

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

May 14, 1984

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Clerk: — I'd like to advise the Assembly that Mr. Speaker will not be present today to open the session.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Currie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure at this time to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this legislature, a group of young visitors from St. Dominic Savio School in Regina. There are 32 students from grade 8 from that school, along with their teacher, Mrs. Paulette Vanderlinde, who is also the principal of the school. And, as well, they are accompanied by teacher, Mr. Hubenig.

I hope that you will find your visit interesting and profitable, and I wish to inform you that I will be meeting with you in the rotunda for pictures, following which we'll meet in the members' dining room for refreshments.

I would ask members on both sides of the House to join with me in extending a cordial welcome to our visitors.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I, too, through you, and to the Assembly, wish to introduce 51 students from the great town of Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, out in the Saltcoats constituency. They come from East Elementary School and they're grades 5 and 6. They are accompanied today by their teachers, Mr. Bob Unchulenko and Mr. Walter Gorkoff, parent Ron Little, and bus driver, Mrs. Heinrich.

We hope that you enjoy seeing the works of the legislature this afternoon through question period, and I'd like to say that I'd meet with you in the rotunda at 3 o'clock for pictures and maybe have some refreshments in 218 following that. So I'd like to have my colleagues welcome you to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Health Care for Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Health, and it's regarding a question that I asked last week, and the answer that I received on Friday. As I indicated, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was not happy at all with the answer that I received, and you indicated that you wanted me to take that information back this weekend, which I did, and I checked out. And my question is to the minister, to start off with, I would like to know who investigated the accident, and I would also like to know who was interviewed during the course of this investigation.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of course it was the people in the northern health services branch of the Department of Health, my employees, that investigated the accident. I have some information I would like to run through with the members of the House today. But the question was: who investigated? It was the members of the northern health

services branch. Who did they investigate? They talked to the RCM Police; they talked to the pilots; they talked to the nurses and the doctors; and those are the people they investigated with.

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and a supplementary question. You indicate that the statements that you gave in the House were correct, that the individual . . . from the time of the accident to the time he was airborne was 15 minutes?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I would run through, for the member, the information that was provided to me by the investigation by my department. I would like to go through it step by step, Mr. Speaker, for the member. The first point I'd point out that the accident victim was in the LCA office at five or 10 minutes before 12 noon, purchasing a motor cycle licence. That's what the people . . . the LCA licence say . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I'll get to it, hon. member.

Secondly, the RCMP report the time of the accident at 12:03. The driver of the vehicle reported the time of the accident 12:05. There's a two minute discrepancy there. The RCMP say 12:03; the driver 12:05. The RCMP report that the transport vehicle was at the airport at 12:30. Buffalo Narrows Airways' flight log reports the plan trip initiated at 12:30 p.m. The log was prepared while still on the ground.

Transport Canada, North Battleford flight tapes, record the pilot checked in at 12:38 after the plan was airborne, the Ile-a-la-Crosse hospital report being notified at 12:20 p.m. that an aircraft was coming with the accident victim. The Ile-a-la-Crosse doctor reports arriving at the airport at 12:35 p.m., and the plan arriving at approximately 12:40.

The flight log reports the plane arriving at Ile-a-la-Crosse at 12:40. The Ile-a-la-Crosse doctor and the nurse provide emergency treatment at the airport. The flight log reports the plane departing Ile-a-la-Crosse at 13:10. The flight log reports the plane arriving at Saskatoon at 14:50.

The ambulance was at the airport when the plane arrived, and delivered the patient to the University Hospital. The hospital records indicate ambulance pickup at 14:50 and arrival at the hospital at 15:45. The nurse waited with the patient at the University Hospital emergency department until 16:00 p.m., by which time patient had been examined by two different doctors.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand the member's personal interest in this situation. I know that people under duress, time seems to take an eternity. But, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate to the House and the members opposite, that I will provide photostatic copies of all the evidence that I have stated today.

Mr. Thompson: — New question, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the Minister of Health. This is fine for you to get up in this House and quote from statements that you got from your officials. But do you not agree, Mr. Minister, that it would only have been fair to interview the patient, the patient's wife, who was at the scene all the time with him, to interview the individuals who were on the scene and who indicate that they were there for close to 45 minutes with a patient who was laying on the side of the road.

Other information that I would like to pass on to you, Mr. Minister, you indicated that the nurse — and I want to congratulate the nurse, who does not work for anybody; she was just a local nurse — and had she not had been in town, there would have been nobody to take care of her. The health centre was closed down. The nurses had all gone out for a meeting. You indicated that she was on the scene immediately and gave him an injection of demerol. I indicate . . . My information through my investigation this weekend was that an individual person was sent to get 292s, and that nurse gave the individual who was laying on the street 292s to stop the pain, not demerol. Could you answer that?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the first part of the member's question is: he

asked me the other day in the House to investigate this matter. I have to find the most factual information possible. I asked my department to do that. They chose to investigate and talk with the RCMP, the pilots, the doctors, and the nurses. I think that has come forward with conclusive evidence.

The member opposite still insists about laying on the street 45 minutes. There is no evidence that the person did lay on the street for 45 minutes. He indicates that the nurses were all away.

Let me indicate the situation in Buffalo Narrows. There are three nurses in Buffalo Narrows manning the nurse station there, and I agree with him, many of these people do outstanding service.

It happened on this day that one was on day off; one nurse had chose to go to an inservice training at Ile-a-la-Crosse called on quick notice by the doctor in Ile-a-la-Crosse. The other nurse was a vacant position at that time, which has been filled as of May 1st. The nurse who was on her day off accompanied the nurse who was on duty to the inservice in Ile-a-la-Crosse. And as the member well knows, those nurses went with the victim from there to Saskatoon. But basically I would say that Buffalo Narrows is well-served by those nurses, as the member rightly knows, also.

Mr. Thompson: — New question, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As the Minister of Health has indicated, there was a serious problem. You did not indicate whether the statement you made of the administration of the demerol was factual or not. I say that this nurse did not administer demerol on the street, that she administered 292s.

And the new question, and by the way of information, and I want to retract this because I consider it a pretty serious situation, because we have discussed in this House many times the serious situation in health care in northern Saskatchewan, and you are aware of them. And I said that there would be a horror story come out of it. And I just didn't think it would come in Buffalo Narrows where we have good airports and good highways. I just didn't think it could happen there.

My new question to you, Mr. Minister, is — and I just want to go back over this, Mr. Deputy Speaker — you indicate 15 minutes from the time of the accident to the time the patient was airborne. And I spoke to the pilot, who indicated he received two phone calls at his office, the first one looking for a stretcher because the health centre was closed, and they could not get a stretcher for that accident victim who was laying on the street. The second phone call he got was for transportation, a vehicle.

Now if the RCMP were on the scene with their first-aid kit and their stretchers, then I don't know why the second phone call would be made to the pilot. And this is what the pilot indicated to me. Then he had to go and find a stretcher. Then they found a stretcher at the community college. So you're saying that all this took place, then they had to travel six miles to the airport, and they were still airborne in 15 minutes.

I ask you, Mr. Minister: will you not agree that what I have just said to you is factual? And if you don't think it's factual, will you investigate it further? And will you interview the individuals that were hurt, injured? Will you interview the wife? Will you interview individuals that I can give you names of, who live there, where phone calls were made?

And that pilot also went into a home and made a call to try and get a twin-engine aircraft, which he could not get because there was no pilot for it. And all this, all this in this short span. Do you not agree that these times are not accurate, and cannot be accurate?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the member opposite is questioning some very reliable authorities. He asked me to do an in-depth investigation. I've instructed my

department to do that. I can indicate to this House that each of these statements I have said have been checked at least two times. They are flight logs by airplanes. They are Department of Transport records. They are reports from the RCM Police. Mr. Speaker, I don't know how more factual I can get in that investigation.

Mr. Thompson: — Supplementary, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You indicate that you got all these here sworn affidavits from reliable people. I'm not questioning the fact that they're reliable. I'm only asking you, Mr. Minister: will you also interview individuals who I have indicated who I consider reliable people, and get their opinion of this accident?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said to the member opposite and to this House that this information is in the northern part of Saskatchewan. Photostats of the things I've stated will be arriving in my office. When they arrive in my office, I invite the member opposite to come down and look through them with me to see if he further questions them. I will provide them to the members of this Assembly. And I think that is a very fair investigation, and that is providing a factual information, Mr. Speaker.

Handling of Asbestos at Queen Elizabeth Power Station

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. My question deals with a letter the minister was sent last week by workers at the Queen Elizabeth power station in Saskatoon. Their letter calls on him to investigate what they feel to be a dangerous and improper handling of asbestos at that power plant.

Along with their request came a number of affidavits from workers, which will be familiar to the minister, saying that they were forced by SPC management to work with loose asbestos insulation without proper protection and without any special instructions. Further, these workers claim that when they questioned this dangerous procedure, management told them to do as they were told or quit. That's what the affidavits say.

As anyone knows, asbestos fibre is a cause of cancer, and since the issue was first brought to the minister's attention some months ago, my question to him is this: what kind of an investigation have you undertaken, and what steps have you taken to see that the management of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation takes a different position, not only with respect to handling asbestos, but also with respect to employees who very properly raise the safety hazards which are involved in dealing with asbestos?

Hon. Mr. McLaren: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll answer that question as the Minister of Labour. We have been fully aware of the situation at Queen Elizabeth power station and, in fact, our occupational health person has been on site from the very start of the clean-up and, as of last week, our report is that the conditions in the plant, as far as the air and the test that was made, the occupational health director has okayed the plant, that it's ready to proceed and as far as working conditions are concerned.

Besides that, we decided — I mean that the Saskatchewan Power people decided to get a second opinion. They went to the Saskatchewan Research Council. They did a test, and their reading came in even lower than the one that we took in the occupational health. So the plant is free. It's within the standards, and the employees are working.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In their May 8th letter the workers point out that school children were taken on tour at a time when there was a great deal of asbestos fibre in the ambient air. Has the minister made any special inquiries as to whether that allegation is true, and whether school children had been taken into an atmosphere which obviously was giving trouble, otherwise there would not have been an occupational health and safety person on the spot continuously? Have you made an investigation of that particular allegation?

Hon. Mr. McLaren: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to remind the member that this situation hasn't just happened in Queen Elizabeth power station. It goes back to way . . . in the years of 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, and so on. And back in 1975, Sask Power people threatened to close the plant down because the employees wouldn't wear the safety equipment that was available to them. So this hasn't been something that's just happened in the last few months. It's been an ongoing problem for many years, under your administration, and at least we've reacted to it and started cleaning it up. It's fit to work, and the workers are back to work, and if there's any specific allegations, I'll certainly look into them, but I'll wait till I get the full report before making any further comments on . . .

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the course of asking my supplementary, I will indicate that the six employees who signed the letter were not, so far as I'm aware, the president of any political constituency of any party. The supplementary that I ask the minister is this: in one of the affidavits, one of the employees said, "From May 9, 1983, until August 31, 1983, I was required to work with asbestos insulation. I raised concerns about the presence of asbestos fibres in the air. I raised it at the occupational health and safety committee. But the management (and I'm paraphrasing now) simply did not deal with it. I was told in response to my request for special equipment, a request for a mask, to grow up." And I wonder if the minister has read these affidavits, and whether he will confirm or deny the allegations, the statements of fact contained in those affidavits.

Hon. Mr. McLaren: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I won't confirm or deny. I'm waiting to get the report from the Saskatchewan Power Corporation people. And we have the list of all the action that was taken way back, starting in January of 1984, concerning this situation. And the grievance that came up at the time was not to do with the actual asbestos in the air. The grievance was regarding mechanics doing the insulation work. So Saskatchewan Power decided to contract out the work. That was done. The contractor that came on-stream was not doing the work as properly as we thought he was. We dismissed him, and we have a new contractor in place that's looking after the clean-up. In our mind, we'll answer any allegations that have come forward once I have the report from my Saskatchewan Power Corporation people.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Minister, the affidavits which were published last week in Saskatoon say, among other things — and this is another employee — that, "I was told, when we complained that we did not know whether proper procedures were being followed by the corporation with respect to the handling of asbestos, that if I did not like working with asbestos insulation I could resign my job." I ask the minister to inquire into whether or not that statement is accurate in the opinion of SPC management and, if so, that he take appropriate disciplinary action against the management who would say that to an employee.

Hon. Mr. McLaren: — Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated earlier, I'll wait till I get my report. And I would like to just suggest to the member opposite it seems very, very strange that, one day after the former director of occupational health conducted a seminar with the employees, that all the trouble started. And we all know who the former director of occupational health and safety is, one in the name of Mr. Robert Sass.

And if our plant is designated as clear — that's by two different firms — then I'd say that the plant is ready to be worked in, and we will continue to clean up over the next period of time with the proper insulation coverage.

Reinstatement of Feed Freight Assistance Plan

Mr. Engel: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of PFRA's (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) announcement that they're cutting back by 20 per cent the amount of cattle that can get into community pastures in our area, and in light of the fact that in your own community pastures cattlemen are telling me that they've been

informed that they can put their cattle in, and there's only a guarantee for one month, and this could put a serious strain . . . If it doesn't rain, they got to take them home. And so the hay situation is pretty serious in the south country. Farmers are worried. Even the valleys aren't green in their own.

My question, Mr. Minister, is: will you promise the cattlemen that you will reinstate the feed freight assistance program that was so popular when we had this kind of problem just a few years ago, and where they offered \$30 a tonne for feed freight, which you cancelled as soon as you got to office?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, certainly in some areas of the province the drought conditions are causing a great deal of problems with the summer pastures. That, combined with the cool temperatures, and pastures haven't come along like they'd have expected them to.

In relation to the feed freight assistance program, I'm not prepared to say at this point in time that, in fact, we would look at that again. What we have done most recently is expand our feed and forage listing service to include those who may have private pastures available for rent and for pasturing.

We've added that to our feed and forage listing service and, of course, as you will know, as well, the feed and forage listing service is something new that this administration brought in to play some good long time ago to make sure that feed and forage supplies that are available, the people who need them are aware of them, because they're distributed through the ag rep offices and the R.M. offices.

So, to put the answer quite simply and cover the full range of programs that may or may not have to be put in place, yes, I'm very much aware of the seriousness of the situation. Secondly, we are and have taken steps to help where we can. Thirdly, I recognize that I have no control over the weather. And, fourthly, we'll continue to monitor it, in fact, get reports in almost on a weekly basis from the regional offices throughout the province.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, a new question, or a supplementary. The first thing you did when you took office is cancelled the feed freight assistance program. The farmers don't need a lot of talk and announcements and studies and everything. They need some guarantee that they're going to get some help in hauling the freight.

It's great to know where the hay is. But the farmer wants to know: is he going to get assistance? There's never been a time in the beef industry when dollars have been tighter and it's been harder to afford to pay for feed. And if they have to buy feed where they thought they could normally grow it, are you going to implement . . . We'll co-operate to give you immediate passage on some legislation to implement a feed freight assistance program. I think you should be doing that today.

Will you consider implementing that this week so the farmers know they can count on it?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — As I said, Mr. Speaker, I'll certainly take it under consideration. I'm not prepared to say that we'll implement that at this point in time.

We'll continue to do the kinds of things we've done, as I mentioned earlier. The feed and forage listing service — we've expanded that, making good use of our Crown lands that we do have available, and any other of several possible measures that have been instituted in the past.

And I probably don't have to go through a list for you on those, because they have been numerous, and I wouldn't want to single out feed freight assistance as the-all and be-all and the panacea to the problems out there. Because, quite frankly, I don't think it is.

And, as well, there . . . Even when that program was in place, as the hon. member would probably know, at that time it did not work perfectly. There was some view out there that a \$20 freight bill just resulted in the price of feed going up by the same amount, so, in fact, the farmer didn't benefit.

Mr. Engel: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Will the Minister of Agriculture not admit that if the farmers don't have a guarantee, that they're going to get some assistance on their freight, that they will be dumping cattle and will further frustrate . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Does the member have a question? Supplementary does not allow a preamble.

Mr. Engel: — Will the minister not admit (is the question) that this is going to put a tremendous strain on the price of beef? Farmers are telling me, should we sell our cattle today, or should we wait a week? And I think it's that kind . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Next question. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Statistics Canada Unemployment Figures

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in answer to a question that was raised, in answer to a question that was raised last Friday by the member for Quill Lakes as it relates to in-migration and out-migration, on page 2492 of *Hansard*, where he says:

The in-migration statistics from Stats Canada indicate from January to April, 1984 . . .

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's a question. It's an answer to a question. And in addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member is answering a question he took notice of.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in addition the member offered . . . In addition the member offered to give me . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member offered to provide me with the data. Firstly, I want to point out that when I answered the question, when I answered the question, Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the member opposite that I simply didn't believe him, and I had good reason, Mr. Speaker, for not believing him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Does the minister have a . . . Order. The member from Shaunavon knows that when the Speaker is on his feet there is supposed to be total silence in the legislature, and I would ask him to be quiet. The Minister of . . . Have to request some order. You cannot ask a point of order in question period.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question raised by the member from Quill Lakes, and I can understand why they'd be a little sensitive . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Economic Development and Trade has the floor. Order. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in answer to the members' question, where he claims to have been quoting StatsCanada, in fact, those StatsCanada figures aren't available till July of this year. It is now May.

Number two, he offered to provide me with those numbers. He has yet to do that. I point out that during my research I was able to find out that, in fact, he was using SSHP, SHSP (Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan) numbers which, Mr. Speaker, are regarded as being not a reliable indicator. And they were the same for the first quarter last year, Mr. Speaker. And the StatsCanada numbers last year, when they did come out, in fact, showed a net in-migration, as they will this year, Mr. Speaker.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, for the last five minutes we have listened to, and which you have allowed, a tirade from the Minister of Economic Development dealing with something that no one in this Assembly . . . I'm sure the press, or the people here, are not aware of a question being asked of him.

I also take the opportunity to look back to May 11th, Friday, when a question was asked and answered by the minister. He at no time took notice of a question, and I would like to ask from you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on what grounds did you allow the member for Souris-Cannington to get up, cut a member of mine down from asking a question, to give an answer to a question that was never asked? I would like to know on what grounds you did that during question period?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — The member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg was not cut off. He was asking a supplementary question with a preamble, which is not allowed. And the minister was answering a question from a previous day . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Order! The member from Shaunavon.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — The point of order that I was raising, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with you was: on what grounds did you allow the member for Souris-Cannington to take up five minutes of question period answering a question that was never asked? And I would like you to inform the Assembly on what grounds you did that, because the answer you gave me was not adequate because no question was asked of the member for Souris-Cannington.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Speaking to the point of order, I sit exactly right next to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The hon. member questions about the five minutes it took him to speak. I literally couldn't hear what he was saying, sitting right beside him. I think the reason it took some time, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member complains about, is the volume of noise coming from that side of the House, and how could you go from there? That's point number one, Mr. Speaker.

Point number two, Mr. Speaker, the member rose to his feet, the Chair properly recognized the . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member rose to his feet to respond to a question. The function of the Chair is . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order! The House Leader is speaking to the point of order. Order, order! Is the member from Quill Lakes challenging the Chair? The House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Speaker quite rightly recognized the hon. member, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . If you would listen to the argument, you would follow the logic of it. The Deputy Speaker rightly recognizes a member of the Crown when he stands to speak, Mr. Deputy Chairman — rightly recognizes it — the minister then responds to the question, Mr. Chairman. It's not for the . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order! Allow the Minister of Finance, the House Leader, to speak to the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, speaking to the point of order, the Chair quite

rightly recognizes the minister. The minister stands up; he says he has a response to a question that was asked of him. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you quite rightly recognized the minister; the minister got up and spoke. One could not hear what was, in fact, being said. It's up to the discretion of the Chair, Mr. Speaker, to determine whether or not it was improper for him to stand up. Clearly you recognized him; clearly he spoke; clearly it took time because of the rattling and the yelling of the members opposite.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to speak to the point of order. I think we would all agree that a minister of the Crown can only stand and make a statement during question period, in answer to a question asked on the day that it was asked or, alternatively, a question on which he has taken notice.

I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to see whether either of those apply. The record will show no question was directed to him, or any that he could take note of.

Secondly, a record will show that on Friday no such question was asked. And I say that on that basis he had no status to stand, ought not to have been recognized, and abused the question period.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — I will check the record and bring back a ruling on it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Victory for Weyburn Hockey Team

Mr. Sveinsson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the Weyburn hockey team on its victory in the Centennial Cup on Sunday evening. I expected the member from Weyburn to rise and congratulate the team from Weyburn. I think it was a great victory for Saskatchewan. It certainly demonstrates that we do have people in this province who are qualified as being number one, and I say that the team from Weyburn does qualify to be the number one hockey team, and they have won the Centennial Cup with a great deal of courage, and a great deal of enthusiasm. And they came from a place where they were in danger of defeat, and I think we can appreciate that on this side of the House, and we will fight to represent the province as they have in the Centennial Cup. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for his new-found desire to represent all people of Saskatchewan. Certainly, I, too, do want to offer my congratulations to the Weyburn Red Wings, and their coaching staff, and their owner. And I was hopeful, and I'm still hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that I will be able to bring them here to the public gallery and have them recognized by the entire House. That is my intent and my plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I was very happy to be able to drop the puck at their opening game of this, what turned out to be, just an extremely competitive, hard-fought series, and I know that everyone in this House and throughout Saskatchewan offers them their sincerest congratulations.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Congratulations to Madame Sauve on Governor General's Post

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, before the orders of the day, I wonder if I might take an opportunity, on behalf of our side of the House, and, I suspect, on behalf of all members

of the House, to congratulate Madame Sauve on being sworn in as the Governor General of Canada, and also to say with what pleasure I heard some of the ceremonies this morning, and hearing a choir from Gravelbourg singing at the inauguration ceremonies.

I was very pleased that our province was participating, and I know that all of the members will join with me in extending our warmest congratulations to Madame Sauve.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 19 — An Act respecting Building and Accessibility Standards and the Inspection of Buildings

Hon. Mr. McLaren: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise in the House today and part of the accomplishment, to move second reading of An Act, Bill 19, respecting Building and Accessibility Standards and the Inspection of Buildings.

This is an entirely new piece of legislation which establishes the national building code as the required uniform building standard in Saskatchewan. And at the same time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the act also paves the way for the introduction of standards to give the disabled in Saskatchewan access to new and renovated public buildings.

I want to mention here that there has never been, in the history of this province, accessibility legislation. Pleas of the disabled in Saskatchewan have been ignored in the past. For over 10 years the former government toyed with the disabled issues, callously shunned appeals for help from the disabled, made big promises when politically convenient, and then dashed the hopes of the disabled and returned to an attitude of indifference and arrogance.

I want to refer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to *Hansard*, March 30, 1984, when the member for Regina Centre questioned me on the time it was taking to implement legislation for the handicapped and his question concerning my refusal to meet with the groups affected.

It was this government's intention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to move with all possible haste in providing the legislation needed while, at the same time, undertaking an exhaustive appraisal of the needs of the disabled. That appraisal took us to every corner of the province where we listened intently to all those concerned. It was our desire that this new legislation would be in the best interests of those affected and, if that were to be accomplished, then those most affected would play a major role in its drafting of the regulations affecting accessibility.

I wish to inform you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that our discussions included dialogue with every voice of the disabled in Saskatchewan. Our discussions also included architects and designers, construction and building associations, the professional engineers association, the association of fire chiefs, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, various housing authorities and groups, the mayors of several centres in the province, including Cliff Wright of Saskatoon and Larry Schneider of Regina.

One would conclude from this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this government has taken into consideration every possible view. Also, I wish to enlighten the member for Regina Centre that this government didn't sit on its hands for over 10 years in getting the job done. For the member from Regina Centre to even suggest that this government was taking too much time to present legislation on such an essential matter can only be thought of as hypocrisy and grandstanding.

The former government had their chance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to satisfy the concerns of the handicapped in Saskatchewan, and they did not. They had over 10 years — over 10 years to show they were worthy of trust placed in them by the handicapped. That trust was dashed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and once again the NDP in this province are questioning the hopes and ambitions of the handicapped by being virtually the only critics of the legislation.

Further to this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was the Progressive Conservatives who, on March 17, 1982, submitted an accessibility act when we were in opposition. This House will recall the motion by the member from Regina South to that effect. The House will also recall what the government of the day, the NDP, did. They rejected the motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They said they needed more time. Over 10 years wasn't enough time to implement a plan for the disabled in Saskatchewan, according to the former Blakeney government.

We have had our sleeves rolled up during this concern, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have worked long and hard, and we held what is generally thought to be the very best in accessibility standards. We are the second province in Canada to have legislation in place in order to provide a better standard of living for those less fortunate than the members of this Assembly.

Another statement made by the member from Regina Centre concerned itself with this government not listening to the concerns of the groups most affected. Not only did we listen, but we amended certain pieces of the legislation to satisfy the concerns of the handicapped. One example of that is an amendment which has been made to delete accessibility requirements from the bill in favour of coverage by regulation, thus ensuring flexibility and ease of amendment should such be required. This was specifically asked for by a number of groups we met with, proof positive that this government intends to abide by the wishes of those concerned by this piece of legislation.

Another example of the government's willingness to satisfy the needs of the handicapped is illustrated by the fact that we have adopted a recommendation by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the Voice of the Handicapped, and that recommendation asked that the government establish an appeals board. That will be done, also, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We realize that this is just a beginning with the legislation and the amendments to it, with the continued support and input from those affected by it. We set down a foundation, a foundation to build upon. And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this government's goal — to establish, to build, to improve, so that the handicapped in this province may be better able to continue their contributions for the overall improvement and quality of life in Saskatchewan.

With regard to the adoption of building standards by means of a national building code, it is the clear consensus of the groups to which we have referred that uniform building standards should be applied in this province. Many other provinces already have a provincial building code in place, and I would think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the new act will reflect all those concerns.

What we are proposing is legislation which will accomplish the objectives of all members of the Assembly, of the target groups affected by the legislation, and among the various public and private owners who would be responsible for the act's implementation. I might add that it is our belief that these objectives will be achieved in a fair and reasonable way without imposing an undue financial burden on governments, organizations, or individuals, and recognizing the best interests and safety of all sectors of our society.

For the first time Saskatchewan will have a uniform building code which will ensure consistent and appropriate quality standards of design materials and facilities in Saskatchewan buildings. For the first time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan residents will have some assurance that a workable system of building safety standards will be in place, and for the first time, our disabled fellow citizens will have significantly and enormously improved access and will have the

opportunity to enjoy facilities available to the other average citizen.

The task at hand proved to be a formidable one in terms of both size and complexity. It has not been a simple or easy job to properly identify, review, and resolve in a reasonable way, the many problems which surround the central issues of building and accessibility standards in our province.

Complicated though the task may have been, it was an essential one. I am proud to have been associated with it, and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those individuals and groups, as well as my own department staff, who have devoted their talent, energy, and goodwill to the objectives now embodied in this bill before the Assembly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to move that this bill now be read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I ask leave to adjourn the debate on this bill, I will make a few comments. I would like to point out before I begin that my colleague from Regina Centre will be carrying the actual debate and committee work on this bill. But I think I would be remiss if I didn't make a few comments on the remarks made by the minister today.

First of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to say that I listened with a great deal of interest to changes that would be occurring in the bill. I know that the minister has talked about House amendments that would be coming forward. I listened very closely, but I was unable to pick up signs that were encouraging as to what the minister might be doing in that area. And I want to tell the minister that there will be a good many people who will continue to be disappointed in you, Mr. Minister, and in work you're doing in the area of accessibility.

You mentioned that the only people in the province who were upset with the bill when it was introduced were the caucus of the New Democratic Party. But I would like to tell you, Mr. Minister, that your ability to listen to people surely is not expanding if you believe that we are the only ones who are not satisfied with the bill as proposed in this Assembly.

There were a number of reasons why not only our caucus, but a number of people were upset with you, Mr. Minister, in dealing with this bill: first, the lengthy delay in bringing it forward; the inadequate consultation process which many groups talked about; and the hasty and inconsiderate review of the process after bill 19 had been introduced in January of 1984.

Mr. Minister, you will know that in January The Voice of the Handicapped stated publicly, and I quote:

Any hope that government has finally and is willing to act upon recommendations of those best knowing the problems and solutions were lost with bill 19.

Now, Mr. Minister, I would take that anything but a glowing report on your bill as it was introduced, and I would question whether you were serious when you stood in this Assembly a few minutes ago and said that we were the only ones who had questions about the bill as you proposed it.

I think that my colleague from Quill Lakes mentions the human rights commission and the minister will know that the previous chairman criticized a good deal, the bill, after it was introduced, as well he should have I think, as well, the co-ordinating council on social planning also directly expressed disappointment to the minister.

And in early January the provincial accessibility committee wrote that it was concerned about the inadequacies of the legislation, and I want you to know, Mr. Minister, that this group includes

a good number of other handicapped groups — the Voice of the Handicapped; the SCCCA (Saskatchewan Council for Crippled Children and Adults); services for the hearing impaired; SAMR.(Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded), and others.

This accessibility committee, in its formal submission to the minister, said, and I quote:

It wished to register its dismay at the manner in which the public hearings were set up, and further illustration of how Bill 19 is so inadequate.

I would like to say to you, Mr. Minister, that if you're wanting to keep in touch with people, that the indications that you have done that over the past year are not there when we listen to what you said in your second reading speech.

I would like to say, as well, that as recently as March of this year the provincial accessibility committee wrote public to you, Mr. Minister, and they again criticized the hasty and inconsiderate public meetings that were held early in January. They indicated their anger and frustration at the minister's refusal to meet with them, and to discuss the bill's inadequacies, and his proposals to rectify them.

And I would like to quote from that open letter as well, and I say, and I quote:

Mr. McLaren, we cannot begin to understand the position you appear to have taken on an issue so basic to the lives of thousands of Saskatchewan citizens. Our constant plea for co-operation and communication has been met by yourself and your staff with rejection and defensiveness.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to say to the minister that he clearly is not listening to the people of the province, in particular to the groups who have concerns about the bill as it was introduced — concerns about the number of apartments suites that would be excluded from your bill; about the number of motel units that would be excluded in, particularly, I believe, in rural areas where I think that all the smaller motels and hotels that would be built under your bill would be excluded from the accessibility legislation.

And so with those few words, I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that my colleague and friend from Regina Centre will have more words to say to the minister on this topic and I, therefore, beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 34 — An Act to amend The Farm Security Act

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of a bill to amend The Farm Security Act. It has been traditional since the act was originally passed in 1944 to extend the act for a period of three years.

The purpose of reviewing the act every three years is to ensure that it continues to serve the purpose for which it was originally intended. Moreover, the amendment before the legislature today has the effect of extending the provisions of the act to the years 1985, '86, and '87.

The principal purpose of this act is to protect the farm operator who is purchasing land under an agreement for sale or mortgage, or a farm operator who is renting land with an option to purchase, by specifying the portion of the crop which may be retained by him for purposes of paying taxes, costs of production, and family living expenses in years of crop failure.

Certain provisions of the act become applicable when the average value of production per acre sown is less than the value of \$10 — sorry — less than the value of 10 bushels of no. 1,

Canadian western red spring wheat.

The act also includes provisions to prevent an order of foreclosure being made on the homestead.

I'd like to point out to you and the members of the legislature, Mr. Speaker, the importance of this legislation has been reduced somewhat as a result of the increased use being made of crop insurance by Saskatchewan farmers. During the past production season, roughly 43,000 Saskatchewan farmers purchased over 1.25 billions of dollars worth of protection on more than 70.5 million acres of crop under the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Program.

However, Mr. Speaker, in spite of this substantial progress in respect to the application of the crop insurance program in Saskatchewan, there are still many farmers who have not elected to protect themselves though the purchase of crop insurance. The bill before us, therefore, is still important to the remaining 30 per cent of Saskatchewan farmers who have not protected themselves by utilizing the crop insurance program.

I would like to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that the crop insurance program is continuing to expand the provisions of crop insurance to include broader coverage of crops, and I think we've seen that most recently with the inclusion of winter wheats for coverage starting in the fall of '84, or will be starting in the fall of '84.

Emphasis is now being placed on research, which may lead to the possibility of offering individual insurance coverage and result in changes to coverage which will recognize modern farm practices, such as continuous cropping. I think this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, along with several other of the initiatives that our government has put in place since we took office, have been put in place, and we will continue to put things in place to ensure the continued viability of Saskatchewan farms and ranches, the family farm and family ranch. We are not about to see those family operations jeopardized.

I can think, as well, most recently, of our measures, the program we put in place, the counselling assistance for farmers programs which is going very smoothly, by all reports. That, coupled with this legislation, as I mentioned earlier, will make sure that viable farms are, in fact, not jeopardized. And, of course, our track record on providing for farmers, in Saskatchewan, relief relative to our interest rate relief programs, is one that's admired by jurisdictions throughout the country. And I think of things like the farm purchase program; the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan; our Crown land policies; our beef insurance, as well; and hog insurance programs to maintain stability on the family farm. Rebate of school tax on the home quarter would be another one.

So I think this is another piece of legislation which we're amending today. It's another building block, if you like, in our program to maintain and ensure viability of the family farms.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 34, An Act to Amend The Farm Security Act.

Mr. Engel: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This bill was originally introduced in 1944 and, as the minister has indicated, it has stood in good stand for the farmers of Saskatchewan for 40 years. But, similar to what the next piece of legislation is that's coming up, the minister used this opportunity to talk about various things.

He says that things that were applicable and that worked 40 years ago, maybe today those sums of money and those kinds of protections are questionable, whether they are still working today, and I think the issue that we should be discussing and the issue that we should be addressing is farm security and the farm issue.

This minister stands up and introduces one piece of legislation after another, and every time . . . and today I listened for it again, and it came out loud and clear, and in his measurement and with his yardstick he says there are viable farms that we can't jeopardize, and there are viable farm units and we are going to ensure that viable farm units are not jeopardized.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a farm that the minister maybe considers a viable farm is maybe quite a different aspect than one that we think, that I and you would think is a viable farm unit and, through his committee structure that he has in place and through the listening device, he is going to decide. And in his office they are going to make the political decision: is this unit viable, or isn't it viable? I agree with the support that's in place with The Farm Security Act. I support and endorse that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But also, if you will look at the order paper in this House, there is a piece of legislation there that goes one step further, and that says anybody that wants to farm in Saskatchewan, we're going to give him a one year's chance. We're going to give him a chance to survive and put his act together and make it work until the end of this coming crop year, the year we're seeding now. And we're going to say to the farmers in Saskatchewan, not just those that a few Tories decide are viable, but farmers that think in their own mind when they go to bed at night and they think about it, "Am I running a viable operation? Is it worth hanging in there? Should I put my farm up for sale along with the hundreds of others that are giving up and getting out, or am I going to get in there and stick it out?"

And I think the question today before this House is: do we believe that those people should have a chance when things are tough, when the margin for success is limited by the greed and the gouging that's taking place by those people that are selling farm products? And they're not charging what it costs to produce. They're charging what they can get out of us. And we know that because chemical producers in this province are trying to get started, and they're trying to get through the humps and the hurdles to get their product licensed so they can sell them in Saskatchewan. We have a good example of a person that's picking up on wild oats control, and he says he can make that available for a third of the cost that we are paying today.

There are farmers that are struggling, and I think the real question is: do we believe in farm security, and are we saying that we believe in The Farm Security Act or not? And I think we'll find out before third reading is done on this bill whether we do or not, and so, therefore, I think we'll go with this act the way it is, but it doesn't go far enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Klein that Bill No. 39 — **An Act to amend The Industrial Development Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to make a few comments in respect to The Industrial Development Act. I've had an opportunity to read the second reading speech provided by the Minister of Small Business and Tourism, and I want to say that it was quite a remarkable speech, but primarily remarkable for what it really didn't say.

Here we have a major public agency being addressed in this bill, namely Sedco — an agency which has existed for more than 20 years, an agency intimately involved in the Saskatchewan economic development. And I'm very disappointed that the minister said nothing about the role and the future goals and that government's outline of what, in fact, Sedco, and what place it will

place in the economic development of the future.

I'm disappointed because in the budget address there was reference that the Minister of Small Business would, in fact, be making a major speech in respect to the future role of Sedco. But nothing about the role of Sedco was set out; nothing about how Sedco fits into the "open for business" approach of this government; nothing about how his governments are being so successful with Sedco that the Premier, in fact, can continue to boast about Saskatchewan not participating in the recession.

In his second reading speech he said nothing, because it seems to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this minister and this government are confused about the role that they see for Sedco. They are embarrassed by their confusion and even more embarrassed about the complete failure of their "open for business" economic policies.

I want to say that, in looking at the record, one will see that this government commenced its economic approach with their big "open for big business conference" to attract investors from all over the world. But the real investment in Saskatchewan has steadily declined since this government assumed office. They created two brand-new government departments and then spent six months wrangling about the bureaucratic terms of reference.

They have talked about economic development, but in 1982, the government's first year, Saskatchewan had the worst economic performance than the Canadian average. And again in 1983, Saskatchewan had a worse economic performance than the Canadian average. And these figures are published on page 37 of the budget speech.

They talk about jobs, but in the past year the number of jobs have not . . . has increased by only 1,000, and the number of unemployed has gone up by 6,000. Saskatchewan now has, under this government, just about the worst job creation in the entire Canada.

This government's record is particularly poor with respect to Saskatchewan's manufacturing and processing industries. To be sure, this government's members like to make the bold statements about what they are doing and what they're going to do. And they like to make promises and to make big talk. But their record is sorry, and their record speaks for itself.

And I refer all members of the Assembly to the cold, hard facts published by the Premier's own department of government, the bureau of statistics in the Executive Council, and they will see that in March of '82, just two years ago, there were 28,000 jobs in Saskatchewan's manufacturing industries. And after two years of this Tory government, by March of 1984, Saskatchewan no longer has 28,000 manufacturing jobs, but has 23. Five thousand manufacturing jobs have been lost in our province under the first two years of the Tory government.

And I want to say that the minister did not speak in great, glowing terms as to what would be the role of Sedco, and I guess that this minister and his government are particularly embarrassed about Sedco and what has happened during their tenure in office.

In 1981, under the New Democrats, Sedco made money for the people of Saskatchewan. In 1982, in 1982 under the open-for-business Tories, Sedco lost more than \$9 million. And again in 1983, Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the open-for-business Tories, Sedco lost money again. They lost \$11.5 million. In their first year the Conservative government cut back sharply in the project financing through Sedco, including an 80 per cent cut in project financing for the manufacturing sector.

I want to say that I am, of course, very disappointed that the minister would not, in fact, have given . . . taken this opportunity to briefly outline the role of Sedco. It seems to me that the minister's confusion is particularly apparent with respect to Sedco's involvement in industrial park development. First he says that Sedco should not have been involved in the building of

Innovation Place in Saskatoon. But Sedco's annual report proudly boasts about Innovation Place as the most advanced research facility in western Canada. I think that the minister is confused. He's embarrassed about Sedco, just as his government is confused and embarrassed about its mismanagement of the provincial economy.

When one takes a look at the general principles being put forward in respect to the bill itself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that I am particularly concerned with the principle which is being put forward here, which perhaps is the most significant principle of the bill, which will apparently permit the government to sell off or give away the assets of Sedco at fire-sale prices without any requirement of any public tendering disclosure.

And members of the government, members of the government are actually cheering at the give-away proposals of his colleagues. Their provisions appear to be another example of this government's desperate scramble for cash, leading to the sell-off and fire sales of valuable publicly-owned assets. And certainly the record is clear. PCS mining equipment, power corporation dragline, \$40 million worth of highway equipment, and now the assets of Sedco.

It seems to me that the minister has made no secret of his desire to sell off much of the valuable industrial property owned by the people of Saskatchewan. The minister, I think, owes to this Assembly and to the people of this province a candid explanation of why he wishes this legislative authority to sell off, or to give away, publicly-owned assets.

The minister had an opportunity to speak in moving second reading. He did not avail himself of the opportunity because of his embarrassment with the way in which he has mismanaged Sedco. A very important example of it is the recent Raymond Construction Limited, a British Columbia company, where the Saskatchewan subcontractors were not, in fact, protected.

I think that the minister obviously has no clear, decisive role for Sedco because he had the opportunity to put it forward, and he failed. I am certainly, as I said, concerned with the provision — and this provision is a part of more and more legislation dealing with more and more Crown corporations — which allows the individual minister and his government to dispose of valuable assets which have been built up as an inventory for the future development of the economy on behalf of the people of this province. And so I say that, when I look at the bill, I am concerned in respect to that particular provision.

Another principle that is outlined, and that is with respect to the voting of shareholders that may be sitting on the board of directors, and also on a particular Crown corporation which is financed by Sedco, allowing them to declare any conflict of interest and then go on to vote, I think, subject to a few questions in respect to that; I agree that that is the general principle.

I note also that the provision for increasing the amount of the loans which goes to, I believe, \$2.5 million without any cabinet approval or notice to the public. I want to raise some concerns in respect to that, but I'll deal with those concerns in the committee of the whole.

In conclusion I want to say that the Minister of Small Business and Tourism has had an opportunity. I think that he has critically . . . not taken the opportunity when the opportunity was made available to him.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I doubt that they've got anybody else over there that would like to speak to this thing.

First of all, I have to thank them very much for the kind remarks they gave me concerning my dynamic second reading. You know, this bill is before the House, Mr. Deputy, for reasons other than Sedco's future direction. That will be dealt with very soon. The opposition left Sedco in such a disgraceful situation that it's taking us a little longer to deal with than we anticipated.

You know, you always keep confusing the issues. You always keep confusing the issues. You keep trying to confuse the business community. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the business community, they know who's confused. It's certainly not the business community, and even in your stupidity you wouldn't say that. They know that it's not us that's confused. That only leaves one other bunch of folks confused, Mr. Deputy, and I lay it at their doorstep.

The member from Quill Lakes jumped on a bill that has nothing to do at all with what he closed his remarks on, and he based it on nothing. It was simply nothing but a cheap political trick, trying to get credibility with the business community. You won't get any with cheap politics. It won't work; it'll backfire on you. The business community is not at all responsive to your observations.

We have a forum for the remarks, called Crown corporation hearings, that will deal with the questions that you are speaking about, and I look forward to that interesting confrontation. It won't be much of a challenge either, let me tell you that. It will be no challenge.

Once again, Mr. Deputy, they are on the wrong subject. They're a joke in the business community. You can never get things straight when it relates to business. What we're talking about here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I mentioned in my opening remarks when I moved second reading, this bill is largely of a housekeeping nature to update obsolete provisions — has nothing at all to do with what the member was talking about. It contains nothing at all controversial. It should actually have been dealt with in non-controversial bills. It will be interesting to see what you do with it in committee. Hopefully, there you won't bring Crown corporation questions to bear and will leave that for the right forum.

And, after it's finished in committee, if the members opposite are truly concerned, truly concerned about the small-business community, then I suppose that you should vote against that bill. However, I think that even you can't justify that, because it's just simply not there. And, Mr. Deputy, in closing debate, I urge all members to join me in the support of this simple house-cleaning bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hepworth that Bill No. 33 — **An Act to repeal The Agricultural Research Foundation Act and to Make provision for Related Matters** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hepworth that Bill No. 35 — **An Act respecting Noxious Weeds** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

CULTURE AND RECREATION

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 7

Item 1 (continued)

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, if I can introduce the officials that are here for continuation here. I have my deputy minister, Mr. Bill Clarke; and assistant deputy minister, Keith Rodgers.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Chairman, I just want to follow-up on your proposed, the government's proposed plans on the consolidation of regional recreation offices, and the elimination of the recreation support grants. It seems to me that you indicated during a question period that, indeed, the consolidation which you had proposed, and the letter which you sent out that subsequent to that that you reversed that decision after the heat of the opposition reached you. The impact of the constructive approach of the opposition, along with the support of citizens of Saskatchewan who are now backing the New Democratic caucus, trying to eliminate some of these dastardly acts that you were going to do under the cover of night, and once they found out, apparently you have reversed the decision.

Could you give a clarification as to whether, in fact, you had a policy in place for a consolidation of recreational offices? Did you initiate a policy? And secondly, have you reversed it?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, we went over this quite extensively in question period not too long ago. The hon. member makes mention to the tremendous heat applied by the opposition, in particular the NDP. And, Mr. Speaker, the heat that came from the caucus across the way would be more relevantly compared to that of a match striking a matchbox cover.

Indeed, when we went over this program, I mentioned numerous times that the number one priority of the Department of Culture and Recreation, as it relates to the field staff, is to provide service to the communities and the citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. Indeed we are always looking at new ways of providing that service and providing it in a better way.

The member asked whether, indeed, we did have a plan. Indeed we did. But in consultation with numerous communities and community groups — not from any question from the opposition, I might add, Mr. Chairman — we decided to take another look at it and, for this year, go back to the original status quo as it relates.

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask a follow-up. You had a policy, and what you're saying is that it's for this year — no guarantee to the continuation to the various communities. But just following up on the reversal of your policy, I'm wondering to what extent, what communications did you have for communicating to all of the towns and villages and communities that you had, in fact, revoked that disastrous course that you were going on? Have you, in fact, notified all of the various towns and communities within the various regions?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, every piece of correspondence that has come through my department — and I alluded to this also in question period some time ago — all the communities have been notified of the change. And they're all cognizant of what's going on. As to the member opposite when he says, "for this year only," I believe, Mr. Chairman, that we are dealing with the coming year's estimates.

Mr. Koskie: — And normally governments have plans for the future also, I would advise the minister, and they're normally under discussion, so that the public can, in fact, make plans for the future.

But leave that aside; you indicate that you have made a communication with all the communities. I don't understand it because what is happening is that we are getting a series of letters in from various towns, and I'll just refer you to one. And I have checked this for a number of communities in my constituency, and here is a letter to Premier Devine and it's from the town of Watson:

Please be advised that the council of the town of Watson are not in favour of the above proposed changes referring to the consolidation of regional recreational offices.

And I want to say that the town of Watson is a very progressive community . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not Conservative, by the way; that's why I said it was progressive. A very progressive community, well on top of what is going on, supplemented by a considerable amount of contact by their elected official, and what I find here is that here is the town of Watson, which I have a letter, a copy of a letter to the Premier, dated May 11th.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, to the minister, that your policy, and then your reversal . . . I agree with the reversal of it because it would have decimated the recreational facilities and the structure that we had in place under the previous government, but I think that what you should do now, Mr. Minister, is make a public communication to all of those concerned people in Saskatchewan.

And since you're spending millions of dollars advertising to support and to attempt vaguely — not vaguely, but in a vague attempt — to keep this government elected, I think that once you have found yourself in a position that you can't support, then you owe a duty to put out a good-sized ad, or else provide the opposition with sufficient indication that the policy which you reversed has been, in fact, indeed, communicated to all the communities throughout the province.

And I don't know why you should just stand here and say that any communications that I get, any letters to my office, I answer. What you have done is to set into motion a policy, and then you had to reverse it, because of the public and the opposition's pressure. And, therefore, I suggest that you could, in fact, deal in a more of a gentleman approach, own up to your disastrous policy, and recant it, and make it public.

Will you assure the opposition, and the people of Saskatchewan, that you will take appropriate steps?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I think we should set a few things straight here. The member from Quill Lakes mentioned that he made strong representation regarding this issue. To my knowledge, he wrote one letter, and that was to do with the gentleman who is in the Quill plains region, and that was before the budget was released. Nothing to do with this matter.

And another, Mr. Speaker, that if . . . Mr. Chairman, if the member was interested in this issue, and indeed was keeping in touch, he would find that every community in his constituency, every community across the province, has been notified of this change through our regional people, through the office of the minister, and he makes an allegation that the policy was put into place. It was never put into place, there was never an office closed or anything else, so I would suggest that the member stay in touch out there and find out from these towns exactly what has happened.

Mr. Koskie: — Another concern raised is in respect to the recreation support grants. Can you indicate whether the recreation support grants are being cut?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, indeed, there has been a reduction in the community recreation grant.

Mr. Koskie: — You indicate a reduction. Can you indicate to what extent of the reduction?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, the exact figures . . . and there's some things that have to be clarified here as far as grants and new programs that have come in. But the base figures are from

about \$1.5 million down to \$940,000. Inherent in there is new programs, such as the ODP (Organizational Development Plan) grant and volunteer recognition, municipal innovative projects grants that communities have been requesting for quite some time, that we are now implementing.

Mr. Koskie: — I want to . . . I wonder if the minister could provide a list of all the recreation support grants for last year, and the amount that the particular boards will be receiving this year. I wonder if you could provide that. You might not have that at present, but I would like that information.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'd be glad to provide that at a later date.

Mr. Koskie: — In respect to the cultural and recreational grants that you provide, one of the problems that we have found in respect to the cultural and recreational grants is that where a community wishes to enlarge, say . . . I'll give you an example, a skating rink, and they want to extend, in my particular instance, by three additional rafters to make a complete renovation inside to improve the exits, and to a large extent, increase the safety of the existing building. The problem that they have run into is that they — in order to qualify for your cultural and recreational grants — then they must meet the standards set by the fire commission. And what this is effectively doing to communities with existing buildings, if you continue to enforce it, is, in fact, deny the communities the cultural and recreational grants.

Let me give you an example. One community was proposing to enlarge the size of their arena. It extended over the 2,500 square feet, slightly over that, and that apparently is what was set as the limit by the fire commission. If it goes over that, then you have to meet the fire commissioner's standards.

In discussing the basic problem with this community, and with the fire commissioner's office, it meant — if they were going to put a couple of hundred thousand dollars worth of renovations into that; make it much more suitable to the community; much upgraded for safety with more exit doors and so on — that they had to put in a sprinkler system which cost them \$120,000. The problem that they ran up against was, in fact, that they were going to be denied the rec and cultural, recreational and cultural grants. And the ridiculousness of it is that if they went ahead on their own, didn't use the grant, that the fire commissioner wouldn't insist upon putting in this very expensive fire prevention sprinkler system.

I'm wondering. I've run into not one, but several of these situations. The second major one is where you have a complex, and this happened in the community of St. Gregor, and they have a curling rink, and attached to it is a hall. And what they did is to add on a senior citizens' bowling alley. And along comes one of the fire commissioner's representatives, and what was being proposed there was laughable to the average farmer that I met with that was on the rec board. What they insisted that they do is put about a 20 foot cement wall in between the hall and the rink, and this was, as I say, very laughable. And I guess what I'm asking you is: to what extent have you overcome the enforcement of the fire commissioner's regulations before these people can, in fact, get a grant?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'd be glad to discuss with the hon. member specifics, but dealing with the question very generally: indeed, on the cultural and recreational facility grant program, that we do put in some conditions there — one, that they have to meet the health requirements as well as the fire inspector requirements, which I believe are provincial standards. And, Mr. Chairman, I in no way apologize for those requirements. I think all the people, and all the communities around the province, should be assured that, whatever renovations or new construction takes place, that indeed it is safe, and this is one of the best vehicles we know of.

Mr. Koskie: — Well, I can see, Mr. Minister, the development of fire safety standards, and certainly when you're in the construction of new complexes, but the ridiculousness of it is that if

they forego the grant, and, in the situations that I have given you, then there is no enforcement of the fire commissioner's regulations. The only enforcement . . . And what you seem to have done is to tie the recreational and cultural grants solely to the fire commissioner's recommendations on fire safety innovations. And as a consequence, I'm wondering: are you running into a lot of problems where communities are being denied the recreational and cultural facilities grants due to this very problem? Because I can indicate to you, and I would like to discuss those, I have two such situations in my constituency.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, indeed, none of these concerns have come across my desk in consultations with my officials. They're not aware of this particular problem that is being all across the province. Certainly I'll extend my invitation once again to the member that, if he wishes to discuss this, certainly I'll take it up. But also, it might shed a little bit of light on it, that when you're building an additional on to a complex, then certainly it changes the complex itself, and certainly new regulations would have to be in effect for fire and health safety. So these are part of the reasons why we have those regulations in there. It's for the safety of the public and safety of the users of the facilities.

Mr. Koskie: — I can take these examples to you directly. In respect to both of them, I have had meetings with officials of the fire commissioner's office, but the first one deals with the addition to the rink, the arena, at Quill Lake. And they ran into that particular problem. It may have been resolved since I last discussed it with them, Mr. Minister, but I did attend Regina with a group of citizens to try to get some amendment to the situation.

And the thing that concerns me is that what they were planning, while an additional to the arena, three additional rafters, and it went over the 2,500 square feet. The overall plan did, indeed, improve vastly the safety to the public in the number of exit doors, and generally the various rooms were substantially improved. The other one that I had was at St. Gregor, and that's the other complex that I mentioned, with the curling rink, a hall, and they added on a senior citizens' bowling alley.

In discussing it with the fire commissioner's office, as I said, in St. Gregor they wanted this here cement wall, which, talking to any farmer, would think you're crazy, having to do that to add on a bowling alley. But nevertheless, what occurs is the fact is that the grants were being denied, but if they didn't request the grants, then they were allowed to proceed. The one at St. Gregor . . . I know the member from Humboldt, they had a discussion with him also, so I'm fairly up on looking after my constituents, thank you.

All I'm wanting to know is: do you have a general policy, or do you just come to the minister or to some cabinet minister, and get a waiver of the provision? This is the particular problem that is developing, and my colleague will raise another one with you. So, do you have a general policy that if it's an existing complex, and if they're going to improve the general safety, why not let it go without putting in a sprinkler system that costs \$120,000? I can't see it.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Well, Mr. Chairman, quite simply, once again, merely in our cultural and recreational facility grant program that two of the conditions are that they meet health standards and fire regulations. I think it's a very healthy thing to have in there. The member raises questions that if indeed they didn't get our grant that they could have gone ahead on their own. I find that a little bit hard to believe, given that it would still be in our province, and once again would invite him to come and discuss that with me.

But I believe it's a valuable thing to have in our program, that indeed the people that use the facilities and everything else, that come in there, are protected and have the assurance that indeed it meets fire requirements.

Mr. Lusney: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, as my colleague was saying, there appears to be some problems in getting grants in the smaller areas, especially when you're

dealing with small renovations to halls in the rural areas of this province, minor renovations really, just to improve it modestly. What some of the organizations are finding is that they've got to get approval from the health department, approval from the fire department, they've got to get all this through for a very minor renovation before they can possibly get that grant. Is there no way that for renovations or any kind of improvement within there, it's really not going to change that building much at all, could get through without having to go through the whole process of all these authorized forms from every department that you can think of before they can get a small grant for their little hall out in the country?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I guess to repeat once again, indeed when they're applying under the culture and recreational facility grant program, which is moneys that come and are available to each community throughout out province, that right on the application it does say that it has to meet fire and health regulations as set out by any inspector. And I would suggest that communities which are maybe having a little bit of a problem here, or are not clear on what is happening, that contact our regional consultant in the area who would be glad to sit down with the people making application, and go through it, and explain it, exactly what it means. But when you do use provincial moneys into these community projects, then indeed they have to follow regulations as set out.

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Minister, are the regulations set by your department for this grant that you're providing, or is it set by the federal government? Who sets these regulations that you're operating under? And we understand that if there's going to be an addition on, or a kitchen added on, but what if it's just some little clothes closet they want to put in the corner, and it's only going to cost them a couple of hundred dollars or so, and they wanted to get a grant for it. Why do they have to go through this long process of trying to get a couple of hundred dollars, where they have to get approval from every department you can think of before they can get a few hundred dollars from this government? Why is it so difficult for these communities to get so little money from you?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, they would be provincial regulations. And indeed, if the example, as the member sets out there . . . If it was just a couple of hundred dollars, then I would highly expect that the fire inspector or the health inspector would be overly concerned because it would not be a major change to the facility. But in most cases they are rather major changes that change the structure of the facility, and therefore should conform to provincial regulations to do with health and fire safety.

Mr. Lusney: — Well, Mr. Minister, it's true enough that I could see a health inspector or the fire inspector would have very little concern about a minor regulation or change in any facility. However, the fact is that the application states they have to get approval from all these departments before they can get that grant. And this is the process they have to go through if it's in the least bit complicated at all. Some of them have to wait a whole year before they can get this grant.

There is a community in my area, a curling rink, which they wanted to finish off, and it took them a whole year before they could finally get this grant. Why is it taking so long before they can get through the process and get the grant for the renovations that they want to do?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, perhaps the hon. member would like to share some of that information with me. I have no idea what community he is talking about. My indication is that on the facility grant program, all the regulations and information needed is right on a brochure that any group could have a look at and go through; or if they were in a but of a hurry, they could consult the regional rep in the area, who would be more than happy to sit down with them and go through. I am not aware of any situation where any application has taken one year. Perhaps it took a year for the application to come in, but I am not aware of any time lapse like that.

Mr. Lusney: — It didn't take a year for the application to come in, Mr. Minister, but it did take a

whole year before the community finally got their grant for the work that they did. Now it seems to take a long time before you can get the application processed and the grant money back into the community.

I don't know if this situation occurs in many other communities, but I am saying somewhere along the way it has become more complicated for the communities to get funding from this government for any kind of work that they want to do in recreational facilities.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Well, Mr. Chairman, unless I missed it, I still have not heard the name of that community that the member is alluding to, and furthermore, in consultation with numerous communities all across the province, they are extremely happy with this program; that it is straightforward; the formula is set out; the application process is there; it's approved by the municipal authority; and then recommended to our provincial government; and it has been a very smooth process so far. And once again, I invite the minister to share the name of that community with me, and any details he may have.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the minister could provide a list of all the communities which have, indeed, to date — since embarking on this program — a list of all the communities which have received the recreational and cultural grants, and the amounts of those grants to the particular communities. Could you provide that information?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, the information I have with me states that there have been 382 applications; 246 have been approved during 1983-84; and the total expenditure of \$3,101,506.96, I believe. And if the member wishes it broken down further, we can certainly provide that later.

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, well what I would really like to do is to get a general picture of the application of it throughout the province, if you could provide us. I know there's 242 approvals, but could you provide a list and the amount of money to each community and just a brief description of the nature of the use for the grant?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, with me right now I have a list of all the towns and R.M.s, etc., which have received moneys from the department, but we don't have any detail that goes with them — exactly what it was used for — but we do have the name of the town or the R.M. and the total amount that was approved, and I'd be glad to send that over to the member if he wishes it right now.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Looking back in *Hansard*, Mr. Minister, I don't know whether this question has been asked — or answered — but if it has, let me know. It has to do with your personal staff in your office, whether or not you have given a list of your E.A.s and M.A.s and secretaries and that type of thing, and their salary.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, or the hon. member, indeed that has not been asked before, but I have that information here and I'll be glad to send it across to him.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Thank you. Mr. Minister, I wonder, as well, if you can tell me who all in your department has an automobile allocated to them. The minister would have; the deputy, I believe. Any other members of your staff or department people who would have automobiles? And, as well, do you have an automobile pool within the department that you have access to?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, a little clarification. Are you asking just for people within my office or all throughout the province, including our regional reps?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — What I would like to know is personal automobiles assigned to anyone in your department, including your staff or members of the civil service. These would not mean cars that are used in a pool in Swift Current with other departments or just your department, but

any members of your staff or department people who would have a car assigned to them personally.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'm informed that the only ones that assigned for personal use are that of myself and that of my deputy minister.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Minister, although you were not here during the term in opposition from '78 to '82, there was, I believe, only one thing that I agreed with the opposition at that time on, and that was that many facilities in rural Saskatchewan — rinks and swimming pools, cultural organizations and recreational organizations — were having a very difficult time paying their utility bills. And the promise was made during the election campaign that if a Conservative government was elected, that your government would do something about the high power bills.

Now, Mr. Minister, you will know that not only did you do something about the power bills, you went in the wrong direction. Rather than reduce them and have a separate rate, which was promised by the Conservative Party while they were in opposition and during the campaign, you will know that power bills have gone up significantly, in fact, to the point where my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg raised the issue where in Gravelbourg they're having a very difficult time keeping the rink complex open.

I would like to know, Mr. Minister, whether you have had discussions in the department and whether you have taken to cabinet a proposal that would lower the utility bills for recreational organizations.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'm very delighted to hear from the member that he was very concerned when he was in government about the high costs and everything else for our rinks all across the province. Perhaps I should just suggest maybe he should have been a little bit more vociferous when he was with government.

Indeed, since we have taken over, I'm sure he's aware of . . . in the last budget it was announced the E&H tax will be off of all facilities and their power bills, which I . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I am sure you will. The member from Shaunavon says he'll vote for PC next time, and I'm sure he will, as will many others.

But I would suggest that that is one move and that is one move more than was ever made by the opposition or the . . . when they were in government. We do have programs through our department for the retrofit of recreational facilities. We have a pamphlet here on reducing energy costs for municipal recreation facilities and indeed, a lot of the information should be coming from Sask Power.

And when he mentions rate increases, I would ask the members to perhaps look back to about 1975 to 1982 and compare the rate increases through Sask Power under their government in those seven years with ours for three years, and I'm sure he would see a remarkable difference in the rate increases then, as opposed they are now, and therefore the costs of operating that are being applied to the many communities throughout our province.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Minister, you might take a look at what happens when power rates go up by 15 and 16, and gas rates go up by as much, to these recreational boards who are indeed having a very difficult time, especially now that the recession is on in Saskatchewan. If you're talking to rink boards, curling rink boards, throughout Saskatchewan, you'll know that because of the recession (and some people talk about depression) the rinks are not even being utilized to the same extent that they were two years ago. So they have a double problem — they're not renting the ice out 100 per cent of the time, and the power bills are going up 15, 16, 17 per cent.

And what I'm telling you is that promising things at the time of an election, a promise made to

reduce the power bills or to have another structure for recreational facilities, will not go unnoticed at the time of the next election. And it's obvious that the promise made was not to take the E&H tax off of recreational power bills. You'll know the promise that was made was to take E&H tax off everything in Saskatchewan, so if you're saying that you're fulfilling your promise to the recreational communities by taking the E&H tax off the power bills, you'll know that neither of your promises have been fulfilled, and you will have to deal with that, Mr. Minister.

What I asked you is whether you had taken a proposal to cabinet that would fulfil your promise made at the time of the last election, to lower the power rates for recreational facilities. And I want to know whether or not you have developed a proposal, and whether you have had it voted on in cabinet, or where you're at on that issue.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has made numerous allegations here. And certainly our removal of the E&H tax on their power bills has resulted in considerable savings for recreation complexes all across our province — savings, I might add, that would not be here if the previous administration was in.

And I do have a couple of example here, one in Yorkton, the agriplex there. Perhaps the member would like to listen to this. In Yorkton, the agriplex, the annual savings projected from this are \$6,463, which is 5.5 per cent saving for Yorkton agriplex; in Regina, the skating hockey rink, saving of \$1,423, once again, a saving of 5.5 per cent. And, Mr. Chairman, I'll submit to you that that is indeed action by our government, an action that is helping communities in their recreational facilities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Minister, all you're pointing out, when you talk about the saving of 5 per cent being \$6,000 for some communities, the magnitude of the problem, because in order for a 5 per cent cut when you're raising power rates 18 per cent, that doesn't add up. Because what you're doing on one hand is raising them 18 per cent, and then say, we're going to cut them 5. It's very obvious that you're still raising the power rates 13 per cent for those rink boards. And the jiggery-pokery that you're playing of taking 18 per cent on one hand, and giving them 5 per cent back — the smoked mirrors that the Tories are attempting to use on the electorate simply isn't working. And I suppose the last poll that was done would indicate that if you continue on in that manner, people very quickly find out that the issue of power rates, whether it's for rink boards or whether it's for individuals, will be a big issue at the time of the next election.

But you still haven't answered me, whether or not cabinet has dealt with this matter, and whether or not you can inform us how you made out in cabinet with a proposal that would have a two-tier structure for power rates when dealing with rec boards. I'd very much like you to answer that.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I know it's not my place to ask questions here but I would ask that perhaps the other gentleman from across there, in the opposition, would have a solution, that obviously evaded him for 11 years while they were in government. And, to my knowledge, they never came up with a proposal to help out any recreational facility in our province. And, Mr. Chairman, I once again reiterate that through that E&H tax removal that all the facilities throughout the province are getting a very big break in their power bills.

And I am informed also that in our three years — two years so far and projected for next year — our gas rate increase is going to average out to approximately 4 point something per cent in electricity to 7 point something per cent, and that's a big change from some of the gas and electricity rate increases that I noticed under the NDP administration.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Minister, you again talk about the great job you're doing of raising the rates only 13 per cent even excluding the 5 per cent that you give back. And if you're saying

now you can afford to not increase the rates going into the next election, well, I suppose the public will judge whether that's the best planning where you have huge rate increases the two years after an election, and then for political reason have lower rate increases as you get closer to the election. That's an interesting proposal for you to put forward at this time. But I think the public is not to be tricked as you have attempted to do in the past, and are attempting to do now, that when you raise the rates 18 per cent in the first two years after the election and then you stand here today and say we're going to . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order!

An Hon. Member: — Yes, what do you want?

An Hon. Member: — What do you mean: yes, what do you want?

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order. The member for Shaunavon, who has been here longer than I have, should know what I want when I stand and call for order. And if the member from Shaunavon doesn't know, then I suppose I can go into a lengthy explanation.

The point of order here is: that the debate is on Culture and Recreation. I have allowed some latitude with respect to power rates. But I think we've allowed enough latitude on the topic of general rates. If you wish to deal with rates with respect to rinks, I'll allow you to proceed. But we will not continue on the general rate increases unless they pertain to Culture and Recreation.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, I appreciate that interpretation and I will attempt to stay closer, if I wasn't, to the issue of rates in rinks. I was . . . I thought I was staying very close when I was asking the minister whether he had taken the proposal to cabinet, and how cabinet had dealt with it. And instead, he chooses to talk about politics and what we did. And I never noticed him being ruled out of order. But I suppose if those are the rules of the Assembly where one member can talk about elections and what we did and have that kind of latitude, then I guess that means we have to put up with it.

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Do you have any debate on this topic, or should I go on to another member?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — That's what I was doing. Very clearly, Mr. Chairman, I was asking the minister whether or not he had taken a proposal to cabinet, and he continues to avoid the issue of whether or not he has a proposal dealing with the crises that many curling and skating rinks have at the present time, in paying their power bills. And I would ask you again: have you taken a proposal to cabinet?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the member opposite knows that I'm not entitled to mention what I have taken to cabinet or what goes on in cabinet. But I will mention, Mr. Speaker, that as far as it comes, and since our administration has come in, that there were no rate increases in 1982, as promised by our government, and this past year we have removed the 5 per cent E&H tax on it. I think that amounts to considerable savings, and quite different from the past.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, I think it becomes obvious that the minister has not brought forward one of the main election promises for rural Saskatchewan, that being there there would be much lower power rates for rinks, and swimming pools, and the curling facilities, because that promise was made that there would be a two-tier structure for power and gas for the recreational facilities.

And here again, as we have pointed out with the Minister of Small Business, where the small-business people have had their promises gone back on, that here again in the area of recreation, we see another minister standing here saying that not only has he not taken a proposal to cabinet which will fulfil that promise, but he has no intention of doing it. That's the

point I want to make, Mr. Minister, and I want to point out to the public and have on record, so that we can send out — when the rink boards write to us what the government is doing — your position that you have no intention of putting forward that promise and bringing it into place before the next election.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, indeed, the member opposite seems to not be listening to what is happening. I said I will not divulge what has gone on in cabinet, and I don't believe that is my job to do so in this forum right now.

And furthermore, I pointed out what our government has done in that area, and indeed, one of his opening statements is that he believed that their government should have done something and didn't do anything. He admitted that, and I would suggest that our government is acting on it, and that theirs never did, and probably never would.

So, Mr. Chairman, I believe that as long as the people out there in all the recreational facilities . . . They know what is happening under our government. They know what their power bills look like; they know how we have acted — the E&H tax removal, the frozen rates in 1982 — those amount to savings for them. And indeed, we've been in for two years, and indeed, if we come up with another proposal, then I'm sure the member opposite will know about it.

Mr. Koskie: — Just in respect to the regional services, a problem that was presented to me also was in respect to the Humboldt region, and that was getting a full-time recreation consultant. And the minister has indicated to me that that position would, in fact, be filled — after much persistence, again.

I want to ask the minister: how many recreation consultants do you have throughout the province, and can you indicate whether any of these have been cut from any of the regions throughout the province?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, I'm informed that all across the province we have a total of 20 regional consultants, and none of the positions have been cut, that there are at present one opening that we are endeavouring to fulfill at this time.

Mr. Koskie: — Would you indicate, Mr. Minister, where that opening is?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, that opening at this present time is in the Rosetown area.

Mr. Koskie: — And just coming back to the regional offices, is your policy then — just to be perfectly clear on it — that none of the regional offices throughout the province will, indeed, be closed during the fiscal year? Is that your position?

Hon. Mr. Folk: — That's very correct, Mr. Chairman.

Item 1 agreed to.

Item 2

Mr. Koskie: — I wonder if the minister could advise. You have executive administration and then you have general administration. Could you give me an explanation of what the general administration applies to? And I note that there has been a very substantial increase from 723,000 to 1.194 or 1.195 million, roughly. Can you outline . . .

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, when we started out our estimates I explained that, indeed, there was a re-organization went on in our department in May of 1983, and numerous items have been shifted in. Under this subvote, for example, the cultural and recreational facility grant program, there's personnel for that have gone into there, so there's been just a shifting of

personnel from one division to another. And I could go into it in detail if the member so desires.

Mr. Koskie: — I would want it a little fuller than that because the total number of personnel has only increased from 20.2 to 23.7, and there has been a very substantial increase in other expenses, and I would appreciate if you could give me a breakdown of other expenses in that subvote.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, what would account for that would be such items as the centralization of the training and reference material budgets; the facility grant administration which I alluded to earlier; that printing and resource development expenditures; and the public awareness campaign which we'll be taking in part this year.

Item 2 agreed to.

Items 3 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Item 6

Mr. Koskie: — I wonder if the minister could outline, or give a list, of any of the heritage sites that have been preserved throughout the province. I take it it's under this here subvote.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Mr. Chairman, when we were in the estimates last year, that was asked by the member from Regina Centre, and it's quite an extensive list, and we promised we'd send that over at a later date.

Item 6 agreed to.

Items 7 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 7 agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Folk: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I could, at this time I'd like to thank my officials for the information they have provided, and also like to thank the opposition for the questions that they have asked in the last few days. Thank you.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to join the minister to thank his staff for providing the information, and I also join with other members from this side to thank the minister for the answers which he provided.

The committee reported progress.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ask for leave to deal with Bills No. 35, No. 33, and Bill No. 34, in committee of the whole by leave of the Assembly.

Leave granted.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 35 — An Act Respecting Noxious Weeds

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, and I would at this time introduce my officials: to my immediate right, Mr. Stu Kramer, assistant deputy minister; and to his right, Mr. Doug Billett, provincial weed specialist.

Clause 1

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Minister, in my comments on second reading, did you check this out with your officials or decide whether we could make the bill more binding for the railway companies? Have you discussed that aspect of the bill?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, yes, I've advised my officials of that point that you did raise, and they advise me that the railways would be expected to abide by the clauses and the regulations forthcoming under this act, as would any other citizen. They would be expected to follow the rule of the law, if you like, just as any other person would be expected to. In fact, the R.M.s would have the same authority to deal with them as they would any other citizen.

Mr. Engel: — The question, Mr. Minister, isn't whether they would get an exemption or not. My questions wasn't whether you'd exempt the CPR from having to abide by the laws that are enforced by this bill, which I think are good. My question was: are the penalties stiff enough so that the railways would have to abide by them?

The point I wanted to make is that, particularly in the lines that have been upgraded and where they were doing some work on, they've hauled in fill, they've hauled in additional gravel. And when farmers in my area that have drawn it to the attention of your department — they've gone through all the hoops that were in the old bill — even with the provisions of the new act, are telling me that it's not sufficiently tough enough to have the railways deal with it, because what's a small fine? You know, to them, it's a bigger nuisance to control the weeds along the side.

They were involved, and I'm not a agricultural technician, so I'm not going to get into defining what kinds of weed were brought into the area, but . . . In an area that floods, and with the drainage spread, there was a serious problem that caused way more than \$500 damage. My concern is that we'd suggest that that would be 10 times as great for the railways, because of the amount of money they have to play with now that the Crow rate's been gone — thanks to your gallant effort. And they have now sufficient money to pay a fine.

And I think the farmers, and particularly one I talked to that was aggrieved last year, and spent more than \$500 of his own money trying to bring the railway to heel to control the weeds along his flat land that floods, and where the water spreads the weeds over a large area . . . I think the offence here is enough that he felt very strong.

And if you want to talk about the situation later, I'll raise that with you. But I think you should seriously consider making that change, either as a House amendment from your side — if not, I'm prepared to move it.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, I think your desire and mine are the same in that we want to see these noxious weeds, if you like, controlled, and controlled properly. And I think the fact that in some instances it may not have happened in the past was, in fact, due to the fact that the penalty wasn't severe enough. It wasn't enough of an incentive, if you like, and this is the point that the rural municipalities have raised with us, and we had some lengthy consultation with them on putting this bill together.

As it relates specifically to your concerns about the size of the fine . . . In fact, if there were instances where clean-up was not proceeding, if you like, the rural municipality could order it to be done. If there was a refusal, then the R.M. could do it, and bill the railways for the costs, if it was, in fact, the railway that was the guilty party. And they could bill them up to \$4,000 per quarter — not just the \$500 fine. So they could bill them up to \$4,000 per quarter, and over and above that, they would also be penalized the maximum, at least possibly the maximum of \$500, as well.

So I think your concerns and my concerns are the same, in so far as making sure things are

cleaned up, and I think of course, that was part and parcel the whole reason for bringing in, if you like, a new act — to put some teeth into it. And I think those teeth are there. If, in fact, of course we find that a year or two or five down the road, the teeth aren't there or it needs additional teeth, then I think we would be prepared to look at it at that point in time, but right now I would suggest let's see how this works.

Mr. Engel: — My colleague, the member for Quill Lakes says, “As adequately design the kind of teeth you're putting into as far as the railways are concerned.” And he suggests that the teeth you've got in this act for the railways are like false teeth; you know, that doesn't really indicate that you have in mind making sure that they'll make this thing stick.

I think with controlling weeds in the critical time that's involved and the time it takes to deal with the railway companies and the large bureaucracy they have in place, I think it's time that we take them on and indicate where we stand on this issue. As you note, I sent you a copy of what the amendment should suggest. And I suggest that in subsection (4) we remove . . . And, Mr. Chairman, maybe you could advise me on this. Should I wait till we get to that subsection to move that amendment or can we do that during the general debate? I'll wait for a ruling on that; I'm not sure.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, it was okay with me, but I'm told the rules provide that you do it when we get to that particular section.

Mr. Engel: — Okay. I think . . . (inaudible) . . . that section at that time then because to . . . (inaudible) . . . The rest of the bill — I think your department officials have done most of their homework and it takes care of the majority of concerns that the farmers that are conscientious and anxious to control weed. Now, there are some noxious weeds that are easier to spread than others, and I think the only section that we had some concern with — in case my colleagues what to raise any further issue — but that's the only section that I had some problems with, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Hon. member, I can only reiterate what I just said a moment ago: that we've put some teeth in it. You think they're false teeth; I think they're for real, and I'm prepared to run with them. Granted, it's new, but let's see how it works.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

Clause 4

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Minister, this is where I think it is going to determine whether the opposition — they'll be opposition in a couple of years time — but whether the government puts their actions where their feelings are.

Do you believe that a \$500 fine is sufficient to shake up the railway companies that gets more than that much money from me on every quota on the additional freight rates I'm paying? I think the railways should be forced to pay their own way. And so, therefore, I would move an amendment, seconded by my colleague, the member for Pelly, that we would amend subsection (4) by removing the period and adding the following:

but in the case of a railway company the by-law may provide for a fine of not more than \$5,000 (instead of \$500).

I so move.

Mr. Chairman: — A point of clarification from the chairman to the member submitting the

amendment.

If the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg will take note of the difficulty here — we are on section 4 of the bill and section 4 does not seem to deal with any provisions for fines, and I think maybe the member wishes to make this amendment on section 25 or section 34.

Mr. Engel: — If I could ask the Minister of Agriculture: on the paper I sent over, what does the section say on that one?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, I am confused on what the hon. member has got in mind here, because the copy that I have, which I assume is a copy of his amendment, amendment Bill 35 deals with clause 25, and asks that we amend the subsection (4). And my understanding of subsection (4) and, in fact, clause 25 is, it has to do with the tarping bylaws, so I'm not certain I understand where you're coming from.

Mr. Chairman: — I'm going to send this amendment back to the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. The amendment states subsection (4), but if he could please add the section, then we could proceed.

Mr. Engel: — Yes, if I could just explain that. It should have read 34 instead of section 4. Sorry about that, Mr. Minister.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5 to 33 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 34

Mr. Engel: — This is the section that deals with any person who:

(a) contravenes any provision of this act or regulation for which no other penalty is specifically provided; or

(b) fails to carry out the terms of an agreement made pursuant to section 17 to which he is party and for which he is responsible; and

(c) fails to comply with an order of a weed inspector; or

(d) fails to comply with the conditions attached to a permit issued to him by a weed inspector or clerk or secretary treasurer pursuant to section 21;

is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not more than \$500.

And then I suggest that we remove the period and add the clause:

except in the case of a railway company where the fine shall be not more than \$5,000.

And I think you'll find that that is the place where the amendment would be in order, and so I've changed this to read clause 34.

Mr. Chairman: — It's been moved by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that clause 34 be amended by removing period and adding the following:

but in the case of a railway company the by-law may provide for a fine of not more than \$5,000.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg advises that he wishes to have a slight changing of wording in his amendment to read:

except in the case of a railway company where the fine shall be not more than \$5,000.

with no reference to a by-law.

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt that motion?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — I'd just like to make a couple of comments on the amendment which I would not be supporting.

First of all, I'm not so sure that the hon. member really understands what the penalties and the fines are in this act. I think there's been some confusion around this matter. Are you aware of the fact that the provisions under section 28 of the act, of section, part number (2), subclause (2), under clause 28 that, in fact, the railways like anybody else could incur expenses levied against them of to \$100 an acre or \$4,000 a quarter, if, in fact, they refuse to clean up their act and the R.M. went in and did it for them?

So, in fact, on a single quarter we could see fines and penalties, or costs at least, levied against them of as high as \$4,500, or it could be \$40,000 if it was 10 quarters. I think the intent here clearly is, at least with this act, to put some teeth in it. You're suggesting that, for example, on a quarter section \$4,500 would do something less than what a \$5,000 fine would do. I'm not so sure that that's a valid argument. I'm presuming that the hon. member didn't understand the intent of the act, especially as it's spelled out in clause 28.

As I said before, I think your goals and mine are the same and that we want to give the rural municipalities some teeth, if you like, to clean up noxious weeds that wasn't there before. I think the provisions that we've laid out with the act will do that. Certainly, I think it deserves a try. And secondly, I think it's important to treat everyone fairly and equally. I suppose if the rural municipalities thought they needed additional teeth in dealing with the railways, they probably would have raised that with us, but they did not.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Minister, I've had farmers raise this with me, that have looked at this act, and have gone through it. They tell me that in spite of . . . And that's why I read this into it. I understand what this act is trying to do. I understand that the \$4,000 ceiling per quarter limit, under section 28 is the costs of clean-up, not a fine. I'm talking about having some teeth in an act that will say to a company with their offices in Montreal, if you're hauling in some dirt that contain leafy spurge along the tracks, along a flat land, and the damage that that can do, all you can charge them is the clean-up of that, and try and get some money out of the railways — try and get some money out of them.

I know what this is all about. I know the kinds of hoops that some of my neighbours have gone through trying to control an outfit like that, and I know how easy it is for the railways to get money out of the farmers. You've got it all going on a one-way street. It's easy to tell the farmers: pay your 35 per cent increase in freight rates.

But when you talk to the railways whose office isn't in Saskatchewan, who you can't get hold of, they're dumping dirt along the edge of their lands that floods, that spreads weeds, and you are saying . . . And the amendment says, "up to \$5,000" — up to \$5,000. If you can get action from them now when the seed is in bloom, and before the seed is in bloom, to control it, you don't need to go the limit. You don't have to go the limit.

But in a case where the railway is thumbing their noses at the municipalities, is thumbing their

noses at the farmers, and they try every avenue to get to them, you want to say that they should stick with a little \$500 fine. You stand up in this House and say that. But we're prepared to say that they should put some teeth in the act, make it so that it'll stick and that they will act. With a \$5,000 fine they will move, but with a \$500 fine they'll just laugh at it.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, I think your arguments are somewhat moot. I've used the example already. It was a quarter section and, in fact, they did not clean it up. The R.M.s moved in and cleaned it up and it was, in fact, the maximum assessment, the bill would be . . . If there was a levy, the fine, and the total for the clean-up cost, the bill would be \$4,500. And I'm suggesting to you that that's a sizeable sum, certainly more than . . . more tools (if you like) at their disposal than they had previously.

And your logic never fails to amaze me. It's only two or three weeks ago in this same House that you were standing up defending the railways, worried about the additional tax that was going to be charged against the railways for their fuel bills and how this would increase farmers' costs. And today you've done a famous flip-flop. One day you're supporting the railways; the next day you're on a vendetta against them. I think that's a lack of consistency and understanding in your arguments, quite frankly.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Chairman, I expect you to rule me out of order if I talk about something that doesn't deal with this act. The minister said that I stood up in this House and defended the railways for him levying a tax. I didn't defend the railways. I said that he was levying that tax directly to the farmers. He is again doing the same thing in this case. He is again saying to the farmer, "You go in and you go after them, and you use this act." And you're afraid to put teeth in it.

Sure, if the R.M. spends \$4,000 cleaning up the weeds, we aren't going to get 4,500 bucks. They're going to get the \$4,000 they spent, and there'll be a \$500 fine involved. I'm saying that in that case, if their seeds are that serious, they should be able to get \$9,000 from the railways, and that'd make the difference whether they're going to pay their fine or not. And I think if it's worth dragging it into the courts and worth a summary conviction act, that \$500 isn't worth the effort. And the farmer . . . it's just put a number in here so he doesn't bother going after it, and I think you're showing who your friends really are.

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Minister, you are saying to us, and you have been saying, that if the R.M. has to clean up some weeds, that the railways could wind up paying more than \$4,000 on it, because they can be charged \$200 per acre. Well, Mr. Minister, it's not likely that the R.M. is going to take any responsibility to clean up a quarter of land, maybe one or two miles down the road within the R.M., that may have been contaminated with weeds from along the tracks, that water may have carried some of these weeds into the R.M.s. You are not going to be able to pin that on the railways.

What my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg was saying is that we are talking about offences and penalties, not about cleaning up weeds, which the R.M. is responsible for. We are talking about a penalty, if the railways don't clean up their right of way along the tracks, that they should be fined before it gets to the point where the R.M.s have to assume a lot of this cost.

And what we're saying to you is that you should get some teeth into this clause, as you call it — not false teeth, but some good strong teeth — that are going to say to the railways, "If you don't clear up your right of way along them tracks, and if you're going to allow it to stay for any length of time after you're told to clean it up, then you are going to have to pay the fine, and the penalty could be up to \$5,000."

That's what my colleague is saying, Mr. Minister. And we are saying that if you don't do that, you are letting the railways get away with a pittance — a real pittance — because they are not going to be concerned about \$500. They will leave that right of way sit there for years before they are

too concerned about cleaning it up, when all it's going to cost them is \$500.

Put some teeth into this act and make sure that the railways live up to their share of the responsibility along the right of way.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. members, the issue here is quite simply what the farmers and the rural municipalities are interested in. They're interested in seeing those weeds eliminated.

You're suggesting that 5,000 should be the size of the fine, rather than 500. I suppose if the rural municipalities had thought that way, they likely would have advanced that suggestion to us. They did not. They must have therefore felt that, in fact, \$500 would do it, along with the fact that they can recover the costs of clean-up.

Now if you're suggesting that, in fact, the railways wouldn't pay their bill, then I would suggest that there are methods and ways to resolve that. As I said before, it intrigues me that one day you're trumpeting the cause of the railways; the next day you're trying to pretend to be in a vendetta against them on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers.

Quite simply, the intent of this bill is to control noxious weeds and give the rural municipalities some teeth to do that.

Mr. Lusney: — Well, Mr. Minister, the intent of the bill definitely is to control noxious weeds, but where does it say in this bill that the R.M. has the right to go on CN or CP right of way and clean up the weeds before they become a problem within the R.M. The problem will start along them tracks if they are not controlled.

Now, who has the right to control those weeds, along those tracks? If the R.M.s have the right to do that, and they can charge the railways whatever they think it's worth to clean up those weeds, and to control them. then I'd like to see it in this bill, where it would say that the R.M.s can go on CN or CP right of way, and clean up those weeds, not what you have in the cost of destroying weeds, because that does not give them an authority to go on CN right of way.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, that's a good question and, as well, I would suggest that probably you, along with your colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, have not thoroughly done your homework in looking at this bill. You asked the question: where does it say in this bill that municipalities have the right to inspect this land, and go on it? Well, it's in clause 16, which we've already approved. That's the short answer: clause 16, entry on land. "A weed inspector may enter land and premises," etc., etc., etc. That's the answer.

Mr. Lusney: — Again, Mr. Minister, although it is a vague interpretation of this act of what the R.M.s may be able to do, or the weed inspectors, and may enter on land . . . is the weed inspector then a member of the department that's going to go out there and check them tracks, or the right of way along them railway tracks? And if he sees a problem with weeds there, that then your department is going to contact the railways, and make sure that that's cleaned up. And what happens if it's not cleaned up? That is the point we get to after, Mr. Minister.

A weed inspector can go on there and say there is a problem along this right of way. But then we get to the penalty clause. If that problem is not looked after and the railway don't clean it up, then we get to where the penalty comes in. If someone doesn't do what they are told by that weed inspector and the problem is left there, are they going to be fined just the \$500 for ignoring what the weed inspector tells them? This is where we get to the penalty. If they ignore the weed inspector and don't clean up their right of way, are you going to fine them \$500 and say that's fine?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, to answer your questions on who

employs the weed inspectors — they are, in fact, appointed by the R.M. council.

Mr. Lusney: — Okay, Mr. Minister. We've got a weed inspector for the R.M. council. He goes along the track and he sees a problem. Is it then the responsibility of the R.M.s to get hold of CPR and instruct them to clean up that railway track? And if the CPR ignores their request and those weeds are allowed to stay there throughout the summer, who then is responsible for applying that fine to the railways? Or can the railways just ignore it and say, we've got not time for that right of way and the R.M.? If you want it, you can spend your money on it.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, well my answer to you is the same one I gave to your colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. The weed inspector would, after his inspection, if it was apparent that there was some acts listed in the schedules here, found something contrary to the act, would order the property owner, whether it be CN, CP, or the local farmer, to resolve the problem. If he refused, then the R.M. could move in and clean up and bill them for costs up to the maximum of \$100 an acre of \$4,000 a quarter, as I stated earlier. I would think that you would agree — a fairly straightforward, sequential systematic approach to the problem. I would see no reason why it would go on for months and months and months, as you suggested.

I suppose that's what's been happening in the past perhaps, because there were no teeth. That's why we brought the bill before the House. And I would urge you to support it, because I think you, along with a lot of other farmers out there, realize and recognize the need for this kind of legislation. And I don't see any reason to hold this up and carry the debate any further on this particular point.

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Minister, I have no intentions of holding anything up. And I have to say that I'm concerned about the problem that's out there regarding weeds. Now, if you're saying that the R.M. can go there and apply whatever means may be necessary to control the weeds along the right of way from the railways, why not then, along with that, since they . . . If the R.M.s have to go on to their property to clean up the problem, they are basically then ignoring the weed inspector and not doing the job themselves, because this is what the railways should be doing. The land owner should be the one to clean up the weed problem when he is told that there is a problem. It should not be the R.M.s to have to go along the right of ways and clean up the weed problem.

So, therefore, if the railways do not listen to the weed inspector and just ignore him and don't clean it up, and the R.M.s have to go there, clean it up, and then bill the CPR or the CNR, or whoever the land owner is — why not, at the same time, put into the offences and penalties a little greater fine for the railways that they will clean up their own right of way without the R.M.s having to go on that right of way and clean it up and bill them. This fine would encourage the railway companies to then make sure that their right of way is clean.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, we could, I suppose, debate at some great length the size of the fine. We picked the number \$500. That's been based on wide-spread consultations, I would suggest to you, with farmers, other rural municipalities.

I would wonder why you would pick 5,000 rather than 50,000 if you thought that isn't the right number. I would wonder why they wouldn't have picked that number if they thought that 500 wasn't high enough.

But I have a fair amount of judgement. And, in fact, I value the judgement of the rural municipalities and the farmers. And that's why we're using this number and why we're prepared — going to use that number.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.

CORRIGENDUM

In the *Hansard* of Friday, May 11, 1984, on page 2524 two lines were improperly printed due to typesetting malfunction. The third line of the second paragraph should read, in part, . . . “to the business community is less than what has been promised . . .”

The fourth line of the seventh complete paragraph should read, in part, . . . “And I don’t know why you would, in fact, put in . . .”

[Note: The online version of *Hansard* has been corrected.]