to the employment of Robert Larter: (1) whether he is employed by or under contract to the Government of Saskatchewan or any Crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; and (2) if so, his position, annual salary, allowances, responsibilities, the date on which he began employment and his physical location of employment.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move than an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 2 showing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 3

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 3 showing:

With respect to the employment of Derek Bedson: (1) whether he is employed by or under contract to the Government of Saskatchewan or any Crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan ; (2) if so, his position, annual salary, allowances, responsibilities, the date on which he began employment and his physical location of employment.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 3 showing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 4

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 4 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Provincial Secretary; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 4 showing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, the government is prepared to give the full amount of the number of trips, the destination, the purpose, name of each person accompanying him at government expense, in each case, the total cost of the trip. The cost of breaking them down into all the sub-items and details is, frankly, an horrendous cost, but we are prepared to supply the total cost of the trip, as we indicated.

So on each of the items –if the hon. members will assist me in expediting the matters; it's obviously in the hands of the opposition – but I'm going to propose an amendment. And it would apply to each of the appropriate items, and I note that it will apply to items 4, or . . . I'm sorry; items 4 to 24 – returns 4 to 24 – and I will have the same proposed amendment in each one. Now, I don't intend to do them all at once, unless there is leave, but it'll be exactly the same amendment to each one.

And so, Mr. Speaker, for return no. 4, I am going to move, seconded by Mr. Garner, the member from Wilkie:

That return number 4 be amended to read as follows: by deleting all the words after “trip” in subsection 3.

I so move.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the amendment, and I point out that

what is being offered is simply one global figure – not even a global figure showing what the minister's total expenses were, but a global figure simply showing what the minister's expenses, together with the persons' who accompanied him, was.

Thus, what we are going to get is, in this case, the number of trips out of the province made by the Provincial Secretary – something like five.

In each case, his destination – fair enough; the purpose of the trip; the name of each person who accompanied him – and that we will get there; therefore, where they went; and who were going; and in each case, the total cost of the trip – the global amount of all the money spent for all of them.

And that doesn't even tell us what the minister spent, so that it is a clear unwillingness to disclose how much a minister of the Crown spent in travel. Because, out of this, you will not be able to distil how much a minister of the Crown spent in travel—even how much the minister of the Crown spent on each one of those trips, which I would have thought was surely information which ought to be disclosed to the public.

AN HON. MEMBER: — So, ask the question.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — We did ask the question.

AN HON. MEMBER: — It's here; it's in writing.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You asked for everyone on the trip; that's your question.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, and there are not so many out of province trips that the Crown could not simply photostat the expense accounts of five people who went to Ottawa.

The ministers of the Crown leave the province perhaps six times a year. They take two or three people with them, on the average. We are talking about 20 or 25 pieces of paper photostated. This is thought to be a horrendous piece of work.

The expenses already will be broken down into air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment – unless this new government has taken to filing expenses accounts on a very different basis.

And what we are seeing here is a simple unwillingness of this government to disclose what their cabinet ministers are spending. I think that this further indicates the unwillingness to disclose simple facts about the manner in which they are husbanding the public resources.

There can be no justification for a minister of the Crown not saying what he spends if he goes to Ottawa; none whatever. Here we have a minister of the Crown refusing to say what he spends when he goes to Ottawa – and we're not asking him to give a daily account of his expenditures.

These are out of province trips; they are surely not that numerous; and I see no reason why the information that requested could not be disclosed. I make one further comment. Even if it was alleged that it was too difficult for the minister to keep account of all of the entertainment expenses he spends when outside the province, which I don't for one moment admit, the information still could have been offered with respect to each person on the trip. That is being denied.

Even if the minister says that it's too much trouble to decide how much each EA – executive assistant – spends on taxis, there would have been no difficulty for the minister to make full disclosure of what he spent. That is being denied. And clearly what we have here is an effort to say: we will not say what we spent; we will tell you where we went; we will tell you who went

April 17, 1984

with us; but we will not tell you anything about what was spent, except the global amount, and make what you can of that. And I'll tell you one thing you can't make of it —and I'm putting words in the minister's mouth – you can't make of it anything that the Minister of Justice spent or the Provincial Secretary spent, and he's dead right.

We will be unable, and so will every member of the public be unable, to know what the Minister of Justice, or in this case the Provincial Secretary, spends when he goes outside the province on public business. It is information which the public ought to have. It's the information which the minister is refusing, and I will oppose the amendment.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Muller	Maxwell	Gerich
Birkbeck	Young	Boutin
Lane	Domotor	Schmidt
Katzman	Muirhead	Meagher
Pickering	Petersen	Glauser
Garner	Bacon	Sauder
Baker	Parker	Zazelenchuk
Sandberg	Myers	Martens
Dutchak	Rybchuk	Weirman
Dirks	Caswell	Morin

— 30

NAYS

Blakeney	Engel	Koskie
Thompson	Lingenfelter	Yew

— 6

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 5

MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Engel, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Finance; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing. I would like to make a few comments on the motion, and this concerns the Minister of Finance. And I think you do your colleague, the Minister of Finance, no service if you say that he is unwilling to say how much he spent on hotels. It is he who is supposed to be the guardian of the purse, and it is he who was supposed to set an example for this House as to how money ought to be properly dealt with, and members opposite apparently are of the view that this information was not available before.

I invite any of them to look at the records of the House in the past. They will see comprehensive expense accounts filed on a good number of occasions, and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Speaker, members opposite can chortle from their seats. What I say they will not do – and I challenge them – is to go to the records of this House, find out what was previously disclosed, and ask themselves whether or not they are disclosing a similar amount of information. They will find they are not; they will find they are engaged in a cover-up; they will find that they are refusing to give to the public information for which there can be no possible excuse for withholding it from the public.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — No possible excuse. There is no reason why you shouldn't give how much a minister of the Crown spends on hotel fares—hotel bills. Not at all.

For you to say, "We will not tell you how much the minister of the Crown spends on hotels when he goes out of this province," is doing a disservice to that minister and to this House.

I therefore will move that an order of the Assembly to issue for return no. 5 showing, and I ask you to vote for it, because it asks for information which you and I both know is properly disclosed in this House; will not be any great amount of work. We know the Minister of Finance does not go outside the province that often. A number of the ministers only go once or twice a year.

We're talking about three or four or five expense accounts photostated, in many cases. No one can allege that's a lot of work to photostat five pieces of paper. It cannot be so alleged; there must be another reason; there must be another reason for failure to disclose; there must be another reason, because it cannot be the amount of work involved.

I am going to challenge members opposite to consider with care whether or not it is their position that the public are not entitled to know this information.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I will be proposing an amendment to the order for return, because we have another example tonight of the opposition trying to make a mountain out of a molehill and they're the same group of people – same group of people – that got up and accused SPC of selling something to a numbered company that happened to be a subsidiary. So it's typical example, Mr. Speaker. Let me tell you what the past record was. Let me tell you when they talk about disclosure and open government.

I ask every member of the public to recall back a couple of years ago when we tried to get information on SGI. Remember that? And we stood up, we went over to England and had to get the court records, public records. And they stood up in the House and refused to give them to us, told us they were confidential. The same time we had the documents. Don't you stand up here and tell anyone that you were an open government and that you gave all this information, because time after time after time we asked for similar information and it wasn't given. Let's come back to the question. Let's come back to the question.

If anyone takes a look at the way the questions were worded – and it's not up to me to cover up the mistakes of the opposition; Lord knows I'd be working 25 hours a day – but they're asking for the number of out of province trips made by the minister. In each case the purpose of the trip, its destination, we're giving that. The name of each person who accompanied him. Why,

April 17, 1984

why if they're so concerned about wanting to know precisely what the minister's expenditures were, why do you want to throw all this other stuff in? Why don't you ask the simple question: what were the minister's expenses? Why didn't you? No, they throw in all the people that go on the trip, that's their question, they throw all of the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well ask what the minister's . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — We want the whole thing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Oh sure, you know, you know perfectly well that you just stood up in this House and said you wanted to know what the minister spent. You didn't ask the question precisely. You could have. You could well have asked the question.

So now, in each case, the total cost of the trip . . . you've asked that and we've agreed to supply the total cost of the trip. And as a matter of fact, I would think that politically if you're looking for great scandals, you're better off with the total amount because it's going to be larger than what the minister spent.

So, so there we go, Mr. Speaker, that in fact they're going to get the total amount of the information. So I . . . Oh sure, sure. Let's make a deal. We'll table these and I'll undertake to get you the precise information if you will go, if you will give a release to this government to have all the documents you turned over to the archives after the last election; all of the documents that you took to Tommy Douglas House and secreted away because you were so embarrassed with the scandals and the activities of your government. You buried that information. You misled the public. You hid the information from the public. Empty files, empty files, shredded. You burnt out shredders for heavens' sakes. You were so anxious. You buried the information in archives. You were the most secretive government in Canada. Don't stand and accuse this government of being secretive.

We undertook to supply you with the total amount of the information. You and I know what you're going to do with that. You're going to say that the minister and all his staff . . . The trip may have been \$3,000. You're going to say that cabinet minister, he spent \$3,000 on a trip to wherever. We know how you're going to use this. This, giving the total amount is far more damning than anything else, but at least it's open. At least it's open, Mr. Speaker, and it's there for the public. And if they wanted to ask precisely what the minister was doing, it's easy enough. Ask the question. But they didn't. They didn't. They asked for the total and it's the total that we're giving to them. And it's the total that we intend to give them.

And, Mr. Speaker, the public remembers the information they got from the previous administration, and I'm going to suggest historically you're getting far more information tonight that they ever got out of the previous administration now sitting in opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move, seconded by the member from Wilkie:

That motion for return no. 5 be amended to read as follows: by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we have heard a rather remarkable display from the Minister of Justice. He has suggested that all anybody wants information for is for scandal. We are, in fact, looking for facts. We are trying to find out what this government spends. And I think that is our duty as an opposition, and incidentally the duties of members opposite as members of the government, to make sure that the public is aware of what goes on in government. And it is entirely proper for us to ask this, and grossly improper for the government to deny it.

Let me make a couple of observations on the comments made by the member for

Qu'Appelle-Lumsden. There is much talk of archives, much talk of archives. Let me say that whatever was asked for in this House, and tabled in this House, is not in the archives, but in the records of this House, available to every member of this House. And if you asked for information you can readily illustrate . . . If any member opposite asks for information they can readily illustrate what they asked for, what they got in return, and they can get a copy of it. And it's not in the archives, it's in the records of this House, and it can be available to the member for Moosomin and he . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am going to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am going to have a little . . . I am going to address this House and if the member for Moosomin insists on making a speech I will invite him to make it after I am sitting down. I am saying again, Mr. Speaker, that this information, or much similar information, has been asked for; it has been given in this House. If it has been denied in this House it would be simple to illustrate it by reference to the *Journals*. The member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden has vast staff available to him. He doesn't attempt to refer to the *Journals* because they won't support his proposition. He makes unsubstantiated allegations. The information which is in the records of this House would either support or deny what he has to say. He's very careful not to refer to that and wisely so, because it won't support the case he makes.

He makes one further point. He says, why don't we ask just for the expense accounts of the minister. Then we would find out what the minister spent. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're aware that the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden was an executive assistant to a previous minister. We're aware of the manner in which . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . For the Liberal party, yes, when he was in another phase of his political career.

We are well aware of how these things are done. We're well aware of the fact that entertainment expenses do not show up on the ministers' expense accounts. They show up on the EAs' expenses accounts. That is absolutely classic and if the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden is prepared to stand up in this House and deny that that ever happened when he was EA to the previous attorney general, I would be amazed. I would be amazed because I think that's the way it's done and that's why you ask, that's why you ask for the expense accounts of all the people who accompanied the minister because only then can you find out what was spent – what the group spent . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Yes, indeed, yes, indeed, you're quite right. The member for Prince Albert says, that's the way our government did it. I know on many occasions when I entertained people on behalf of the Crown and I had an EA with me, the EA picked up the bill and the EA put it on his expense account, and if you had asked on my expense account, you wouldn't have found that out. That is a perfectly normal thing, for an EA to pay the bill and to put it on his account. That is perfectly normal and reasonable because he paid the bill. That's why he put it on his account.

I am very, very sure that that's how other ministers of the Crown do it. I am very sure that is why the minister so magnanimously offers the expense accounts of the ministers but not of the staff. And I think that simply doesn't tell us how they conduct their affairs; who they're entertaining; how much they're paying; what they're paying for gifts and the rest. And surely, surely, that is information which ought to be open and available to the public. Surely it is not unreasonable for a minister of the Crown to disclose how much he spends in entertaining guests and in buying gifts for, for people to whom he feels he should give gifts.

Surely that is information which ought to be given to the public. Just as surely it is information which the minister, the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, is denying. And I think that there can only be one reason for denying it and that is that they don't want the public to know. We are, we can draw our own conclusions when anyone refuse to say how much is spent for gifts, entertainment, expenses, and the rest; and draw those conclusions we will – and so indeed will the public.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS – 28

Muller	Young	Boutin
Birkbeck	Domotor	Schmidt
Lane	Muirhead	Meagher
Katzman	Petersen	Glauser
Pickering	Bacon	Sauder
Garner	Parker	Zazelenchuk
Baker	Byers	Martens
Sandberg	Rybchuk	Weirman
Dutchak	Caswell	Morin
Maxwell		

— 28

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 6

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Yew, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 6 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Energy and Mines; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, this return is similar to the ones we have already dealt with. And this asks for the information with respect to the Minister of Energy and Mines, and asks for a breakdown of the information as indicated, into air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, and miscellaneous. It's information which, in my recollection, has been given in the past, and I am sure the Minister of Energy and Mines would be quite anxious that the similar information be given in the future so that no one would make any improper inferences as to his spending practices when he's outside the province. And accordingly, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 6 showing.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, we've been through the debate and the hon. member, I know it last time, was quite properly indicated what was normal practice, and that being the normal practice as to how ministers travel. I can say, and I don't say it facetiously, when he indicated my experiences as an executive assistant taught me how the procedure . . . Let me assure you, when I was an executive assistant, if I remember, the then premier didn't allow any out of province trips. And I can assure you that he didn't allow any for this particular EA at that particular time.

And anyway, the matter has been debated. We've made it clear. The members may want to ask specific questions on gifts, for example. I suggest they ask the protocol office how much is being

spent on gifts. I don't have the, frankly, the foggiest idea what the pictorial history of Saskatchewan or some of the other crafts. That particular question that the hon. member asked – well that's evaluation that we would have to have. Certainly the breakdown in the allocations between the minister's allocated expense allowance of \$300 a quarter, I believe it has – and I don't think there's been any change in that – would have to be broken down. So I suggest to the hon. members that, in fact, the information we give is fair; it's proper. The procedures are normal and there's no difference as to past practice.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move an amendment, seconded by the member from Wilkie:

That the motion for return no. 6 be amended to read as follows: by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I won't take a long time on this amendment. I just want to deal with one implied suggestion, by the Minister of Justice, that we could always put in a new motion for return to get information, perhaps about money spent by the protocol office for gifts, or as the case may be.

Our difficulty is that we may well want it before a year from now, and there is not the slightest prospect of getting any reasonable response from this government in any reasonable period of time.

The ones that we're dealing with now, Mr. Speaker, have been on the order paper since December. They have . . . It is now four months before we even get an opportunity to move them. It will be some time, and I can bet quite a bit of time, before we will get any answer.

And so that any suggestion that you can simply rephrase the question and get an answer is not the case. I would not, as we all know, be able to ask the Minister of Justice whether he has a deputy minister. If I asked him the name of his deputy minister, that would promptly be converted into an order for return. And instead of a 24-hour turn-around, we'd have a six or eight months turn-around.

That has been the invariable record of this government; one which incidentally has never happened before in the history of this legislature. And I invite anybody, anybody, just anybody, to look at the *Journals*. I invite anybody to look at the *Journals*, and no one, no one . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now, just a moment, before everybody offers me comments.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is: we have now been through virtually three sessions with this government in office – not a single written question has been answered. Not one.

If anyone can find a parallel for that in the history of this province since 1905, I invite them to find it. And they're all there in the *Journals*, and . . . don't hesitate; just come and tell us. Because I don't think you can find it.

And it is part of a very, very clear decision on the part of this government to withhold all the information that can possibly be withheld before the public starts to rebel.

And we are now having a situation where the Minister of Energy and Mines is unwilling to say how much he spends on hotels. And surely that is not a matter which is likely to upset the government. It is simply a matter of information and interest to the public. This sort of thing is normally and routinely disclosed at Ottawa and is normally and routinely, by the way, the matter subject of some debate.

Even in British Columbia, which is not known for being a government which is forthcoming with the information, they readily disclose whether or not Broadway tickets find their – or tickets to

April 17, 1984

Broadway shows find their way on, into expense accounts; and for shows with very interesting titles. And/or whether or not wine, French wine of a reasonably good vintage, finds its way onto expense accounts. They're free at least. Even in British Columbia they disclose those facts. And members opposite are unwilling even to disclose the facts. Unwilling even to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Speaker, we're now having suggestions that you can effectively get that information in public accounts, and I think we all know you cannot. And it has been absolutely traditional at Ottawa and elsewhere to get them by way of orders for return. And again, if this is doubted, please don't argue with me. Just show us the records in Ottawa, they're all there. There's no point in rhetoric. Evidence is what we need and I suggest that the evidence shows incontrovertibly that this sort of information has been disclosed in this House; in other provinces; in Ottawa; and there is no reason why it ought not now to be disclosed except that this government has adopted a policy of failing to disclose, failing to disclose any information which conceivably might embarrass them and which they feel they can get away with not disclosing.

The evidence is there. The public will, in due course, ask whether or not this is appropriate conduct for a government which claims to be an open government.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Muller	Dirks	Caswell
Birkbeck	Maxwell	Gerich
Lane	Young	Boutin
Katzman	Domotor	Schmidt
Pickering	Muirhead	Glauser
Hardy	Petersen	Sauder
Garner	Bacon	Zazelenchuk
Baker	Parker	Martens
Sandberg	Myers	Weirman
Dutchak	Rybachuk	Morin

— 30

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 7

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved, seconded by Mr. Thompson, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 7 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the

trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, this is a similar return to the ones we've already dealt with. This deals with trips made by the person who is currently the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services. We will recall that on a previous occasion this minister, the individual who is now this minister, went off to Europe, as he was indicating, to sell steel and coal and potash in Germany. And we still don't know what either the cost or the results are. I would be interested, indeed, to find what the results were, but what the costs were because I think we — a cost-benefit study with respect to some of these activities is not amiss — particularly some of the more extensive out of province travel.

Here again the request is for information as it is normally set out in expense accounts. If any of the hon. members are interested they can get a copy of what was the standard expense account and I suspect still is the standard expense account. And it calls for a breakdown into air fares, or at least transportation fares and hotels and meals and taxis or livery, as they call it. And then information which has to be specifically and especially listed — gifts, gratuities and entertainment. And there is a miscellaneous item.

These are expense accounts normally filled in by both elected officials and public servants. We don't ordinarily expect public servants to have gifts, gratuities, or entertainment expenses, although certain public servants are understandably called upon to entertain from time to time.

This is something which is, I am sure, watched with care by the government of the day, the amount of entertainment done by public servants, and properly watched with care. And I am sure equally that the cabinet ministers are careful and prudent in the extent to which they entertain with public funds, because while proper and appropriate, it can easily lead to excesses. This is similarly true with respect to gifts and to a lesser extent with respect to gratuities.

These are matters which have traditionally been the subject of scrutiny by legislative bodies. I suggest they ought to be of this chamber, as well as other chambers, and accordingly I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 7 showing, seconded by my colleague the member for Athabasca.

HON. MR. LANE: — Again, Mr. Speaker, the issue is the same, and I note the comment of the Leader of the Opposition with regard to the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services, as to his trip. I'm sure that a specific question could have been asked as to that trip, and the benefits therefrom, and I think the question was asked on numerous occasions.

I compare, Mr. Speaker, the situation under the former New Democratic government when the then premier, now Leader of the Opposition, went over to Russia. I don't know if we got any benefits out of that particular trip. I know we had the Cruise missile debate, where we asked what representations had been made by the then premier while he was over there. But I suppose all we got back from that particular trip wasn't any new jobs, business — maybe some Belarus tractors, I don't know — but primarily probably some new programs for the then government is probably what happened.

But I think that the hon. members know full well — they've been around this House long enough by now — that in fact a properly asked question could have got them the information that they were asking. It's not my job to clear up what the opposition is doing wrong, and, in fact, the information . . . And this government is more than pleased, Mr. Speaker, to supply the total amounts of each trip for the public of Saskatchewan.

And because there may be an attempt to leave a mistaken impression about orders for return not being replied to, and I'm sure that there are people here that recall three or four years back where the then government, as a matter of fact, refused, and refused, and refused, and refused,

April 17, 1984

and refused to give information, and finally released it all at once. Not so that the opposition could sit down and go through it in a reasonable manner – they brought it in by the wheelbarrows full, to dump it on all at once, so that the opposition would spend literally a year to try and go through the information and sort it out. So that that wasn't delivered. So, Mr. Speaker, that was the allegation that was made. I have every obligation, I think, Mr. Speaker, to respond to that type of allegation because it's not a fair one. It's not an accurate one and is perhaps . . . tends to leave a misleading impression with the public.

So I think that as the public looks back and recalls the past record of the garbage bags full of information out back – in the archives, and the shredders – and the delay in information, and the refusal to give information on SGI and on, and on, and on, and on, that they will be able to when we give this information. And the information will consist of: the number of trips; the destination of each trip; the purpose of the trip; the name of each and every single person who accompany them on that trip at government expense; and in each case, the total cost of that trip.

Now; Mr. Speaker, that's a lot of detail, and that's a lot of information. And it's going to take us time to pull all that information together. And I suggest to the hon. members opposite – ask the hon. members opposite – to just think of: (1) what their own record was; (2) what's the public interest being well served pulling this information? We're quite happy to supply it. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the government is being not only more than generous in the information it's giving out. It's being more than proper and more than fair.

Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment:

That motion for return no. 7 be amended to read as follows: by deleting all the words after “trip” in subsection 3.

I move, seconded by the member from Wilkie.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will just add a word or two and invite the members to reject this amendment and to give the information earlier asked. As the Minister of Justice has now conceded, in earlier times information came, in his own words, by the wheelbarrow load – information which took an opposition of 11 or 15 people or at one time 18 or 19 people a year to go through. That is a very large amount of information. And we invite you to deal with us in the same way and bring us wheelbarrow loads of information, we will attempt to go through it – even in less than a year – but we will attempt.

We would prefer to have some figures, and as I think will be illustrated by the amendment, we will get on each of these motions for return, one figure – one number. We will get, I suppose you could say, number of trips out of the province – four. We'll get that number, one number, there.

Then we will get some names; and we will get the name of the city; a reason to do business with the federal government, or some such item which will be very explanatory; and then, how much did it cost for seven people to go — \$14,000, or whatever figure they care to put in.

No one will ever be able to know whether that's reasonable or unreasonable; whether there are items there which ought to be included or not; whether there are gifts and for whom, and of what kind, and what variety. That, I think, is a matter for regret, and I think that the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services would be prepared to disclose this, if he were not part of a concerted effort by the Minister of Justice to withhold information.

I think you members are doing the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services a disservice, and accordingly, I will oppose the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Muller	Dirks	Caswell
Birkbeck	Maxwell	Gerich
Lane	Young	Boutin
Katzman	Domotor	Schmidt
Pickering	Muirhead	Glauser
Hardy	Petersen	Sauder
Garner	Bacon	Zazelenchuk
Baker	Parker	Martens
Sandberg	Myers	Weirman
Dutchak	Rybchuk	Morin

— 30

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

MR. ENGEL moved, seconded by Mr. Thompson, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no 8. Showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an order of the Assembly that we issue for a return no. 8 showing.

This return has to deal with the retravel of that cabinet, the member or Minister of Economic Development and Trade. We know, we know that the minister went abroad with some staff members to sell some bulls in Austria.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Bulls in Bulgaria.

MR. ENGEL: — Or Bulgaria, that's right. He's been to Bulgaria to sell some beef and some pure-bred bulls. He's been to Vienna. He's away now. I'm not sure, I'm not sure if the Croatians want to buy some heavy crude oil or not but he's down selling something down there and I would like to tell the members opposite, and particularly my friend, the banker, that sits on the Public Accounts Committee, how easy it is to get information out of the Public Accounts Committee. He's the vice-chairman. He knows. We tried hard to get some information and you know what the member from Rosthern . . .

April 17, 1984

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. I think the member's comments have very little to do with the motion for return, and I would ask him to get back to the subject.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of Justice is doing is grouping together under one sum what a number of people are doing. Now we tried to find out in a committee of this legislature the same kind of information, and they grouped it together. And so the answer he's giving us is in telling me that I don't need this information individually, I can get it from public accounts.

I would like to tell this House that's not possible. That's not possible because when we asked them . . . You read the verbatim journals in public accounts and the member for Rosthern made a motion and he grouped together all the people that were dismissed. He grouped together those people that worked for six months along with people that worked for 20 years, and then gave us a lump sum, and we were supposed to know how much severance pay they paid. Because you divide six into the lump sum, one guy get \$10, and the other guy gets 50,000, and you come up with a pretty good average. That's not so bad.

We had no way of finding out. We debated it for two days, and we couldn't get a breakdown. And here we have the same thing again. We have the Minister of Economic Development and Trade going on some trips; we know he took some individuals along; we know there were at least three people went – but how much did they spend? How much did they spend on air fare, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, entertainment expenses, and miscellaneous?

I think this is very serious. I think this government is heavy-handedly trying to stonewall some information. Their colleagues — their friends in Alberta — had a premier that went on a trip. Peter Lougheed was home six months after spending \$250,000 in the Orient. In six weeks they had the answer.

Their colleagues in Alberta, their counterparts, those big spenders, revealed in six weeks time how much Peter Lougheed spent in Alberta, when he went down to the Orient — a quarter of a million dollars.

These people are trying to hide something. They're trying to hide what the individual members are spending. Now, I have four on the list here. I will make any kind of commitment that I know, when I get to number 210, that that member didn't spend anything on liquor.

If question number 10 comes up, I know that he could reveal the individual items. I know if he shared a hotel room, that he would have shared it with his wife. I know that. I know that. And I'll leave without saying what I don't know about the other ministers. And I think it's time . . . If they don't have anything to hide, they'd better come clean and reveal what they're doing in their travels.

So I would move that this Assembly do issue for return no. 8 showing — all the details — seconded by my colleague, the member for Athabasca.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LANE: — Well I appreciate, finally, Mr. Speaker, getting from the opposition area intent tonight.

The hon. member opposite wants to know what cabinet ministers were doing with their wives. He wants to know what they were doing; whether they had a drink on a trip or not. He wants to know whether they used cab fares.

You know, that's typical of the New Democratic Party — the sleaze, the innuendo, the

falsehoods . . . Now we finally see what the intent is.

For the first time tonight, someone stood up in this House and indicated what the real intent of the opposition – not to find out information as to total cost and how much this government is spending on trips, and how much cabinet ministers are spending on trips. That's not the objective. They hope – they hope that some cabinet minister had a glass of wine. That's what they're asking for. I frankly think that that indication – the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg exemplifies why they're in opposition. It's the sick attitude that anybody else in public life is a sleaze bag, is corrupt, is morally sick, and frankly what I see from you sickens me tonight. It sickens me tonight. And it's that constant search – the constant search for scandal, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: —. Order, please.

HON. MR. LANE: — It's that constant search for scandal that so far has been unsuccessful. And I can remember, when they say that we're not supplying the information – and I know the public remembers. I remember when there used to be a member from Moose Jaw, used to be an NDP member from Moose Jaw that ended up getting government guarantee for a business loan.

MR. SPEAKER: —. I would ask the member to stay on the subject of the motion.

HON. MR. LANE: — The issue – sorry, Mr. Speaker – the issue was whether there was full access to the information. And I accept Mr. Speaker's ruling.

But we finally saw, we finally saw what the opposition is trying to do. They assume that everybody is corrupt. And they're making those allegations, and they're making them from their chair, right now, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is shouting across the hall, across this Assembly, and is making that allegation and he's afraid to do it outside the House. They're not interested, they're not interested, Mr. Speaker, as to how much is being spent because that information we freely give. That information we freely give.

It's that attitude, and you did it again today in question period about local government officials in Moose Jaw. But they're sleazy, that's the assumption you make. You sit here and you criticize everybody in public life. That's yours and you try and pretend you're holier-than-thou. The public knows different and I just frankly think that we finally tonight, finally tonight got the real reasons for the question and it's interesting that it had nothing whatsoever to do with cost. And the public will well remember that. They will well remember that, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to move an amendment:

That motion for return no. 8 be amended to read as follows: by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Attorney General, why he thought we asked for air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainments and expenses and miscellaneous? Why did he think we asked for a breakdown on this information? Why did he think not – the member – the Minister of Sask Housing says we're asking for a witch hunt. Now all of a sudden it's a witch hunt . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — It could be a witch hunt, I'm not sure.

MR. ENGEL: — Well it is, it is. We want to know which minister is afraid to reveal an itemized account of his travels. All we, as an opposition, all we as an opposition can think they are trying to hide something if they want to group them together. There is no other reason in the book for

April 17, 1984

grouping it, other than what the member for — the Attorney General has suggested. And he finally woke up.

We want to know an itemized account. The people of Saskatchewan want to know what the Minister of Economic Development is spending their money, their hard-earned money, hard-pressed tax dollars are being spent on trips and if he can group it together the people don't know anything. They don't know anything.

And he thinks by covering up, that they are making some information available. Well I want to say to the Attorney General that we were never afraid to give itemized accounts in this Assembly. When these people were asked a question when they were in treasury branches they gave you wheelbarrows full of information; all the detailed information you asked for.

But here is a government that in public accounts, that in order to send a — makes us wait six, seven, eight, ten months and a year for information. And then they want to group it together with six or seven people taking a trip. They want to group all the expenses together so it doesn't show. I think it reveals that they have something to hide. I think that's what it reveals.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Muller	Maxwell	Gerich
Lane	Young	Boutin
Katzman	Domotor	Schmidt
Pickering	Muirhead	Meagher
Hardy	Petersen	Glauser
Garner	Bacon	Sauder
Baker	Parker	Zazelenchuk
Sandberg	Myers	Martens
Dutchak	Rybchuk	Weirman
Dirks	Caswell	Morin

— 30

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 9

MR. ENGEL moved, seconded by Mr. Yew, that an order of the assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Agriculture; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by my colleague from Cumberland, an issue for return showing:

Regarding the period April 1, '83 to December 7, '83: the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Agriculture; in each case, his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and in each case, the total cost of the trip, separated according to the costs incurred for each on the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses and miscellaneous.

Now we asked this question last year. December 7 is when I submitted this question. December 7, January 7, February 7, March 7, April 7 – more than five months ago: five months and 10 days.

Five months and 10 days . . . the government is finally getting around to deciding what they're going to do with this question. And do they answer the question that people incurred that travelled with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Agriculture on trips that he's made abroad? And he's been out of the province.

No. They want to group them all into one. Now I know, I know that if a former constituent of mine were here tonight, if he were here tonight, I am sure, I am sure that he would be very disappointed. Because he's the kind of minister that isn't afraid. Because he spends what he thinks is right, in the amounts he's not afraid to justify, and he'd like to have these numbers revealed.

And I think it's very unfair for the Attorney General to force these ministers into having to be grouped in the same kettle as some of the other ministers we have been asking about.

I think that is the most unfair injustice that could ever happen to any minister. And I'm sorry they're doing it to this minister. Because he, along with the next one that I'm going to deal with, don't deserve that kind of treatment. The kind of expense trips they submit can be justified.

The trips he's made to Ottawa on behalf of the farmers of Saskatchewan are justifiable; and they should be listed; and they should be listed on what he expends; and who travels with him; what their expenditures are.

But no; the Attorney General will try and amend this one, as well.

I hope he doesn't.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be proposing a slight amendment . . . And I had hoped after the last debate, which is getting a little repetitious with the hon. member, that perhaps he had learnt . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

You can be as repetitious as you want. The public have been watching your performance for some time and haven't been overly impressed now.

I just simply ask the hon. member – now I know he missed a few years in this House – I ask him to recall back the matter, that was not told to the public by the previous administration, of the big expenditure by the NDP in the Playboy Club in New York. Well, we had to get that from other sources. That was a matter of some debate in this House.

I also remember in this House trying to get the detailed expenditures of the former minister responsible for Sask Tel – the former minister responsible for Sask Tel; some hon. members will remember that – who conveniently was going to view a bus depot in Houston . . . Houston,

April 17, 1984

Texas – or Galveston. Remember that, and it just happened to be close to his winter home. When it was just close to his winter home. We tried to get that information across to those expenditures. The hon. members opposite refused to give it to us. So, don't . . . Watch where you're casting . . . You just watch, you just watch what you're saying.

Mr. Speaker, I'm responding to the request of the hon. members for information. And I've indicated, and I've indicated as well, we're prepared to tell them to the total amount, the trip.

We're prepared to tell them where the minister went. We're prepared to tell them who travelled with him. If they can't figure out from that information what the average air fare was, and they didn't ask these questions, I suggest there's something wrong with them. And if they can't figure out what the average hotel bill would be, there's something wrong with them.

Provided you know, you can come as close to as accurate information as you want. And you phrased the question, remember this. I didn't ask this question. They asked the question.

I suggest that the hon. members – one, could have properly drafted questions. Secondly, that the information will give an indication of where the government expenditures. The public will decide. The opposition will decide in talking to the public whether a minister goes on a trip.

The fact that we're giving the total amount is no great political benefit to the government. Because we know that if a total trip is 6, or 7, or \$8,000, it's all going to be placed on the minister, not on the officials that travel with him.

It's not, it's all . . . I suggest to you. I suggest to the hon. members, I suggest to each and every one of you that you get the full information.

I think the objective tonight obviously, Mr. Speaker, is to look for scandals when they don't exist; hope the public has forgotten the past, and fortunately, for their sake, the public hasn't.

And so again, I propose the amendment to order for return no. 9, seconded by the member from Humboldt:

That it be amended by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

MR. ENGEL: — The Attorney General stands up, and tries to be reasonable about . . . He never answered, he never answered my question I raised when I made my original remark.

He tells me tonight that I can average this out. Now I would like to inform him that I got A's in math in both high school and college. I'm fairly good at math. I can get a grasp on numbers fairly good. And somebody's cheering for that. But I would like to know how a mathematician – I don't care if he's got a doctorate like premier, as a rule, has – but how a mathematician can add that four guys went with the Minister of Agriculture. So there's five people on a trip. They have grouped together on the one member. We're going to get now, five air fares, five hotel rooms, five meals, five taxis, five gifts, five gratuities, five entertainments, five expenses, and five miscellaneous, and they lumped it all into one little number. A neat little package to hide under.

Now am I supposed to divide that by five? And let's say, we're talking about \$20,000. So there's \$4,000 for air fares; \$4,000 for hotels, \$4,000 for meals and so on. Is that what he wants me to do? Is that what he's saying, we can average it out? Is he saying they're spending as much for gifts and gratuities and entertainment as they are for air fare? I can't understand this. He has dropped all the words after "trip".

He's dropped it as far as separating it according to costs incurred. This is a reasonable question to ask of the Minister of Agriculture. It's reasonable to know because we can phone the airlines and find out what an air fare was, but there's no way we're going to build a guess what hotel he

stayed at, or how much his meal tickets were, his taxis, or his gifts, or his entertainment. And I think this is where they're afraid because some of the ministers (I suggest and I am suggesting it loud and clear) have a pretty hefty expense for entertainment and gifts, some of them do.

We've heard some rumours and if they want to squelch some rumours tonight, if you want to squelch some rumours tonight, leave this question on your Minister of Agriculture. And the rest of you colleagues stand behind your colleague, a rookie Minister of Agriculture who is trying to do something for the farmers of Saskatchewan. Stand behind him and tell he's got a clean record. I dare you to. I dare you to stand up and support him and say "this minister has a clean record." I don't think they're going to do it. They're going to listen to the former Liberal member, now the Attorney General.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Muller	Dirks	Gerich
Birkbeck	Maxwell	Boutin
Lane	Young	Schmidt
Taylor	Domotor	Meagher
Katzman	Muirhead	Glauser
Pickering	Petersen	Sauder
Hardy	Bacon	Zazelenchuk
Garner	Parker	Martens
Baker	Myers	Weirman
Sandberg	Rybachuk	Morin
Dutchak	Caswell	

— 32

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 10

MR. ENGEL moved, seconded by Mr. Lusney, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983, to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister responsible for Sask. Crop Insurance Board; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotel, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, for all the reasons we've given before, I want to move that in order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10 showing. Seconded by my colleague from Pelly.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, for all of the reasons given in earlier motions, I'm going to

April 17, 1984

move a amendment:

That motion for return no. 10 be amended to read as follows by deleting all the words after “trip” in subsection 3.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

AN HON. MEMBER: — The new member from Humboldt.

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please, order.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 11

MR. ENGEL moved, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 11 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Tourism and Small Business; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at a government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I'd move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 11 showing, and we'd like this information on the Minister of Tourism.

HON. MR. LANE: — The usual reasons; I move an amendment:

That motion for return be amended by deleting all the words after “trip” in subsection 3.

As seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 12

MR. KOSKIE moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 12 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at a government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 12 showing, seconded by the member from Shaunavon.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment to the motion:

By deleting all the words after “trip” in subsection 3.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to, on division.

Return No. 13

MR. KOSKIE moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 13 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Justice; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. KOSKIE: — I just want to indicate, in respect to this particular motion, it refers to the Minister of Justice. And I want to point out that we have a considerable amount of concern, because when we look at the questions that we have submitted in the past, in the second session, that is March to November of 1983, that there are three returns that are still outstanding. And the one that is outstanding is the information in respect to the out of province trips by the Attorney General from December 17, '82 to March 24, '83.

And the thing is that today we still do not have that information. And here we have the Attorney General, which is trying to indicate to the House, and presumably to the people of Saskatchewan, that he is so ready, and his government is so open in providing information.

We also have another return which was from the second session, addressed to the Attorney General, and that has to deal with the amount that was paid to the law firm of Dutchak and Balicki & company, for a period, May 1, '80, to May 13, '83. Those are from the second session, and they have not, to this date, been replied to. So I'm indicating here, certainly we have every belief to believe that if there is an embarrassment, if there is no embarrassment — why wouldn't of these questions have been answered? They're over a year old and the Minister of Justice, who is the one trying to defend his actions here today.

The other point that I want to make is that the Minister of Justice indicates that he will give us the total, and he said that should be enough information. Well it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that if he is going to arrive at the total of the trips, that he will, in fact, have to add up all the fares. He'll have to add up all the individual hotel bills, add up all the meals, all the taxis, all the gifts, all the gratuities, entertainment expenses and so on. All of that will have to be before him before he can get the total. And certainly, since he has to go through all that information to get his total, I can't understand the reason behind his logic, that he is not prepared to give that, which he has already had to have before him to get the grand total.

And that's the contradiction in the approach that he has taken. As has been said by other members here, that one can only conclude that the government, while it speaks of being a very open government, is indeed a very closed government.

I think there is other indications when we go into Crown corporations, Mr. Minister, and before,

April 17, 1984

we used to always present the salary of the top executive officer of a Crown corporation. No longer is that the practice. And in item after item of information which we previously provided, this government has decided that it's not in the public interest. Well we certainly believe that is in the public interest to have this information, and accordingly this is why we are, indeed, requesting it.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I will undertake with the two matters for return. I'm not aware of any impediment. I thought all of the returns had been filed on the law firm, but if not, I will check back. But we had just shipped a shipment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And I just said I would. I don't see any impediment to tabling.

I just thought . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm standing here trying to make an offer to indicate to the hon. member I'll go back and find out why the delay. I'm not aware of it, and I don't see any reason for it. Now if you're going to make a big issue of it, go ahead. I think that simply indicates what's been going on, Mr. Speaker.

I move an amendment:

To delete all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 14

MR. KOSKIE moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 14 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Education; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 14 showing. Seconded by the member from Shaunavon.

HON. MR. LANE: — I would propose an amendment to return no. 14:

By deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 15

MR. THOMPSON moved, seconded by Mr. Engel, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no 15 showing;

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. THOMPSON: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no 15 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

Seconded by my colleague, the member for Assiniboia Gravelbourg.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a few comments on this motion, and as we have seen here tonight it's history being made in this legislature. This is the first time that we have ever seen a situation where requests have been made by the opposition to ministers of the Crown and have been refused the information that we have requested.

It's fine for the Attorney General to get up in this House and indicate that he will give us a lump sum figure for trips taken out of the province. And I'm sure that he knows, and I'm sure that all the other members that are sitting in this House — other ministers and other private members — know that there's no way that you can determine just how much money has been spent on that trip out of the province when you get a lump sum.

We know that three or four members of that party will take a trip to which ever country or destination they may take. We know that hotel rooms are different in each country. We know that currency is different. We know that taxi trips are different. We know that executive assistants travel indifferent areas. And there's just no way that the taxpayer of this province can determine, and the opposition who is trying to see that the taxpayers of this province is spent properly.

I think that what the Attorney General is indicating here tonight that he is setting new rules. He is going to give us a lump sum, and as he indicated you can guess where the money was spent.

Well I just say, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General of this province, we're not dealing in a guessing game. We're dealing with the taxpayers' money of this province, and I think that every minister . . . And I know that there are ministers on that side . . .

I'm sure that the minister for Prince Albert-Duck Lake would not want to make a trip out of this province and not be able to answer to the taxpayers of this province as to how the money was spent on that trip. I'm sure that he would want everybody in this province, all taxpayers, to know that there was X number of dollars spent on taxi fares; there was X number of dollars spent on air fare; and there was X number of dollars spent on food and shelter. And I know that the other ministers would want that.

And I just find it kind of odd to see the few members that are in here . . . They're allowing the Attorney General to make new laws that are going to put a cloud over top of the other ministers in here who are going out and making legitimate trips.

And I know that anybody that works for the government and goes on the taxpayers' expense

April 17, 1984

have to account for where they spent their money, regardless of what civil servant it is. When they make a trip, they have to put in a separate bill for their hotels, and they have to put in a separate trip for their taxis. The same should apply to everybody in this province who is handling the funds of the taxpayer.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that these new rules that the Attorney General has brought before us tonight rules that put a cloud over top of the heads of all them Conservative members over there. And I think it's time for them to get up and speak out, speak out individually. Because I know for sure that when you go out and spend the taxpayers' money, you want to be accountable for it. You don't want any clouds over your head.

And I just ask, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General, to not change these rules, because I think it's a bad rule, and we're going down a trail that's going to lead only to disaster.

Thank you.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I won't let myself be provoked. I'm assuming the hon. member, when he got carried away, was not in any way indicating that anyone that's filing expense chits, or anything else, is not properly on government business. And if he is, I would dare him to make that outside the House.

And I will freely admit, Mr. Speaker, I stand here condemned, accepting from the public of Saskatchewan a monthly expense allowance of \$100. And so I suppose that cabinet ministers are overpaid, and living high off the hog, on \$100 a month. And I suggest that that, Mr. Speaker, is an amount that we have, and that the hon. members are upset. No, I said I freely stand up here and say that I get a monthly expense allowance of \$100, and I'm not afraid to tell my constituents. I'm not afraid to tell the public of Saskatchewan that that is the expense allowance that I have.

So I make the usual amendment, Mr. Speaker, by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 16

MR. LUSNEY moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 16 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Highways and Transportation; (2) in each case his destination, the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 16 showing, and, Mr. Speaker, this motion will be seconded by my colleague from Quill Lakes.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a couple of comments on this return. The Minister of Justice seems to say, or is saying, that somehow we are looking for something that isn't there; that we might be insinuating that some ministers might be spending money that should not be spent; or that we might be saying they are spending money that is not spent in the proper manner.

Well, Mr. Speaker, how are we, as members, to know where this money is being spent if the ministers opposite, the government opposite refuses to give us any information as to where the expenditures were made? All we are trying to do is ask the government to justify those expenditures – not an unreasonable request – just asking government to justify those expenditures.

And one can look at . . . Mr. Minister, on motion 16 – and it's asking for the expenditures of the Minister of Highways – and I don't see anything unreasonable about that request. It's asked for: the trips that he made out of province; the people that were with him; the cost of hotels, meals, taxis, gratuities, entertainment, gifts, expenses. Now we are not aware if the minister purchased any gifts whatsoever, or if he didn't. We don't know what he spent on hotels or on any of the other items.

All we are doing is acting on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan and asking this government to justify those expenditures, and to give us an itemized statement of where they were spent, and how they are spent, and what the money was spent for.

This is the open government that have been talking about how open they would be before they got elected, and how open they are now, refusing – refusing the people of Saskatchewan any information that would tell them where the money was spent. That, Mr. Speaker, I think is totally unbelievable. I don't see the public of Saskatchewan accepting this kind of act in from a government that talks about openness, and opening the books to the people.

All we are saying, Mr. Minister, is that if you are an open government, and if you are going to be open to the people and fair with the people, all you should do is allow these motions to go forward as they are, without amending them, and let the people know that you have nothing to hide. And as I stated before, if the Minister of Highways has nothing to hide, there is no reason why he should not allow this motion to go forward as it is.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, it's been a long evening and getting a little repetitive. And I know that the hon. member in his impassioned pleas said =. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg says there are 25 at the trough again. I just repeat, I freely admit that I get \$100 a month, or \$300 every 3 months, expense allowance. And that's what I get as a cabinet minister, Mr. Speaker.

I note the hon. member who sat in the back-benches didn't get up and respond to the past practice of . . . I remember, as I say, the former member responsible for Sask Tel and the trip to Galveston for his winter home and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . that's right. We asked for that for three nights in a row, and of course the previous administration wouldn't give it.

I was wrong, I thought it was the . . . When the debate went on in this House it was a former minister of energy, I believe, who the indication was on a Playboy Club, but I gather that's not the case—that it was another minister. And that debate went on in this House for some time.

Now that information was given by the opposition. It was referred in the House, and I don't think that the hon. member from north west wants to talk about records coming clean. And I think he'll be very silent, because let me tell you . . . Let me tell you. Let me tell you, we will have some fun . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. Order! It's impossible to carry on the business of the House with this much hollering, and I would ask some order . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order! I just called for order, and I'm not even back in my chair when I hear both of you hollering again on that side. I would ask for order. Proceed.

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and so we've got the indication that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The hon. members have ample opportunity to respond . . .

April 17, 1984

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! I'm going to caution the members that the hollering has been excessive, and I've cautioned for the second time now, and this will be the last time. Proceed.

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anyway the issue has been well debated tonight. I remind the hon. member, and I know that he referred to some concerns when he talks about whether the public is going to know. The public's going to know the total cost of the trip. And let me tell you what the public, if they're dissatisfied with the total amount of the trip, and an example was given by one of the opposition members, and that was a complaint about the trip in Alberta . . . They raised the total amount. I forget what it was, but there was public disapproval, and the public will, I am sure, disapprove. That's right, will disapprove trips that they think are excessive, but we're prepared to give the total amount, and we've indicated that on numerous occasions tonight. So anyway, I simply had to respond to the hon. member. We've been over it numerous times.

But I would like to move an amendment to return no. 16 by deleting all the words after "trip" in subsection 3.

And I so move and seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Birkbeck	Dutchak	Caswell
Lane	Dirks	Hampton
Taylor	Maxwell	Gerich
Katzman	Young	Boutin
Pickering	Domotor	Schmidt
Hardy	Folk	Meagher
McLaren	Muirhead	Glauser
Garner	Petersen	Sauder
Baker	Bacon	Zazelenchuk
Duncan	Parker	Martens
Currie	Myers	Weirman
Sandberg	Rybachuk	Morin

— 36

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Return No. 17

MR. LUSNEY moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 17 showing:

Regarding the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the Minister of Telephones; (2) in each case his destination,

the purpose of the trip, the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and (3) in each case the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for each of the following: air fares, hotels, meals, taxis, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, expenses, miscellaneous.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 17 showing:

And Mr. Speaker, I can only say that this is one motion that I'm sure, and one minister that has nothing to fear about providing this afternoon. The one, at least one, honest minister in this House that I am sure would provide any of the information that is being asked for, and I can see no reason why the Minister of Justice would refuse to allow this minister to let the people know what is being asked in this motion, and what he has spent.

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Again, we've been over this numerous times tonight, and that the hon. member over there, who – double standards member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg – who believes that there should be one rules for his government that he was an on-and-off member of, and another rules for this government.

And secondly that, Mr. Speaker, the fact that his allegation, as it came from the floor, of course, is that anyone who is not a New Democrat is dishonest, immoral, and sleazy. And that is what he has said tonight. And I think the vast majority of the public up there is going to be upset with that double standard.

So I indicate to the hon. member that we are prepared to give the following information:

That we are prepared for the period April 1, 1983 to December 7, 1983: (1) the number of out of province trips made by the minister; (2) in each case his destination; (3) the purpose of the trip; (4) the name of each person who accompanied him at government expense; and the total cost of the trip.

And, Mr. Speaker, let me put it in perspective that it's far more information – far more information – than given by New Democratic Party when it was in government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! It's very difficult to hear when the members are talking back and forth across the floor.

HON. MR. LANE: — So I suggest that it's in fact, Mr. Speaker, based on the information that we've given tonight – the indication of past practice that what we're seeing tonight is a new record . . . and the amount of information given by a Saskatchewan government in terms of out of province travel, and out of province trips by cabinet ministers.

Mr. Speaker, it's with pleasure that I make the amendment:

By deleting all the words after "trip".

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. I'll ask the members again to keep a little decorum in the House.

HON. MR. LANE: — Seconded by the member from Humboldt. I so move, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

April 17, 1984

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS

Birkbeck	Dirks	Caswell
Lane	Maxwell	Hampton
Taylor	Young	Gerich
Katzman	Domotor	Boutin
Hardy	Folk	Schmidt
McLaren	Muirhead	Meagher
Baker	Petersen	Glauser
Duncan	Bacon	Sauder
Currie	Parker	Zazelenchuk
Sandberg	Myers	Martens
Dutchak	Rybachuk	Weirman

— 33

NAYS

Blakeney	Lingenfelter	Lusney
Thompson	Koskie	Yew
Engel		

— 7

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've had a long, fruitful, and productive evening. I call it 10 o'clock.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:02 p.m.