

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

May 30, 1985

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. MR. SWAN: — I would like to take this opportunity today to introduce to you His Excellency Stanislas Chigwedere, the High Commissioner of Zimbabwe. He's accompanied today by Mr. Francis Nhema, attaché to the High Commission of Zimbabwe in Ottawa.

I'd like to give you just a little bit of a background for the High Commissioner. He has been, first, in the secondary school teaching position from 1972-80. Then he moved to the Parliament of Zimbabwe, and acted as the deputy *Hansard* editor from '80-81. From '81 to 1983 he was principal private secretary to the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, and from 1983 to '84, deputy secretary to the cabinet. In 1984 in September he moved to deputy secretary for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and from there to the High Commissioner's post in Canada.

I'd like to welcome you with us today, and we hope that you will enjoy question period and the time in the House. Would you all welcome him.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HODGINS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague, the member for Kelvington-Wadena, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the legislature, a group of 43 grade 4 students that are visiting with us here from the Wadena Elementary School in Wadena. They are seated in the west gallery.

They are accompanied by their teachers, Reg Glennie, and Mair MacDonald; their chaperons, Barb Peace, and Mary-Kay Zaporosky. In addition, they have their very capable bus driver, Jim Haggerd, with them.

I'll be delighted to meet with them afterwards for pictures and drinks. And I would invite all members to join with me in welcoming this group to the legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, a group of 19 students from the Stenen Elementary School. They're seated in the east gallery.

I would just like to wish them a good visit to Regina, and hope that they find their visit to the legislature both interesting and informative. And I will be meeting with them at 2:30 for drinks and pictures, and I'd like all members of the legislature to join me in welcoming them here today.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of 29 grade 8 students from Turtleford School in the constituency of Turtleford. They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They're accompanied by Bill Kresowaty, Rick Webb, Lloyd Wiebe, Liz Bellanger and, I may say, Marilyn Stewart, who's seated on the floor of the House.

I'd like all members to join with me in wishing them a very warm welcome. It will be my pleasure to meet with you at 2:30 for pictures and refreshments.

Enjoy your stay. Have a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Saskatchewan Potash Corporation — Temporary Mine Closures

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. I was wondering whether the minister can confirm that all of the PCS potash mines will be closed down for a minimum of nine weeks this summer placing hundreds of people out of work, and specifically can you confirm that in addition to the four-week vacation shut-down you now plan an additional five-week lay-off before this fall?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, the information that the hon. member has indicated is basically true. Yesterday notices were sent to the unions involved, indicating that plans are in place for a five-week . . . or up to a five-week lay-off period. When combined with the normal holidays, that would amount, in fact, to nine weeks' lay-off this summer.

The reasons are relatively simple. They're based on an over-supply in the market, unfavourable market conditions. It's not the practice of the corporation to overflow the bins as was the case in 1982. Consequently this is necessary.

MR. KOSKIE: — Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister confirm that in addition to these nine weeks of lay-off for hundreds of PCS workers, that a total of 70 permanent employees at the PCS mine in Lanigan will be let go this summer — 70 people, permanently?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, at the end of the summer there will be something in the area of 60 employees at PCS, Lanigan, which will be subject to lay-off. These are people who were involved in the developmental crew, the construction process of the phase 2 expansion. Originally this had expected to take place . . . the termination of these jobs had been expected at the end of the year. However we're ahead of schedule, and since the job will have terminated, that will end.

MR. KOSKIE: — Further supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister give the Assembly the total figures with respect to the impact of these plans? Specifically I want to know how many people will be affected by the summer-long lay-offs, and how many people are going to lose their jobs throughout the corporation permanently?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, as was indicated, the total number of employees at the four divisions of PCS that will be laid off over the summer are 1,180. As I indicated, as well, the 60 permanent terminations are the result of the construction program ending. I think it's rather reasonable that once the job is done the employees are no longer needed. I don't think after you've built a house you maintain the carpenters. The same principle applies here, but those are the numbers.

MR. KOSKIE: — Further supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of a similar shut-down, or lay-off plans, at the private potash mines throughout Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. While I don't have the exact time periods, private-sector mining interests have been closing down for two- and four-day periods for the last number of months and will be continuing that practice on into the summer.

The potash corporation has chosen rather to go with the extended period and have one shut-down, rather than periodic short-term shut-downs, as has been the case in most of the private-sector mines.

Expansion of Lanigan Mine

MR. KOSKIE: — A question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister confirm that the phase 2 expansion at the PCS Lanigan potash mine has been postponed once again, and that the completion of this expansion is not now due until the summer of 1986? And if so, when is this expansion now due for completion?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — No, Mr. Speaker, I can't confirm that. It's my understanding that the expansion is ahead of schedule, that it will be completed later this year, and that the commissioning will take place at that time. As I indicated, the reason for the 60 permanent employees being laid off is because they job is basically completed.

Marketing of Potash

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, and I ask him: will he not agree that the facts he has given the House is just a late example of the potash corporation stepping aside to give away markets and sales to the private potash companies who support his party. Isn't it true that PCS is being forced to give up its market share to the private potash companies because they don't like competition, and isn't that what these lay-offs are all about?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — No, Mr. Speaker, that is patently untrue.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker — or a new question, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Mr. Minister, isn't it true that instead of selling potash aggressively overseas, you have forced PCS to give away its market advantage overseas, and that as a result Saskatchewan miners and Saskatchewan taxpayers are suffering substantial loss?

Will the minister not admit that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan's share of overseas markets has dropped from 63 per cent in 1981 to 43 per cent in 1984, and that's why so many jobs are being lost?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, as we went through in Crown corporations, that is not true. The share of available market that the potash corporation has is the same as it was previously.

The fact of the matter is that in the domestic market the price of potash in march fell to somewhere in the area of 52 or \$53. The price in the export market has held somewhere around 80. I believe it's obvious to anyone who thinks about it that an aggressive approach by one predatory marketer in that offshore market would certainly undercut that market, and the basic future of the industry in the province and of the benefits to the provincial economy would be greatly decreased if that activity took place.

We have made the decision to market the product as part of Canpotex. I believe it's a rational approach, and has been positive. The fact of the matter is that the reasons for these lay-offs are primarily because of weak sales and a low price in the domestic market, an oversupply situation and high inventories — and a correction has to be made.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Have you not just admitted, Mr. Minister, that you are holding y our potash off the market in order to keep up the overseas price, and do you not admit that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is operating at a far lower level of production, as a ratio of its total capacity, than are your private sector competitors. In

short, are you not holding off your product off the market, where the private companies are not, in order to sustain the price for both.

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the 42 per cent which was referred to is relative to our capacity. We are selling at capacity in the off-shore market. It's in the domestic market, where there is, in fact, competition, where low prices are the order of the day, that we have not maintained our share, if you will, of the market. Any further predatory pricing in the off-shore market would be detrimental to the industry as a whole —would be detrimental to the province; consequently, we're not interested in pursuing that.

Fresh Food Transportation Subsidy

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Finance, in the absence of the Premier. Yesterday your government announced that they had found \$321,000 to advertise and promote the April 10, the provincial budget, but just five months ago your government announced that it could not find \$250,000 a year to continue the fresh food transportation subsidy to northern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, by way of information I would just like to indicate to the minister just what this has meant, and when the subsidy was on, Mr. Minister, and I'll just give you four items, Mr. Speaker. When the transportation subsidy was on in Stony Rapids, — and these are prices today — a loaf of bread was \$1.25, and after the subsidy was taken off, it has now jumped to \$1.52. Milk is from \$1.41, today if \$1.94. Potatoes, Mr. Minister, were \$4.50 for 10 pounds; they have now jumped, since the subsidy has been taken off, to \$8.50 for 10 pounds of potatoes — almost 100 per cent. And pork chops, six for \$4, have now jumped to six for \$7.

Mr. Minister, if you can find money to advertise your budget to such an extent, why can't you find the money to help families in northern Saskatchewan put fresh food on their table?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I would direct that question to the minister responsible for northern affairs, and perhaps he can respond.

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — I am pleased to advise the member opposite that we have been working on the problem. I visited some of the northern communities and indicated that I wanted them to advise me as to a better way of assuring that there was no nutrition problems in the northern communities.

As the member is well aware of, this affects certain communities that don't have access by way of roads. And it is a problem; it's a long-standing problem. However, I must also indicate that the member must be aware that a good number of dollars have gone to the northern outfitters who were utilizing this program for their purposes and other purposes as well.

So we have indicated to northern people that we wanted to direct our concerns to the nutrition question. And I've invited input from people of northern Saskatchewan, and I invite the input from the member from Athabasca and the member from Cumberland if they have any ideas as to how we can correct the situation, if there is a problem.

MR. THOMPSON: — New question, Mr. Speaker, and I'll direct that to the minister in charge of northern affairs. You indicate that the reason for taking off the food subsidy was that the local people were not taking advantage of it, but rather that the tourist operators were part of the reason for reducing that. And I want to indicate by way, also, of information, Mr. Speaker, that the government has letters from the tourist association indicating that that is not true; that they were not taking advantage of that subsidy.

And I have another list here that I have just got from the community of Black Lake, and they are valid as of this hour, and I will just pass that over, or table that for your own information.

But my new question to you, Mr. Minister, is: the government has already announced a major reversal from your April 10th provincial budget by reinstating the senior citizens' property rebate. And we agree that was a good move because the budget had taken millions of dollars of benefits away from the seniors. But are you saying that the health of northern families is not as important as the advertising and promotion of your budget? And you can see just a drop in consumption that we have now had since that transportation subsidy has been removed, and the increase in prices.

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, there are a number of questions that were raised in the statement made by the member from Athabasca. First of all, I would like to receive a copy of the letter from the outfitters for my perusal. Secondly, it's coincidental that the member uses the example of Black Lake because not too very long ago, in fact within the last 30 days, one of the outfitters from Black Lake was on CBC radio, which is broadcast in Regina, indicating some criticism of the provincial government for cutting the food subsidy which he had been taking advantage of.

Clearly this is totally inconsistent with what the member has just advised this House. And I have indicated quite openly to northern Saskatchewan people that I am prepared to look at any deficiencies.

The Minister of Health has spoken to me on occasion, before this happened and afterwards, indicating that he is concerned about things that have to be done in northern Saskatchewan and overlooked for a number of years. So I want to invite the member that if he has any ideas as to what should be done in this area we want him to bring it to our attention and we'll gladly review it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: — A new question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister in charge of Northern Affairs.

It's quite interesting, Mr. Minister, that you just stand up in the House and say that I was using the example of Black Lake. I had just got through quoting Stony Rapids, and now I am also quoting . . . I am also quoting now from Black Lake, and for information, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that a dozen eggs in Black Lake, as of today, is \$2.34 a dozen. That's what they are paying today because the transportation subsidy has been taken off.

And as far as the letter is concerned, you know yourself that that letter is in the hands of your government and your Premier, and I believe the hon. member from Meadow Lake will have a copy, and he can supply you with that.

But, Mr. Minister, I have talked to a number of families in the North since you cut the fresh food subsidy, and they tell me that they just cannot afford to put as much fresh food on the table, and you can see that by the prices, how they have increased. More families are turning to less nutritional food. In the long run that will mean more health problems in the North, not fewer.

So how can you argue to this legislature that that represents a savings to the taxpayer?

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, our initial concern, and our paramount concern, is the welfare of the people in northern Saskatchewan, not the cost issue. And when we have outfitters that are complaining publicly about the fact that we cut the program, that indicates that there may be a problem there, and I'm sure the member would admit that.

Now I would invite the member to visit some of these communities, because I'm sure he hasn't been there recently if what he is saying is reflecting his understanding of the situation, because I have consulted with the people in northern Saskatchewan. I have invited them for input, and I'm

going up there in the near future, and I expect to get that input as I have before.

And the Minister of Health has expressed his full co-operation on this issue, and I'm just not sure what the member is getting at. If he has something more specific, I could provide it to him. However, he does not seem to be aware of the situation in the areas that he speaks of. And a matter of correction, Mr. Speaker, he distinctly mentioned Black Lake when I answered the question, and he must be confused on that issue as well.

MR. THOMPSON: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister in charge of northern affairs. And he tells me . . . he's got up in the House and indicates that the outfitters have been complaining to him because the food transportation subsidy has been taken off.

He also stands up in this House and makes an accusation that I have not been up in northern Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, he did. He said that I'm not aware of the situation because I have not been up there. I ask the minister to go and take a look at the records, and you'll find that I was up in Stony Rapids and Black Lake only two months ago. And I was in conversation with them same communities . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. This is becoming debate rather than question period. If you have a question, I'd like you to get directly to the question.

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask this question to you, Mr. Minister, and I would ask you to give me an answer without a bunch of preambles. You claim that the fresh fruit subsidy was eliminated so that money could be used to benefit Northerners in some other way. And I'm quoting from what the Minister of Health has said, but today you're answering on his behalf. Specifically what has that money been applied to? And would you stand up in this House today, Mr. Minister, and give your assurance that that food transportation subsidy will be reinstated?

HON. MR. DUTCHAK: — What I will do, Mr. Speaker, so my friend across understands it totally is, I will bring back a list of our objectives in northern Saskatchewan, and I will answer the question. It's clear, Mr. Speaker, that, like the member from Athabasca, like his numbers on the seniors' home repair program, his understanding of this issue is just as far out and inaccurate. And I will provide the information in writing to the member so he clearly understands what we're doing in northern Saskatchewan in relation to improvement in the health care system.

Highway Accident at Saskatchewan Landing Bridge

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Highways, and this has to do with Monday's tragic accident on Highway 4 north of Swift Current in which, Mr. Speaker, an RCMP officer was killed.

Well, Mr. Speaker, a Highways department crew was working on the bridge at the time of the mishap on the Saskatchewan Landing bridge. And can the minister explain why the flagmen working with the crew were situated at the bottom of the hill near the bridge rather than at the top where they could have warned the oncoming vehicles to test their brakes, and where they could have, if the vehicle did go through, warn the crew on the bridge by walkie-talkie that a vehicle had gone through the flag stop, and they could have got out of the way in time?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, yes, it was a very tragic accident that took place at the Saskatchewan Landing bridge on Monday, May 27th. We have a preliminary report here, and it is a tragedy that an individual lost their lives. There were a number of injuries as well to departmental staff. The RCMP Police are still investigating it and to our knowledge today there have been . . . no one else has lost their life because of this accident.

The flag persons — and I will report back to the member the exact location of where they were

at—but the information that we have here is that the flag person was well back of the bridge and the vehicle that was travelling towards the bridge passed the flag person travelling at approximately 100 kilometres an hour, and the individual did have the stop sign indicator up. It was a very tragic thing. But I will report back to the member the exact location of where the flag person was at.

MR. LUSNEY: — Question to the minister. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, it appears that the flagman, according to you, was well back of the bridge. Now that being a hill, Mr. Minister, would you not agree that the flagman should have been stationed, not just well back of the bridge, but at the top of the hill where he could have warned any vehicle, or warned the crew if a vehicle did go through?

I am told by some of the residents in the area that the work crews that were working on that bridge said that that was the third vehicle that went through the flag stop without stopping. And Mr. Minister, would you not agree that it was fortunate that no other accidents had happened at that time with the other vehicles that went through, because I suppose there were no oncoming vehicles?

In light of those instances, do you not think that someone would have thought at that time to have repositioned the flagmen and put them at the top of the hill where there would have been more safety for the crew down below and for anyone else that may have been using that bridge at the time?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we . . . I am not aware of any other vehicles that did proceed past the flag person on that specific day or any other day. I know there were vehicles that were already stopped. The information that I have received from the department is that there has not been a traffic problem there. The preliminary report indicates that the brakes did fail on the tractor and trailer unit. That is one of the reasons why the accident took place.

We are very prepared to investigate it further, and that, but the information that we have is that all safety precautions were in place. It's fortunate there weren't more people hurt, injured, and no more fatalities, but it is a very tragic accident. And I will get all of those specific details for the member opposite from all of the individuals and officials that are there and report back to him personally.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Supplement to the Minister of Highways. It has to do with flagmen in general on projects in the province of Saskatchewan. I would inform the minister, first of all, that last year on a project south of Gull Lake there were no flagmen at any time on that project, that a number of complaints from residents in the area were brought, I believe, to your department and in letter form.

I wonder whether or not the policy has been relaxed in the area of flagmen being placed in a position on general contractors and on projects in the province. Can you give the assurance to the Assembly that every project that will take place this summer will involve the hiring of flagmen, either students or regular highway employees, to make sure the safety of the motorist and the public at large is taken care of?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker, I'm very disturbed to hear that, because I believe that all of our department personnel do an excellent job in either co-ordinating all of the projects. Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a very serious incident here. I hope no members in the Assembly would make light of something like this, that we will check into what projects didn't have flag personnel on them.

I can also report, Mr. Speaker, that we did change the regulations regarding the speed limit of passing highway construction workers in the past year, or I believe it was two years, that it's 60 kilometres an hour. There are individuals out there, Mr. Speaker, that do not obey the laws all the

time. We can only make the laws and try to take all of the safety concerns to the people, and hopefully everyone will co-operate with us totally, Mr. Speaker.

Herbicide Spray Report

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources. My question to the Minister of Parks is this: last December the former minister appointed a provincial task force on the use of herbicide spray in Saskatchewan's forest management. I want to ask the minister: has that task force completed its report, and if not, when do you expect the report to be completed and made public?

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Well Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. member for raising the question. It is a timely issue. It is an issue I know is of great concern to both my hon. colleagues on the other side of the House, as indeed it is of grave concern to the members on this side of the House. And that is why, because it is such a grave concern, Mr. Speaker, that my predecessor did, in fact, institute this task force to investigate the whole area of herbicide spray use in forest management, not only in Saskatchewan, but what is happening across the country and what, indeed, has taken place in other countries.

The report is not yet in my hands, Mr. Speaker. I expect it some time in the very near future. After I receive the report, it will be carefully studied, carefully examined, and no decision, Mr. Speaker, will be taken on the use of herbicide spray in the forest until we are absolutely satisfied that it is perfectly safe and that the report, in fact, comes out and says it's possible that this can be done. And I can assure the hon. member, if the report is contrary to that opinion, the moratorium will continue.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 87 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 88 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Department of Finance Act, 1983

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Department of Finance Act, 1983.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee.

Bill No. 89 — An Act to amend The Heritage Fund (Saskatchewan) Act

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Heritage Fund (Saskatchewan) Act.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee.

Bill No. 90 — An Act to amend The Rural Municipality Act

HON. MR. DOMOTOR: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Rural Municipality Act.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee.

Bill No. 91 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984 (No. 2)

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 92 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Consequential Amendment Act

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Urban Municipality Consequential Amendment Act.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Non-Controversial Bills Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Stephen Fonyo

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Before orders of the day, with your permission, sir, I rise today to offer the congratulations of the people of Saskatchewan to Stephen Fonyo on the successful completion of his historical cross-Canada Journey for Lives.

Steve has run from one coast of this great country to the other as part of a campaign to raise money for cancer research. This courageous young man is an example to all Canadians of what can be achieved with enterprise, endeavour, and tenacity.

We, in Saskatchewan, are proud of the fact that the people of our province have on a per capita basis contributed the largest amount in donations towards cancer research raised by Stephen on his run.

The entire nation was behind Stephen in his formidable venture, and they cheer and applaud him in his victory. He is indeed an inspiration to our entire nation and a credit to his family.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Minister of Health in congratulating Stephen Fonyo and his family and the cancer foundation who were involved and helped with the run, and I would like to agree with the minister when he says that this individual has set an example for not only the young people of the country, but for all of us to assist in any way we can in dealing with the dreaded disease of cancer which most families in Canada have dealt with in one way or another.

And I think the people of Saskatchewan . . . I think this was the province that set the standard for the country in raising funds. And I think it bodes well and indicates that there is a feeling of concern within Saskatchewan that is well founded. And I imagine in the Heritage Year of Saskatchewan that the money that was raised here, part of the 7.5 million, congratulations should also go to the people of Saskatchewan who donated to this worthy cause.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Motions for Interim Supply

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, what we are proposing today is Bill No. 93, I guess it will be, is the third appropriation which will involve one-twelfth expenditures for a total of four-twelfths expenditures:

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$265,961,560 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1986.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I ask a question: is that one-twelfth of the amount as shown in the blue book?

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Yes.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I make a few comments with respect to this. I'm a little puzzled by this Bill, since it asks us to grant interim supply for month number four, and we're still only in month number two. We are already good for money up to the end of June, and this provides that we provide money up to the end of July.

I don't know whether this means that the payment out of the budgeting process is as out of control as the budgeting process itself, but it may well indicate that.

This has been an interesting budget, Mr. Chairman, in that we have had 61 million in supplementary estimates for this year, for 1985-86, and I venture to think that's the first time in the history of the province we've had supplementary estimates for our current year, except at times when a government may have changed and the budget fell by the wayside because of an election.

But with the government seated comfortably in power and having 61 million in supplementary estimates because it doesn't bring its budget in until into the year in question, I think, is another first for Saskatchewan. That is world class. When we had this intelligent budget which we're all familiar with, that sort of budget which has given intelligence a bad name, and which fell flatter than the flat tax, I think we aware that things are in some disarray.

I asked the minister whether this was one-twelfth of the amount which appeared in the blue book. It then is not one-twelfth of the budget, because we are already well aware that the amount in the blue book is getting less and less relevant to the amount in the budget as the days go on.

We've got 28 million which we have voted, which we're going to pay out which isn't in the budget, on one matter. We have 25 in another. The 28 may be such as there may be small recovery in this fiscal year, but it may not be very much. So we may well be out at a minimum 25 or 30, \$35 million and perhaps as much as \$50 million already. Before we pass the budget, we find we're 50 million short. And no doubt this is required to pay out the cheques to Pioneer Trust people that is over and above the other normal expenditures. I am sure this one, and the requirement that senior citizens who now had paid their property tax may be able to get \$25 or \$30 million, and that will need to be paid out promptly.

These strike me as the reasons, at least in part, for this. It indicates a budget which is even more in tatters than we had thought was the case. I don't know whether the government needs the money, but in the event that they haven't done their sums and that, if we don't grant the money, somebody will be waiting in line for their money, which is entirely likely, since it's not at all clear that the government is aware of how much money it has coming in or going out.

We will support the resolution, but we are a little surprised at needing the additional money wince we're almost certainly going to be . . . have approved this budget by the end of June, subject to the changes which may come between now and then. It may be a . . . It may be quite an innovative budget by the time we finally know what it is, since we've had, as I say, some small additions of 28 million here and 25 million there.

(14:45)

AN HON. MEMBER: — Budget leaks three weeks after.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — This is giving a . . . This is leaks of a different kind and which we assume — I assume will either be added to the deficit or will be subtracted from some other programs — it may well be. I am darkly suspicious that a fair amount of it is going to be subtracted from school grants, and that's why the Minister of Education steadfastly refuses to tell us how much she's paid out in school grants, or agreed to pay out, but then again I may be wrong.

We will have an opportunity, I know, to in due course to get some facts from the minister, even though extracting facts from the minister has proved to be exceedingly difficult in the past, and I venture to think will continue to be difficult in the future.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — I would make only one comment, Mr. Chairman, is that in the years 19 . . . In the years 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, there was four-twelfths requested and granted by this Assembly to the government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . to the government four-twelfths by and before the end of May in each of those years, and this is exactly the same — exactly the same.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman:

Resolved, that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, the sum of \$265,961,560 be granted from the Consolidated Fund.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman:

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$69,005,200 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 month period ending March 31, 1986. This is from the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman:

Be it resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, the sum of \$69,005,200 be granted out of the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman:

May 30, 1985

Resolved, that a sum not exceeding \$220,830 be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1986, Special Projects Fund.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Chairman:

Resolved, towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1986, the sum of \$220,830 be granted out of the Special Projects Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The committee reported progress.

FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolutions be read a first time.

Motion agreed to and resolutions read a first time.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move the resolutions be now read a second time and agreed to.

By leave of the Assembly, the said resolutions were read a second time and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (Interim Supply)

HON. MR. ANDREW: — By leave of the Assembly, I move:

That Bill No. 93 — An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31st, 1986, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a first time.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

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

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 85 — An Act respecting Film and Video Classification

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Speaker, hon. members have all received copies of the draft bill to be known as The Film and Video Classification Act. This Bill will modernize the law respecting film and video materials which may be shown in Saskatchewan. The Bill now makes it possible for the government to respond to the growing public concern about the unrestricted access to some of these materials by our young people.

There are a number of compelling reasons for introducing new and innovative legislation which will govern all motion pictures and videos available in Saskatchewan. The existing Act, Mr. Speaker, came into effect in 1968 and was amended in 1979, and we find that it is now outdated. This is primarily because of the growth of the home video cassette industry. As a result, Mr. Speaker, video-cassette consumers do not benefit from the content information service which is

available to theatre-goers. Restricted access cannot be enforced with respect to the purchase or rental of video cassettes. Similar or identical material which may be restricted to certain age groups when it is shown in theatres is not applied to video cassettes at this time.

Video cassette material may contain material that would not withstand the criteria applied to by the film classification board to motion pictures appearing in public theatres. The new film and video cassette classification Act will regulate film and videos exhibited in theatres and those distributed to the public from retail outlets for private use.

Mr. Speaker, there are three main goals of this new legislation. One, there should be sufficient information about the content of a film or video cassette provided to consumers (parents in particular) so that they may make informed choices.

Secondly, children should not be able to purchase or rent restricted films. All of you are aware of the public concern in this area, especially regarding the advent of the cassette age. Young people may now rent or purchase video materials which they would not be permitted to see in a public theatre. This, I believe, is totally unacceptable.

In the future the same access restrictions will apply at the point of sale, whether we are talking about a theatre or a video retail store. By applying age restrictions to video cassettes we will not be interfering with parents' rights. Parents may make available what they want in their homes. Those who wish to exercise discretion will be supported and assisted.

And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, retailers should comply with certain advertising and display requirements. Children's films should not be displayed right next to films suitable only for adults. These three goals can only be achieved by expanding the film classification system. This government is convinced that Saskatchewan people want enough information about films or cassettes to make judgements and informed choices. I believe that most hon. members would agree with that.

About 80 per cent of the video material available here comes into Saskatchewan from Ontario and is subject to classification there. Because we have no intention of creating a massive bureaucracy to view every film or every single video, we will take advantage of the classification work done elsewhere by other provinces or perhaps the industry.

I would emphasize, however, that we will continue to review, approve, and classify ourselves. By working with Ontario and other provinces and the industry, we will be able to minimize duplication. Distributors should not be forced to deal with multiple inventories, and consumers should not be faced with the additional confusion which wholly different systems of classifications bring. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, no additional costs of administration is anticipated with the information of this Bill . . . or the introduction of this Bill.

We do want some uniformity, some sort of national standards when considering film and video classification. Each province may not place the same restrictions on each classification or use the same name, but we can work to develop shared criteria and shared guide-lines. Saskatchewan standards will be reflected at all times. Our goal is to establish clear classifications in consultation with other provinces and the industry, which will ease some of the current confusion which parents in particular face.

Under the new Act, Mr. Speaker, we have the authority to establish a broader range of agreements with other provinces to allow for co-operation in classifying of material. This co-operation may be demanded if new technologies are to be effectively and fairly regulated without setting up a large and costly bureaucracy.

Film and video cassettes will likely be classified under one of four new classifications. The proposed classifications are more descriptive. They are: (1) general; (2) parental guidance

suggested; (3) parental accompaniment required, which means that persons under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent; and (4) restricted, which means that only persons 18 years of age or over may view in a public theatre or buy or rent in video form at a rental outlet. These will be set by regulation so that we can make necessary changes in the transition period.

We will also retain and expand the additional system or warnings on films and videos. One that I can think of is a warning that we use that violence may be offensive. These will serve to provide additional information to prospective viewers and to parents.

There is a recognized difference, I believe, between a public theatre and a private home. Accordingly, while all video cassettes will be classified, and most are sold or rented for private use, there will be control only at the point of sale. The access restrictions will be the same for the theatre and video retailers, namely age restrictions. The retailer who handles video cassettes will bear the same responsibility as the theatre operator to ensure that his customers are of proper age.

Mr. Speaker, it may be argued that this should be left to the federal government and to changing the Criminal Code. I cannot accept that reasoning. We feel very strongly that something must be done now. We are taking what steps we can to support parents and protect our young people. We will also continue to lobby the federal government for improvements to the Criminal Code.

Hon. members will note that the censorship power has been retained in the new Act. This is necessary to ensure that the Saskatchewan board can keep material which offends local standards from reaching public theatres and retail stores.

(15:00)

If we ever had to exercise this power, the board would be applying a local standard and not judging the material on obscenity criteria. The obscenity standards are national standards. In some cases, however, the board could refer material to police for possible prosecution under the obscenity provisions of the Criminal Code.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this new classification system will support parents, providing them with much-needed information about what their children may or may not be exposed to. The new system will also serve to restrict access to these materials at the point of sale. I would be pleased to discuss the provisions of the Act in greater detail in committee of the whole, Mr. Speaker, and I would at this time move second reading of a Bill to be called The Film and Video Classification Act and I would urge all members of the House to support this Bill.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we welcome the Bill introduced by the minister. Saskatchewan will be province number four or province number five that is introducing legislation of this kind to pick up video cassettes. All the provinces, I believe, have some form of classification with respect to films displayed in public theatres, and that is long-standing legislation. What we have here is grafted upon it the legislation dealing with video cassettes and the like. I believe that the time has come for this province, as well as others, to do that.

I welcome the minister's comment that the province proposes to, in effect, attempt to use the classifications which are used in some other provinces, notably Ontario, and attempt to get some sort of common classification. There obviously could be a good deal of mix-up for the public, additional expense for governments, and I think that in most areas the standards will not be sufficiently at variance that you need several areas of classification. There may well be an occasion when that would develop, and I know the province would reserve its right to impose its own standard if substantial deviations appeared to be emerging.

However, in essence the minister proposes to revamp the existing legislation with respect to classification of films shown in public theatres, to which we have no quarrel. To add to that a

classification system with respect to video cassettes and the like, to that we have no quarrel, and proposes to work towards a classification system which will cause the least inconvenience for people who market cassettes. And they tell me now that 75 or 80 per cent of the material now has the Ontario classification on it.

Many of these people who have been troubled by the same concerns that the minister has expressed, and do not wish to sell or rent material to people who, they perhaps feel, should not have it, will welcome the support of this legislation; and accordingly, I and my colleagues join with the minister in the support of this Bill. There may well be some questions of detail which we could raise in committee. We would reserve the right, of course, to do that.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. MULLER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you and to this Assembly, six grade 7 students from Wild Rose, Saskatchewan, right up in the heart of that parkland, the most beautiful country in Saskatchewan; probably the 4-H capital of Saskatchewan, and maybe the world (I'm not sure of that), but it has one of the longest standing 4-H clubs. I think I used that line last year. Five of the students are sitting in the Speaker's gallery with their teacher, Mr. McKenzie, and chaperon, Cheryl Mason; and Mrs. Judy Mason and her daughter, Deana, are on the floor. And I would ask all members to join with me in wishing them a good stay in Regina and a safe trip home, and I hope they enjoy themselves. I ask all members to join with me.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lane that Bill No. 79 — **An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act** be now read a second time.

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't take a long time on this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to make a few comments on it. Looking at this Bill I notice that there are only a couple of changes proposed in it, and I would have to say after some of the huge increases we've seen in utility rates, and one can look at going back to May 1, 1983 when we had an 11 per cent increase in the basic phone service rental rate, and we had 18 per cent increase in the field visit charge, and we had a 6 per cent hike in the long distance rate, and we had another increase in October of '83 — a 5 per cent increase, and November 1st we had a basic rate increase and all the categories went up some 9 per cent.

Well, Mr. Speaker, all of those increases — and I might add the minister isn't here today — but just since the minister was in, we've had something like a 20 per cent increase in rates in that one area alone of telephones, not going into all the other increases that the people of this province have had to accept.

Mr. Minister, it seems the big point in this Bill alone here is the deletion of that space between Sask and Tel — the deletion of the space between Sask and Tel. I don't know why they had to bring those two together, but it seems that that is what the minister feels is important, and that is one of the amendments to that Act.

The other amendment is giving more power to the legislative or the Lieutenant Governor in

Council. And it says that:

... to exercise any powers, in addition to those described in clauses ... that may be designated and prescribed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council ...

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know why the minister needs more power in Sask Tel but I would understand, I suppose, that if there are things that he wants to get into, if he wants to expand Sask Tel a little and get into some other business along with Sask Tel ... Maybe it's because he recognizes when they got into government, after all the criticism before they became government regarding Crown corporations and public utilities, that maybe now they realize that maybe in some areas having a public utility is not all that bad, Mr. Speaker.

And Mr. Speaker, maybe that is why they feel that they need some changes to the Act, to allow them to maybe expand the corporation a little more. And if this is what they intend to do, to make it work better and to make it a little more profitable, I suppose we can go along with that, although we don't really know what their reason is for it — very reluctantly, Mr. Speaker, when we don't have a definition of what the reasoning is for it.

But we will, I suppose, go along with the amendment and see what the purpose of the amendment is in the future. We will, I am sure, in the near future, find out what it is. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think we will allow the Bill to go into committee and see what's in it. Thank you.

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

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Item 1 (continued)

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask the minister if he could provide me with the names of the contractors that have been used, and the work, in the past year?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we can provide it. It will be a fairly lengthy piece of document, and we're very prepared to share that information with you. We don't have it here, but very prepared to send that to you.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, could you then indicate — and I'm sure you'd have some of that with you — as to the number of actual kilometres of grading that have been done in the year of '84, in the past year, and the number of kilometres of surfacing and of oil treatment?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, if the member — while we're obtaining and gathering that information — if the member has another question, we can proceed on to that while the officials are getting you that information.

MR. LUSNEY: — While they're doing that, I suppose the information would be probably close to the same area that they're going to be searching for, Mr. Minister, and if you could get them to give me the cubic metres of earth that was moved on the various jobs that you had, projects that you had out on highways.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, here we are for 1984: grading 245 kilometres; for recap and paving, 512 kilometres; and oil treatment work, 84 kilometres ... (inaudible interjection) ... Surfacing was 512; grading, 245 — well, recap and paving, 512; and oil treatment work, 84

kilometres. Total cubic metres of material moved is 6,790,500 cubic metres of material was moved.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, what was the cost per cubic metre for moving that out?

(15:15)

HON. MR. GARNER: — Estimated cost is approximately \$1 per cubic metre, depending on each project. You know, they do vary.

MR. LUSNEY: — That hasn't changed much from last year then, Mr. Minister. I notice however, Mr. Minister, when we look at the number of kilometres of road, of surfacing and grading and oil treatment, they are down a fair amount in grading, and it's down from your own estimates of '82-83, and '83-84. I notice you're doing less and less grading every year, Mr. Minister.

Would you not consider that one of the reasons why we have some of the problems with our highways where they're breaking up and they're not being redone when they should be, and we see people complaining that we have some very terrible roads? I've had a class in today that come down from Stenen, and that was one of their questions, why we have such bad roads, why the roads are breaking up the way they are.

And it's a common question, Mr. Minister, and I think it's one that you should be addressing. You should be putting more money into highways so that we can upgrade those roads a bit.

Mr. Minister, why are you doing less every year? I understand you've got less dollars to do it with, so you would presumably have to do less work. But why don't you ask your cabinet colleagues to provide you with more funding so you can get on with the job of building some roads in this province?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, it fluctuates from year to year. We look at 1982 and the grading was 239; 1983 there was 306; this past year it was 245, and partly because of the winter came on a little earlier. On the paving and recap, in 1982 it was 402; 1983 it was 397; and last year some of the paving went ahead faster than the grading — it was 512. So that's not quite accurate, what you stated.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, on the Borden Bridge, that bridge has been a topic of discussion for a little while now. Could you tell me how close you are to completing that bridge and when you expect it to be open?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to state to the members that we're a little ahead of schedule, and even barring some weather problems on that, we should be able to open that bridge the very latter part of September — another major connecting link for the Yellowhead Highway Association.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, do you propose any changes to the underpass going under the railways to the approaches coming to the bridge on the west side? Do you propose any change to that underpass, or is it going to stay the way it is now?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, we are presently at this time working on some details and negotiating with the federal government to see what we can do to correct that.

MR. LUSNEY: — Have you approached the railways, Mr. Minister, to see whether they would agree to any changes, or whether they would approve anything being done on that? Are you going to widen . . . I suppose the one clear question would be: are you going to widen the existing approach there, or the subway or underpass, or are you going to build another underpass where the new bridge is that goes in a straight line rather than with the one that

curves into there?

HON. MR. GARNER: — The original one will not be widened in time for the opening of the bridge, but that's part and parcel of the negotiations that's going on right now with the federal government.

MR. LUSNEY: — The widening? Or looking at constructing a new underpass? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You're looking at both of them. Very well, Mr. Minister. What are you going to do with the old bridge once you open the new one?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, the engineering studies have been done on it, and the pillars that are there are still in very good workable service condition, and planning ahead to the future, that when we go to twinning that section and that area of the Yellowhead, we would be able to knock the old deck off the top and put a new deck on it. And that way we would have another bridge that would still serve the needs of the people travelling on the Yellowhead Route.

We would have to correct the accesses onto that bridge because many people lost their lives because of the accesses where they come down the hill. The new bridge, as you'll be aware, Mr. Chairman, goes straight on, and is a great safety improvement on the system.

MR. LUSNEY: — Yes, Mr. Minister, the bridge itself is good because it goes straight down. But the underpass that we'll have to be using with the new bridge temporarily until you make some decision as to what's going to be done in the future, is still a hazardous point really. And it's going to be a dangerous point because it's even worse than the old one was. So that is one area that I hope you're going to pursue, Mr. Minister, and try to correct it as soon as possible.

Mr. Minister, could you indicate to me whether you've got any hiring freezes on anywhere in the Department of Highways? Have you slowed up the hiring amount, or is it open, or what is happening? I understood there was a hiring freeze in Saskatoon at one point. Is there one on now, or not?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No hiring freeze, Mr. Chairman.

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, my information was that you had a freeze on at the Saskatoon shop there at one time last year, and that no one was allowed to be hired because you said there wasn't any need for anyone to be hired. However, it appears that at this point, if anybody wants to get to work for Department of Highways they don't necessarily do it by applying on a job that might be advertised, but it's being done through some other means and that's either through the minister's office or through some other member's office where a name is proposed.

You seem to be going to the proposal method of getting people into place like you are with some of your contracts, rather than opening the contract up for bid or to put a job description up on the wall — job opening up there that people can apply for. It seems that you're now going through the proposal route where people get hired by some minister or some other member making that proposal.

Is that the kind of practice that's going to continue, Mr. Minister.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, what the member has stated opposite is not true.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, I guess I can't dispute that with you. I don't agree with you, but I can't hardly dispute that fact because it would be sometime difficult to prove any of that.

I suppose I can ask you about one person — a Mr. Fraser that was hired in Saskatoon. Was Mr. Fraser's job advertised when he was hired?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, very competent staff we have in the department tell me that this individual worked in the maintenance department in the summer, and then worked on the Hot Line (Road Information) program in the winter, which is a tremendous success, and helps out the motoring public throughout Saskatchewan.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, what you have told me is correct, and that's a good cover story. How did Mr. Fraser first get hired into maintenance last year?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, the officials don't have all of the employment forms and everything here. We'll get that information, and send it to the member.

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Minister, I suppose that's as good an answer as any. All that does is prove to me that my information is correct, that there wasn't exactly a job competition there. It certainly wasn't, and it wasn't posted anywhere. There was an individual hired that had very little to do last summer in the maintenance shop, and since then has been transferred to other areas where, as somebody mentioned, he's been reclassified. That's been happening in many departments.

Mr. Minister, one of the other questions I think I'd like to ask you at this point. Maybe it's more of a comment. I had a call this morning regarding a funeral procession that a party was in. And it was in Regina here, and they almost had an accident. And it doesn't necessarily focus totally on your department. There may be another one that could share some of the responsibility for it.

But this individual apparently, when the funeral procession was going through the lights, when the light changed from green to red, some of the cars went through, and the others were still coming. At that time when the lights changed, traffic from the other direction started to move. A vehicle apparently started to move in, and the two vehicles come in there where they had to hit their brakes.

The individual that started to cross the street when he got the green light suggested he wasn't aware it was a funeral procession because the lights were on, and with the Lights for Life thing now everybody or a lot of people drive around with their lights, so it almost created an accident — something that's supposed to prevent accidents.

Now, Mr. Minister, do you propose at any time in the future to advertise the fact that if anybody sees a procession and a number of cars with lights on, that they should be well aware of the fact that it's not just Lights on for Life, and they better watch their life because they might lose it, and pay attention to what is happening, because the Lights on for Life now can be a little confusing, it appears.

Are you looking at promoting or getting some information out rather than spending it all on travelling like you have been? Are you going to spend some of the money to inform the public of some of the hazards of the Lights on for Life now, and how they should be preparing themselves for a funeral procession?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, yes, we sure wouldn't want to see anyone interrupting with a funeral procession, and I will just read you section 90, Mr. Chairman, of the Act, where it states that:

No person driving a vehicle shall drive it through or cause it to obstruct or interfere with a funeral procession.

And Mr. Chairman, we're very concerned about this and we'll check into it.

MR. LUSNEY: — One of the other criticisms I had, Mr. Minister, was when this person, the other

party involved was in the funeral procession wanted to lay some charges against the individual involved, they were told by the RCMP that it's going to cost them a little money to start laying charges because the fine for the infraction is only \$50. And if the party had to hire a lawyer to lay charges, it would cost them a little more than that. So they dropped that idea.

However, Mr. Minister, they were a little concerned of the fact and they were hoping that somehow maybe you would look into it and see what could be done to . . . whether they expect . . . I suppose they would expect a little higher fine for anyone that does interrupt a funeral procession, or maybe some changes to the legislation. But those I would expect you will look into and bring some proposals forward.

Mr. Minister, I'd like you to give me a breakdown of the huge travel bill that you've run up in the past year. Could you give me a breakdown of your travel expenses in the past year — some \$62,743.71, Mr. Minister? Could you give me a breakdown of those costs, where you made the trips, who accompanied you, was it by aircraft, was it by vehicle, or how was it? Could you give me a total breakdown of your travel expenses?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, those are handled through Executive Council and the member will have to get that information from Executive Council estimates.

(15:30)

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Minister, surely your department, if you have submitted them through the Executive Council to get paid, that you would have some record of the bills that you had. You'd have some record of your expenses. Surely you would have that, Mr. Minister. Going to Executive Council, Executive Council might say they don't have all the details; all they have is a bill. And I'd like you to provide me with the information regarding the trips you took, where you took them to, who accompanied you on the trips, and the cost of them — all the trips, Mr. Minister, that would amount to \$62,743.71.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, the trips from . . . On air trips within the province, you can obtain that information from the Minister of Supply and Services at his estimates. We do have the information on out-of-province trips and I'm prepared to send you a sheet over to that effect.

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Minister, you're saying some of them I'm going to have to go to Executive Council for some, to the Minister of Supply and Services, and some maybe from you. That's going to get a little difficult to get all the information that a person wants.

Don't you have a record of your expenses, total expenses, even though they are paid by some other department of government? Do you not have a record of the bills that you submitted to Supply and Services or to Executive Council?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, that's why we have the other departments, and that's where the member can obtain that other information from.

MR. LUSNEY: — Doesn't your department, Mr. Minister, submit bills to Executive Council to get paid, or to Supply and Services to get paid?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, here I have the information here for out-of-province travel that I can send over and share to . . .

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Minister, it's an interesting little sheet here. You gave me your travel expenses for \$7,187.82. Some place we're missing a lot of money. Now I'm just wondering how come your department in your *Public Accounts* shows you down for \$62,743.71 and you hand me a sheet for \$7,000.

Mr. Minister, where were the other trips that you took? These were out-of-province ones. Are you saying that you've got some 50-odd thousand dollars, over \$50,000 in-province costs, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I explained previously, the in-flight travel, that information can be obtained from the Minister of Supply and Services. The other information can be obtained from Executive Council estimates.

MR. LUSNEY: — Well, Mr. Minister, when we're looking at over \$50,000, I'm not certain if Executive Council has a breakdown of your expenses or if they have everything bulked together. Now what the Premier is going to do when we get to Executive Council, he'll probably say that they've got a total amount, they don't have the breakdown there, and we won't get the figures again.

Surely, Mr. Minister, you must have figures or a log of some kind as to all the in-province flights that you've taken or in-Canada flights. These are out-of-province flights so it would have to be in-province flights, Mr. Minister. So the rest would have to be in-province flights. And there's a large amount of in-province flights.

There's one here that's an interesting one, Mr. Minister, and that's on February of '84, a trip to Maui for \$2,400 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . In February. Did you go to check the highways in Maui to see if there's something you could use there in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, just so that we set the record straight, that's why I provided the information for the member opposite. It was a trip that was called the Western Canada Roadbuilders Association conference. At that conference was the Minister of Transportation from Alberta, the Minister of Transportation from Saskatchewan, the Minister of Transportation from Manitoba.

So I mean we were there representing our governments at the western Canada roadbuilders. It was very productive, very well accepted, and hopefully the member opposite isn't saying that it's okay for an NDP minister of transportation to go but not a Conservative minister of transportation to go.

MR. LUSNEY: — Well Mr. Minister, if what you are saying that it was a roadbuilders' conference, I suppose if the ministers from every province went that might be correct. I won't question you on that because I don't have any information that would prove different. I suppose that's one nice area that the ministers could meet, fit hey were going to meet — it's in Maui in the middle of February when it's about 40 below. But, Mr. Minister, what was the length of your stay at Maui when you went down there for the conference?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, it was a six-day trip. I believe we left on a Saturday, and came back the following Friday.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, I guess I'll have to pursue the rest of your expenses in Department of Finance, and in Executive Council, and Supply and Services . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The Minister of Supply and Services asked me if I wanted him to answer right now. If he's able to answer that question right now, I can almost assume the answer I'm going to get when I do ask it of him.

So it would appear then, Mr. Minister, that we're going to be looking hard for some \$50,000 in travel expenses because we're not likely to get it from any of the other ministers.

Mr. Minister, could you give me a list of the members that you have on the traffic board and the members on the traffic safety committee?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, they are the following: Mr. Mike . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, no, I'll read it to you here. Mr. Michael Beard, Gerald Bobbitt, Mr. Bozak, Carl Ciesielski, Ann Doran, Herb Kemp, Barb Larson, Bert Lozinski, Jack McKinstry, Calvin Roberts, Adelle Schafer, Herb Shea, Glen Sitter, Eugene Teslia, Mr. Wass, Jake Wiebe, and Mr. Reigert.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could send me that list so I could have a look at it. And while you're doing that, could you provide me with the per diem that the members on the traffic board get?

And I did ask you for also the members of the traffic safety committee — I believe would be different than the traffic board — if you could get me those also. And per diems of the members on both boards, how many meetings they attended in the past year, and what was their total remuneration for that year.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, it's about \$90 per day per diem on it, and I do have travel or per diem and the total amount of dollars that was spent by the people of Saskatchewan for the motor carrier board and for the drivers' licence appeal board. And I'd be very pleased to share this information with the member opposite.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, are there any other expenses paid to any of these members? You've got highway traffic board members' expenses. Are these members that . . . the list of these names that you gave me, are they combined — both the traffic board and the traffic safety committee?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes, that is total expenses, total dollars paid to them, and that's both motor carrier board and drivers' licence appeal board.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, if this is the total amount that you say they get . . . In *Public Accounts* I noticed that there are some different figures on the . . . looking at one, Carl . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Carl Zarzeczny, okay? The minister is saying that it was a different year. He's correct. It was a different year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay, could you give me that information? List the total amount of expenditures for all the members. This would include . . . It doesn't include the amount of meetings that they had. And I suppose to do some justice for the members on here with some of the expenses, I suppose one would want to know just how many meetings they went to. I suppose I could say they went to five meetings and got this amount of money. That wouldn't be true. So if you could provide that information to me, if not today, possibly in the future.

The expenses are paid, Mr. Minister, then by the mile, or how do you pay their expenses? Are their hotels covered, meals, what have you?

HON. MR. GARNER: — It's in accordance with the SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) rules. There it is. We will share whatever information you want.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, do any of the members on this list get any money from elsewhere in the department? Do they work anywhere else, or is this the only area that they're on? Are they working anywhere else in the department other than being on the committee, either committee?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Bernie Churko, I believe it is, does he not work in some part of the department, or did he work in some part of the department in the past?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes he does, and he did, and he still does, and he's not on the list.

MR. LUSNEY: — Does he get an additional income to what's on here then, or is this his total income for the year?

(15:45)

HON. MR. GARNER: — He is a civil servant that works with the government as well, but he's a member of the board because he brings forth a certain degree of expertise from another section of the department.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, could you provide me with the number of staff, personal staff that you have, their salaries that they have been getting also, and the number of people, their names and the salaries?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes, Mr. Chairman. Here it is.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, while the member from Pelly is checking those numbers over, I have just a couple of questions on the little junket that you took down to Maui in February of '84, costing the taxpayers of the province \$2,403.32. Mr. Minister, can you inform the Assembly who went with you on the trip? Can you give me the list of individuals who had their trip paid for when you went down to Maui?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. John Weir was the individual that accompanied me on that trip.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — And could you tell me the exact dates of the meeting, and where the meeting was held in Maui? Have you got the exact dates of the meeting?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, we don't have all of the specifics, but the deputy informs me that the meetings were from Sunday through till Wednesday.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — And where were they held at in Maui? What was the name of the centre where it was held? Was it at the Hyatt Regency in Kaanapali, or where was it at exactly, Mr. Minister, is what I would like to know.

HON. MR. GARNER: — The Maui Merriott Convention Center, Mr. Chairman.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I missed the name of the centre. Can you give me the name of the town that it was in, or the city it was in, as well as the hotel?

Well, Mr. Minister, I notice you asking someone where you had your meeting. I don't think you should have to ask the name of the city, or have you forgotten?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, a little town . . . It was just right close to a little town called Lahaina.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We're really on to a big scandal here.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, I don't know whether it's a scandal or not. The Minister of Highways going to Maui in the middle of winter for a little holiday, and he can downplay it as much as he wants, but it's \$2,400 of taxpayers' money. And he can talk about other ministers from other provinces who went, but I don't think that's a justification because what he has done here is spend 2,400 bucks of my taxpayer's money, your taxpayer's money, and I don't know if they agree with that.

And I don't know why the minister is so sensitive if it's all . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well then I don't know why everyone gets so excited when we ask questions about them going to Hawaii for a holiday in the winter at taxpayers' expense . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, the only

thing is, Mr. Minister, I'm not sure why you're so excited about this holiday you took.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that it was no holiday because you put three transportation ministers in amongst about 600 road builders, and I'll tell you there is not much time to spend having a swim or even getting a great deal of sleep. So I can assure you that when you leave on a Saturday and come back on a Friday it is no great holiday.

But you know, Mr. Chairman, the member opposite seems to be throwing out allegations that it's wrong for any member of our government, or the Minister of Transportation, myself, to go to meetings called by the Western Canada Road Builders. I didn't call the meeting. I didn't set the location.

You know, we just need to look back, you know, where former transportation ministers of Saskatchewan, you know, flipped over to Japan. Mr. Kramer, you know, and then a Western Canada Road Builders, San Diego, 1979; Reno, Western Canada Road Builders, 1980. The former minister, Mr. Long, happened to run over to Sweden in 1980, you know. And then another Western Canada Road Builders in Phoenix, 1982, Mr. Chairman, you know.

I mean, like I go to one Western Canada Road Builders trip, you know, and all of a sudden it's great big glorious holiday. If he wants to call this holidays I guess he's saying that what their ministers did was they took a number of holidays to Japan and Sweden as well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, the minister mentions the holidays that the previous ministers have taken and include . . . I imagine that would then mean that his was a holiday, if they had taken a holiday.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, then if you can outline the agenda of this hard-working trip that you took. Can you send across a copy of the agenda that you worked on while you were in Maui? You say you had no time to go swimming or whatever, and no time for sleep either. Can you send a copy of the agenda and what you were doing in those evenings that you didn't have time to sleep? I'm a little interested in that comment.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I image the member opposite most likely would be interested in something like that, but I'm really not, Mr. Chairman. We will contact the Saskatchewan Road Builders and the Western Canada Road Builders and see if we can find an agenda from them. I don't happen to have one in my pocket here right now, I don't think, and we don't have one with our information here. So if we can find one, I'll be very pleased to provide it to you.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, looking at the salaries I notice that your department is no different than the other departments. Personal staff has gone up again from 8 to 10 per cent, in that range, for your ministerial assistants, from last year.

Mr. Minister, when you put a freeze on almost everybody's salary in the province — you've asked the teachers, the nurses, the workers, the people on minimum wage to stay at the level they've been for the last three years — why do we continue to see every department increasing their staff salaries by anywhere from 8 to 10 per cent?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we provided the member opposite with the names of the staff and the salary that they receive, you know. And I can see the member complaining about the number of staff and that, and I look at the previous minister who had Mr. Voegeli, and Mr. Degenstien, Mr. Rathgeber, and Mr. Friesen, Miss Hansen, Mr. Oglan, and Mr. Spentz, and a Mr. Semchuk. That's one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight staff members.

I look at the staff that I have, Mr. Chairman, which is: Mr. Wier, Miss Dickson, Miss Johnston is no

longer there because Mrs. Anderson is replacing her, Mr. Scott, Miss Nicholas, and Miss Pearce. That's a staff of six versus the previous administration had a staff of eight, which I cannot quite agree with because that previous minister didn't have the same responsibilities.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, I wasn't necessarily interested in the number of staff you have. I know how many you have here; I can see them. There's seven of them — six of them — there's one that's not there anymore. Okay. One has gone back to school you say, fine.

My interest, Mr. Minister, was in the salary increases at a time when you were asking everyone to exercise restraint and not to ask for increases at their work place. You are automatically giving salary increases to your personal staff. We've got a J. Wier, that would be a John Wier, I believe, that was getting \$3,435, now is getting \$3,740 a month.

Every one is up. H. Dickson was getting 2,266, now is getting 2,445. Kemp Scott, 3,740, used to get 3,435; Vera Nicholas, 2,455, now is 2,670; Darlene Pearce, I believe it is, 1,762 now, was 1,590. And we've got a new one that I suppose is starting at the bottom of the scale at 2,249, although that's more than Darlene Pearce was getting when she started.

So, Mr. Minister, you're saying one is a secretary and one is an MA. Now I notice some ministers don't even have secretaries anymore. Their MAs are secretaries, so they can give them a different salary. They can reclassify them. Even a secretary gets reclassified now.

Mr. Minister, when you were asking the people of Saskatchewan, the working people of Saskatchewan, to exercise restraint, I ask you again, why don't you ask your staff to exercise the same restraint without reclassifying — at least for one year — and keep them at the level they were at because none of these are all that low, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the individuals on my staff did receive an increment and that was all they received — no cost of living. And you have the figures there.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, you're saying they received no cost of living. A ministerial assistant . . . I don't know whether there are any other perks that go along with the job description. Your ministerial assistants . . . Some of the other ministers, I suppose, do have some.

I don't know how many of them get a government vehicle or a credit card to do their travelling on. And if they do, I would wonder why they would have to get any other living expenses. And when you're getting \$3,700 a month you would hardly need an additional living expense yet, unless you're from B.C. or Alberta or somewhere else and you came to Saskatchewan just to get a little higher salary with this government. But if you're a Saskatchewan resident you hardly need a living expense on top of your salary, Mr. Minister.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, there is no cars and no credit cards in our office.

MR. YEW: — Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. I want to ask the minister if he has in his budget for this fiscal year appropriated any funding for the bridge that has been requested for quite some time by the community of Cumberland House, and, if there is, the amount and when he hopes to have the project started.

HON. MR. GARNER: — No funds have been committed for this year, Mr. Chairman, for the Cumberland House bridge.

MR. YEW: — Have you got a plan or any proposal to deal with that request, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. GARNER: — There was some location work looked at and some rough designs looked at, Mr. Chairman, but that's all — no details.

MR. YEW: — Was there any proposal to . . . If you haven't allotted any funds for this current fiscal year, if you haven't got any definite plan or a proposal, has your caucus considered placing a program for that community, say, within the course of the next two or three years?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, it's something that we are looking at into the future.

(16:00)

MR. YEW: — In terms of highways to more remote communities as well further north of Cumberland House, Mr. Minister, we have Sandy Bay and Pelican Narrows that have very treacherous and hazardous road conditions, as the minister may know or maybe perhaps some of his officials within the Department of Highways may know.

Are there any major plans to upgrade and to try to improve the hazardous and disastrous road conditions in that particular area, Mr. Minister, the roads into Southend . . . pardon me, Pelican Narrows and into Sandy Bay, and also the highway into Southend, Reindeer Lake, and Wollaston Lake?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, it's in the future programming and planning.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Minister, how far into the future are you talking about?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, it's very difficult to relate as to where it is in the programming and planning because until we have funding in place I don't want to make commitments in this Assembly that cannot be kept.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Minister, you have met with several delegations from the North, from Cumberland House. I know for a fact that you met with some delegations there, and others among those, regarding the transportation problems in northern Saskatchewan. Were there any commitments made to these visitors from the top half of this province?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we have met with many groups from northern Saskatchewan, and any commitments that we have made we have kept, or will be keeping.

MR. YEW: — I have had discussions with many communities, Mr. Minister, and I'm led to believe that many of the residents in northern Saskatchewan feel very remote and isolated when it comes down to highway projects, and as well, highway maintenance. Mr. Minister, for that portion of the budget in terms of maintenance and the upkeep of those highways, can the minister advise if you have reduced priority for northern Saskatchewan in that respect?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, there has been no decrease in maintenance money or maintenance work, allocation, or anything else to the North or the South or anything else. We've had a 5 per cent increase in our maintenance budget this year.

MR. YEW: — Final question, Mr. Minister. I noted from the project array that you gave members of this Assembly that there was not very much appropriated at all for the northern administration district, the North, the top half of this province. In fact, I believe that in the constituency of Cumberland you've allotted, I believe, 4.2 kilometres of resurfacing, if I'm correct. That is very insignificant, Mr. Minister.

As I was saying, you know the road conditions are very hazardous, disastrous, and I really can't understand the status of your government's priorities. On the one hand you promote tourism and the development of renewable and non-renewable resources. Tremendous amounts of revenue is being generated from our natural resources in the top half of this province. But yet you neglect to improve the highways, the conditions of our highways.

You continuously neglect the social and economic conditions of northern Saskatchewan. I just really can't see where your government is heading. Have you just completely abandoned the North? This is what the understanding is in the top half of this province. You have simply neglected the North; you have simply . . .

In fact, I believe at one point or another the member for Meadow Lake and also the member for P.A.-Duck Lake tried to emphasize that we're going to do away with that jack pine curtain. We're going to see that the North is part of this province. We're going to streamline the north into the province as a whole.

But yet when it comes to your fiscal budget arrangements — budget one in '82, budget two in '83-84, and budget three in '84-85 — you totally excluded the North. All the major needs, requirements, grievances, all the social and economic problems that have been presented to your government have continuously been neglected, Mr. Minister, and I can't really see any compassion and understanding being had by your government at all.

Many of the road conditions are disastrous and hazardous in the North, and I would sincerely hope that you will recognize the fact that we need some priority preferences as well those roads in southern Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I look at some of the notes here and it looks like we're spending for '85-86, major capital construction programs, some \$2.5 million in that north-east part of the province.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Minister, I believe that you are referring to the annual budget allotments for maintenance, the continuous administration of your department in terms of maintenance and in minor improvements, in terms of the highways and transportation systems in that particular part of the province. But how much in terms of dollars have you allotted for bridges and major recapping, resurfacing, and major road construction?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, as I had stated previously, this was not maintenance; this was major capital construction.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, could you give me a list of how much money was spent with Dome Advertising and Roberts & Poole, and what the nature of the service was that they provided to you?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, Dome Advertising did receive \$223,788.26 in total cost of service of programs: new drivers' handbooks, school bus driver's handbook, stop-arm campaign, winter driving campaign, hot-line information, highway map, 60-kilometre highway worker safety campaign, all-terrain vehicle consultation, annual report, road restriction advertising, staff news-letter, annual report, professional driver's handbook, and construction map.

And we're prepared, Mr. Chairman, to send it over to the member opposite. It's all on a safety . . . direction of safety, and trying to cut down accidents and injuries, and work with people in the province of Saskatchewan.

From Roberts and Poole, Mr. Chairman, \$124,957.68, and it was a drinking driving prevention campaign, research development production, communications vehicles for television, radio, billboard, and newspaper advertising.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, I noticed on here you have the highway map. Yet in yesterday's questioning I believe you told me that the highway map was printed by Modern Press of Saskatoon. Were both companies working on it, or who actually printed it and for what cost?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Dome provided the artwork and the creative consultation on it.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, that highway map cost more than 19 cents then — or whatever it was, 19.5 that you mentioned the other day — when you got Dome putting in the artwork on it and Modern Press printing it. So the total cost of the map is not 19 cents. Could you give me the cost of the printing or the cost of that map from Dome?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, the total cost of the map, Dome's costs and the other outfit in Saskatoon, was 19 and a half cents per map.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I have a couple of questions of simple detail. This deals with the Borden Bridge and it maybe have already been dealt with at length. Basically I am asking whether you intend to use both the old bridge and the new bridge, and how you intend to arrange the approaches on what I will fondly call the west side, although it may well be the north side — the North Battleford side anyway?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, yes, to hon. member opposite, we have discussed the Borden Bridge. The new bridge should be, if everything goes well, should be ready to be opened at about the end of September. We have got the engineering results back on the piers on the old bridge. They're structurally sound and we are going to be keeping that, and for the future of knocking the top off it and putting a new deck on it.

And we will have to change the access onto the old bridge, but I can assure you that the access onto the new bridge from both the North Battleford side (I'm always a little confused on whether it's west or north) . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — The Meadow Lake side.

HON. MR. GARNER: — We'll call it the Meadow Lake side then, and the Saskatoon side — both of those accesses onto that bridge are one of the most modern and safest methods of approaching a bridge.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I am talking about the North Battleford side, and I'm talking about the access to the bridge, and more particularly the manner in which you intend to go under the railway track, whatever you intend to do. You now have one underpass, and the one underpass presumably serves both the old bridge and the new bridge at this point. What are your plans with respect to underpasses on the North Battleford side?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, as I had stated previously, we are negotiating with the federal government and the railroads with doing something to alleviate the problem there. We cannot widen the underpass that is there right now, and I believe the hon. member can understand that. It's something that we're dealing with the federal government with as to rather building one new overpass or underpass. We need one there that will accommodate traffic to both bridges for the future twinning of the Yellowhead Route.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I heard what the minister said and didn't understand what he was saying. What is your plan: to have another underpass, to use the current one and have another one, or have a single new underpass of wider dimensions? Which is your plan?

(16:15)

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, as I tried to explain to the member opposite, we are dealing with the federal government right now and the railroad as to having a new underpass there. We have to look at when the Yellowhead will be twinned to that part of the road.

There's no point in trying to do very much with the underpass that is there. We have to build an underpass that will serve the needs of both of the bridges. That's the negotiations that are taking place today.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — So, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, the proposal is for a new underpass big enough to accommodate a twinned Yellowhead, which will undoubtedly be the policy of the next government of Saskatchewan, even though it's not the policy of this government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . With respect . . . We're just coming to this minister now. And what we've got is an underpass under that railway now and some talk about somebody doing something else. Can you give us any sort of time frame when you expect to be able to commence any construction of the new underpass which you say is your solution to that particular traffic problem?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we should maybe just look back a little ways, and I'm not prepared to stand in this Assembly and say what date a new overpass will be constructed because anything that we announce is going to take place, Mr. Chairman.

You know, when the hon. member opposite was the premier of the province of Saskatchewan, where was the Borden Bridge then? We were talking about it and talking about it. Mr. Chairman, we're talking about the Borden Bridge. The member asked about the Borden Bridge and the access to it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm perfectly happy to have a general debate on highway policy with the minister. If he is dealing with the policy of the previous government with respect to this matter, I'm perfectly happy to do it. It's just that I want to know, Mr. Chairman, is whether I have the same leeway that he is taking. We've had this before. I simply want a ruling.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The ruling is quite simple. The Leader of the Opposition started the leeway problem by indicating that his government would twin the Yellowhead Highway when they were elected, and that would necessarily cause an answer along that line. So if we could all restrain ourselves, then we can stick to the topic.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong debate or go off of the topic whatsoever. The only point I'm trying to make, Mr. Chairman, to you, and to other members of the Assembly, and my hon. colleague across the floor, is that there was a great deal of talk about the Borden Bridge, and it was talk, talk, talk. Mr. Chairman, this government . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I believe the minister has already made that point, and I won't rule whether it's in order or out of order. We just won't hear it again. All right?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Borden Bridge will be opened on September of this year if everything proceeds along well. Our concern with the old bridge, which was brought up for discussion, as well as the underpass, Mr. Chairman, if the approaches to the old Borden Bridge would have been changed many years ago, Mr. Chairman, there would be many more people alive today because of that mistake that was made by a previous administration.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I've only been around this province 35 years, and that's the same approach that was there 35 years ago. So we're busy getting back to previous administrations a long way back, and that, indeed, approach is the same one that was there. So what I am asking, Mr. Minister, about that approach is, that you're telling me that you will give this committee no indication whatever of when you intend even to start a new approach on the North Battleford side of the bridges?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to share with this committee, and with the members of the Assembly, that we're in consultation and discussion with the federal

government regarding the underpass that is on the North Battleford side of the river that approaches services, not only the old bridge now, but will service the new bridge as well.

We're in negotiations on this, Mr. Chairman, and we too are very, very concerned about traffic safety, accidents, and fatalities, and I believe our record shows that we have got results in working with the people. And just this morning I announced that fatalities for the first quarter of 1985 are down another 10 per cent, Mr. Chairman, and that is very, very positive news.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I'm having difficult following the minister. I understood him to say, and perhaps I'm wrong, that that particular . . . that particular underpass was dangerous, the one on the North Battleford side of the Borden Bridge. If I misunderstood you, I am sorry, sir.

I am asking you when . . . Obviously you knew that when you began building the new bridge that problem would arise with respect to approaches. You obviously started negotiating with the railways and the federal government then, which has been a matter of a couple of years.

What I'm asking is: are you able to give the committee any indication of when construction is likely to start on a new underpass — you once called it an overpass; it could be an overpass, I suppose — a new underpass on the North Battleford side of the bridges?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not saying that we could call it a grade separation — maybe for clarification — and then depending whether you're riding in a train or in a car. The problem was, with the old Borden Bridge, were the curves and the approach onto the bridge. There was not the great major problem with the grade separation. But we are negotiating, and started negotiations and discussions with the federal government as to what we can do to expand or improve the grade separation there for the future twinning of the highway.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I'm sorry that I'm not making myself clear. I heard the minister say that he started negotiations. I heard that perhaps three times.

The question that I ask is this: can you give the committee any indication of what you expect construction to start on the new grade separation on the North Battleford side? The new grade separation — I'm using your words, Mr. Minister — on the North Battleford side?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No, Mr. Chairman, I can't because I cannot tell you what the final decision, or what the end result of the discussions will be. I can only state to the committee, Mr. Chairman, that negotiations and discussions are carrying on, and if the member opposite is trying to get me to announce something before final design and everything else can be approved, and before final dollars are in place for these projects . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, I inherited a mess like that from the previous administration, where seven out of every 10 roads that were announced, there was no money there to fund them.

I'm not going to go that same route. Every project we announce, every project we commit to, will be started, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Sure, sure, Mr. Minister. We all undoubtedly accept the minister's assurances, except those who have been experiencing the worst pot-hole season in 1985 that this province has seen.

What I want to ask the minister is this: with respect to the budget for the year ended March 31, 1985, the year ending that has just ended, approximately how much is your total budget — capital and operating — underspent?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, approximately 7.7 million. And just clarification on this is that winter did set in on us at least a month earlier and . . . Well, I hear some members of the

Assembly laughing. I don't believe it's a joke, Mr. Chairman, because we wanted to complete, Mr. Chairman, many of those projects, but with the snow coming in early it took at least a month to six weeks out of the construction season. But 7.7 million was roughly the money that was left over.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I see. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I noted last year, the year before, there was a substantial underexpenditure, and while I didn't notice it perhaps winter came early in 1983 as well. Certainly, there was a substantial underexpenditure and I haven't heard the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, sure, sure.

With respect, Mr. Minister, to tenders for highway construction, would the minister give me the following information: in how many instances was the lowest tender not accepted where the lowest tender was a Saskatchewan contractor? Please understand my question. Where the lowest tender was a Saskatchewan contractor, in what instances was the lowest tender not accepted?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, and just so you know and the member opposite knows, just so that we have this clear, what you're stating is: what or how many tenders did not go — the low bid tender — to Saskatchewan contractors? Is that what the question is?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I do not understand your paraphrase of it, but I will state mine again.

In how many instances was a contract awarded to other than the low bidder, where such low bidder was a Saskatchewan contractor?

HON. MR. GARNER: — None whatsoever, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I want to turn to another subject. This has to do with staff of the Department of Highways. And the minister will be aware that in the budget for the year 1984-85, the year just completed, there were major lay-offs, and the lay-offs . . . There were at least 236 lay-offs. Approximately 89 or 90 of them were in the works branch, and approximately 150 of them were in as technicians, project supervisors, engineers, and the like — not in works branch, but in the technical staff of the department. This as last spring.

Can you tell me, Mr. Minister, how many fewer technicians, project supervisors, engineers, and the like — people in the operations branch — or how many more you have in this budget, the one we're talking about, than we had in the year before?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Eighteen, Mr. Chairman, and most of those are due to early retirement.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, what you're saying is that last year when there was, as I say, approximately 150 people from the operations branch — technicians, project supervisors, engineers, and the like — cut back, we have a further 18 in this budget, and I understand that to be the case.

Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I want to raise something, and I'll raise it on subvote 1. If strong objection is taken I will wait until we get to the capital one. It deals with urban surface assistance, urban assistance.

Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, you will know that there has been a massive cut-back in urban assistance to Regina and Saskatoon — I will take those two cities — in this budget.

With respect to Regina, you will doubtless be aware that the city of Regina made up its budget in April on the basis of obtaining \$3.5 million in urban assistance. There is provided in the budget \$1.6 million in urban assistance, representing a loss of \$1.8 million in urban assistance over what the city had budgeted for and just about what they got last year. I will pull those figures if you wish.

(16:30)

Now these are, I believe, all highway's figures. There is some compensation with respect to the provincial capital fund of \$800,000, if you call that a compensation. On the other hand, with respect to the transit grant, there is \$500,000 less in transit grants.

So what we have got, Mr. Minister, is a \$1.8 million less in urban assistance, \$500,000 less in transit branch, and \$800,000 more in the capital fund. And they are short \$1.5 million; they're short \$1.5 million.

As will be known to the minister, they've had to put on a special levy in order to gather in some of that money. And we have in Regina — I suspect it's true elsewhere — but in Regina a situation where the streets are probably in poorer shape than they've been for many a spring.

There is no question that the amount of money available for urban assistance has been down, and that the result has been that the city has had to divert some money to finishing capital projects which were under way, and has had to neglect or put less attention on its streets.

No one I think can deny who has been driving around the city streets of Regina that the streets are in poor shape, or poorer than the city would like them to be, and poorer than they have been in the past. I suspect the same to be true in Saskatoon. I don't traverse the streets of Saskatoon in quite the same way, but my friends tell me that the situation is no different in Saskatoon.

With respect to actual cash, it looks like the city of Saskatoon perhaps lost even more money. The capital budget assistance for the urban assistance for arterial roads was cut by about \$2 million. A further urban assistance for recapping arterials was cut by \$500,000. Transit capital projects were cut by \$350,000.

To compensate that, to offset that, the city got about \$900,000 in additional transit assistance for operating, and a \$5 per capita provincial capital fund. In the result, the city of Saskatoon was short close to \$2 million — \$1.9 million — with the same result, Mr. Minister, with the same result that they are having to take special measures with respect to their streets.

I'm not as familiar with them as I am with the city of Regina, but there is no question that there has been a dramatic cut-back in urban assistance from roughly \$18 million in '83-84 to \$10 million in '84-85, to \$5 million in '85-86. And particularly for the major cities who have many demands on their cash, and have many transit problems, many road and street problems, it is creating very, very acute problems. Will the minister indicate why he has decided to cut back so severely on urban assistance for Regina and Saskatoon? I will allow other members to speak for themselves.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, in meeting with the city and other cities in other locations, they basically asked for unconditional grants. They got their \$5 per capita increase, and they wanted to be able to have more movement as to where to build projects, where to put in improvements, and they basically asked for unconditional grants, and that has been gifted to them.

We could argue about the conditions of the city streets. We could stand here and argue for hours about the conditions of the roads. We would just simply disagree.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, if . . . I'll just talk about the city streets for a moment. Are you disagreeing that the city streets in Regina are in a state of repair which is poorer than in previous years? You said we'd agree to disagree. I am stating that they are in a state of disrepair which is . . . the streets are in poorer shape than they were in most previous springs. Are you accepting that, or are you not accepting that?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, what I'm saying is that the city streets are managed by the city of Regina.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Indeed they are, Mr. Minister, and they are paid for by the citizens of Regina. And what I'm asking is how you justify withdrawing \$1.8 million from the city of Regina and saying that \$5 per capita or 800,000 is somehow compensation on the ground that it is an unconditional grant.

I have heard this, Mr. Minister, and are you suggesting to me that the city of Regina requested that you withdraw \$1.8 million of conditional grants and replace it with \$800,000 of non-conditional grants? Are you saying that? Are you saying that that's what the cities asked for, or are you saying that they asked for more unconditional grants as cities and towns always do?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No, Mr. Chairman, I'm not stating what the member opposite is leading to. I'm simply stating that they asked for unconditional grants. There was a \$5 increase in the capital grant, and it went into an unconditional grant for them to do whatever improvements they want in either building of additional roads, improving roads, or putting in grade separations.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, Mr. Minister, that is under the Minister of Urban Affairs' vote, so I won't press it here. I am sure they asked for unconditional grants. What I'm trying to find out is: why did you withdraw more than twice as much money out of urban assistance? They didn't ask for that, did they?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, they had asked for unconditional grants. The decision was made to go to unconditional grants to allow them to build or replace whatever roads they wanted to.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, why was the decision made to provide less than half the money in 1984-85 that was provided . . . in '85-86 that was provided in '84-85? Why did you slash their total grants in half?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, most of the major projects were completed. We look at Lewvan Drive in Regina, we look at the bridge in Saskatoon, and it was a decision that we made.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I'm well aware of the decision that you made. What I was trying to find out is: is it your view that these cities don't have any need for the money which they had in previous years? You're saying that there is no need for the urban assistance? My question was not whether you made a decision. I knew that. My question was why you made the decision. I ask you again.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, there are not as many major projects on the drawing board for this year or for next year.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, may I take it that if there are major projects on the drawing board you will provide urban assistance in the way that it has been provided in the past? Or is this a permanent withdrawal of the Department of Highways from assisting major cities in dealing with their traffic problems?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No, Mr. Chairman, we're saying that we have gone to an increase in the per capita grant, and it's an unconditional grant. And the cities, whether it be Regina or Saskatoon, can allocate where they want to spend those dollars.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I got that message. I managed to pick that up the first three or four times the minister said it. What I am asking, Mr. Minister, is whether or not the cities can expect that they will have available to them substantial sums of money in

the future as they've had in the past for urban assistance projects, of which there are many in each of the major cities, and I suspect in other cities as well.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, we will still be finding highway routes through cities and towns in the province of Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I am aware that you are continuing to fund highway routes through cities and towns in the province of Saskatchewan. I am talking . . . I will therefore turn my mind, and your mind if you would, to arterials, as the phrase has been used, which need not be highways, need not be provincial highways. Do I understand that you have withdrawn all financial support for the construction and maintenance of arterial highways as has been paid in the past? Do I understand that that program is dead?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, yes, we have withdrawn funding for arterial routes through cities and towns, but once again we're saying that there's been an increase in the per capita grant. It's a \$5 increase, and it's into unconditional grants, and we let the cities and the towns do whatever improvements that they want.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm sure that the Minister of Urban Affairs will wish to ascribe to that money all manner of other uses. I'm asking about the Department of Highways. And I think I have established the point that so far as assistance for arterial roads is concerned, there will be no more assistance for arterial roads. And does the minister feel that that is the in the best interests of the highways and transportation system of Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, I believe it's in the best interests of the people that are involved in it. They have asked for unconditional grants. They have been awarded unconditional grants. They wanted to be able to allocate their money, as I've stated previously, to either grade separations, road improvements, or new roads, or arterial streets. Now they do not have to come before the Department of Highways and Transportation. They can do that on their own.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I read with some care the letter that SUMA sent to your government, and from it I did not gain the impression that they had asked for the unconditional grants as a substitute for the arterial road program, or any other assistance from your department. Are you suggesting that they asked for this as a substitute, or are you suggesting that they asked for greater grants, as all municipalities do, but did not ask for an did not expect a vicious slash of the money that they used to get from the Department of Highways?

HON. MR. GARNER: — No, Mr. Chairman, I'm not suggesting anything like that.

You know, I mean, many people ask for many things. Many political parties ask to become re-elected, and we've seen what's happened to your party in the last general election. So I guess we'll just agree to disagree.

(16:45)

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I simply want to close by saying that the city of Regina, the city of Saskatoon, have each suffered a very substantial loss in revenue — \$1.5 to \$2 million, in each case.

After you have assigned all money that you might wish to assign as compensation, they've had a net loss, and their streets and roads are going to show it. The Minister of Highways, apparently, is unconcerned about the streets in the major cities, and I want to advise this committee, and the motorists of Regina and Saskatoon, that when they hit a pot-hole, they should mark that down as evidence of the unconcern of the Minister of Highways.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, no, not quite, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe we can agree with the

member opposite on that, you know. We could go back, I guess, and review the record. Commitments that we make, we will be keeping.

The member opposite raised the point about the grade separation on the North Battleford side of the Borden Bridge, you know. We're not prepared to make that announcement until everything is in place. Once again, the city of Regina had asked for unconditional grants. They've received unconditional grants. They can build whatever roads, or whatever streets they want; it's their local responsibility.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I change the subject moderately to the question of capital grants for transit systems. Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, you have been busy at discussing what urban affairs is paying. You're not, I take it, willing to discuss what urban affairs is not paying in terms of transit grants. If you would rather that this be raised in the Department of Urban Affairs, I will be happy to do so.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Chairman, just as short question. You've got a Legislative Secretary, I believe, Mr. Minister, do you? Could you tell me whether that Legislative Secretary has a CVA car or whether he uses his own car when he travels on your approval, and whether he has taken any trips out of province?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, he has no CVA car, and the Executive Council will have the information on my Legislative Secretary's travel — who is the member from Rosthern, Mr. Katzman, who does a great job.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 and 3 agreed to.

Item 4

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, transportation planning and research — I notice here there's quite an increase. If we go back to '83, you had 1.5 million and you went up to 1.9 or close to 2.0. And in '84-85 and in '85-86 you went up again — and it really went up — to 4.3.

Mr. Minister, could you tell me what it was that went up so high in other expenses in transportation planning?

HON. MR. GARNER: — There were some various studies that were conducted, Mr. Chairman. A review of the western grain transportation Act, transportation advisory service demonstration on the branch line alternatives, road vehicle research and transportation research on bulk commodities.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, could you send me a list of all of those studies that you made, where we're looking at \$2 million. I'd like you to send that list over and a breakdown.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes.

Item 4 agreed to.

Items 5 and 6 agreed to.

Item 7

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, communications — I notice again that communications has gone up once more this year. And it went up from '83, which was 275,000, to 844 in '84, and now we're looking at 850. Mr. Minister, why does it continue to go up? Do you not think that at a time

when you're asking everyone else to practise some restraint that maybe you should practise some restraint in your communications budget?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, the public communications director tells me it's just ongoing safety programs — the drinking driver, the school bus, the stop arms — everything related to the winter safe driving campaign. We discussed it earlier under vote number 1. I believe you have the list of it all right there.

Item 7 agreed to.

Item 8 agreed to.

Item 9

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I notice you've got two less people in engineering division. The salary range hasn't gone down, or the amount paid out for personal services is about the same. Could you indicate why there is no decrease? Is it because of the so-called increments that you talked about, or what's the reason for the amount staying the same when you reduced it by two people?

HON. MR. GARNER: — It's early retirements — two. It was early retirement. Normal salary increments took place in there, so they had the normal salary increments as did others.

Item 9 agreed to.

Items 10 to 19 inclusive agreed to.

Item 20

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Chairman, we were moving along not bad. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, you mentioned a while ago that there were only some 19, 18 or 19 people that were laid off this year, was it, or are no longer with the department? I'm just asking you: I believe when the Leader of the Opposition was asking some questions, you had indicated the number of people — above those that were laid off last year — how many are no longer working with the department, have been laid off or retired or whatever, this year? I notice there's quite a number in each department here that are not working this year. Now are they moved, or is it early retirement, or what happened to all these people?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, and the hon. member, that's for the early retirement.

Item 20 agreed to.

Items 21 to 23 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 16 agreed to.

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Capital Expenditure — Vote 17

Items 1 to 3 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 17 agreed to.

May 30, 1985

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1986
CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 16

Items 1 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Chairman, this is just for information purposes, isn't this, Mr. Chairman? This is part of the main estimates?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Yes. It has to be voted but there's no resolution.

Vote 16 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1986
CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Capital Expenditure — Vote 17

Item 1

MR. LUSNEY: — What was this spent on, Mr. Minister, the extra \$2 million that you required in this from last year, was that in snow removal over the winter or what was it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, on page 3 of the '85-86 Supplementaries. Sorry.

Item 1 agreed to.

Vote 17 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1985??????????
CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 16

Item 1

MR. LUSNEY: — I guess I'll re-ask that question, Mr. Chairman. The extra \$2 million that you require here, Mr. Minister, in expenditures for last year, what was that for?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, that's for accounts payable.

MR. LUSNEY: — What accounts are you talking about, salaries or what?

HON. MR. GARNER: — It's expenditures that are made in the previous year and paid in the following year.

May 30, 1985

MR. LUSNEY: — I know that, Mr. Minister, but what were those expenditures? This is what I was asking you.

HON. MR. GARNER: — For asphalt, culvert, salt, and things in that nature for the maintenance of the department.

Item 1 agreed to.

Vote 16 agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'd like to thank the minister and his officials.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to thank all of the department officials for their hard work and their keen interest.

And, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the members in opposition for their questions. We will be providing them with the information that they required.

The committee recessed until 7 p.m.