

September 8, 1987

EVENING SITTING

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 6

Mr. Kowalsky moved, seconded by Mr. Lautermilch, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 6 showing:

Regarding one P.J. (Paul) Schoenhals: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I'll be moving a motion to the Assembly, asking the Assembly to provide some information regarding one P.J. (Paul) Schoenhals — information about whether he's been employed by the government or any of its boards, and information relating to the remuneration and the responsibilities of this employee.

This entire procedure, Mr. Speaker, is designed for the purpose of scrutinizing the government, and the opposition members have put forth a series of motions, which if passed by this Assembly will provide information to the public through this Assembly — straightforward, honest information so that the public can judge whether or not the government is treating the expenditures of the people in the manner which, of course, they deserve.

Now in this particular case we're asking, and have asked for earlier today, previous to the 5 o'clock adjournment, we asked for a very similar motion regarding one Sidney Dutchak and one George Hill. We asked the government members to vote for these motions and show openness, show that they believe strongly in the appointments, that their appointments were the right ones; and they can do this by opening up their books. And then of course they would leave that to the public and to the people to decide, and if they trusted the people and the people's decision in total they would open up the books on matters like this.

Now in this particular case, the people of Saskatchewan are quite interested in knowing whether this Paul Schoenhals, who was a member of their former government, who is now employed by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, whether it is \$300,000 that he earns, or \$200,000 that he earns, or some place in between, or some place a little lower, or some place a little above that, Mr. Speaker.

So it is seeking this information, then, that I move the motion that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 6 showing:

Regarding one P.J. (Paul) Schoenhals: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact

duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

I make that motion, and it is seconded by the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, this is no different than a couple of other motions that were dealt with earlier today, and the same arguments apply; as has been — and, I think, invented by the previous administration — the long-standing practice of this kind of information being given through the committee of Crown corporations and then, as it relates to the management team, as an aggregate sum as opposed to individual members of the management team.

So simply put, Mr. Speaker, I'll be urging all members to vote against this particular motion.

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make a comment in respect to this particular motion. This motion is seeking information regarding Mr. Schoenhals, who was an hon. member in the House up until the last election when the people of Sutherland in Saskatoon decided that they would be better served with a New Democratic candidate member. And certainly they expressed their wishes on that particular election day.

I think what is important here, although there is no way of us getting exact information other than through motions for return, it is our understanding that Mr. Schoenhals, a former defeated cabinet minister, who indicated when he took over Tourism and Small Business that he had virtually no business experience . . .

And it's our understanding that what he has been promoted to here, Mr. Speaker, is as a permanent — permanent — chairman of the board of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. The precedents in the past, Mr. Speaker, is that any member of the board of any Crown corporation, all were paid an equal amount, a per diem allowance. With Mr. Schoenhals, again he's at the public trough, and unlike what was the practice in the past of a per diem allowance, apparently Mr. Schoenhals is a permanent employee, a permanent chairman of the board receiving a very substantial amount of money, estimated at over \$100,000.

And what we're asking here, is this here Paul Schoenhals, which is chairman of the board, who in this House indicated he had no business experience, who supposedly is running the potash corporation as chairman of the board, what we want to know and the people of Saskatchewan want to know is: how much is being paid; how he's employed; the basis of employment; and the amount that he's being paid.

And I think it's significant because there has been a substantial change of simply paying on a number of meetings. I think that the former chairman of the board of the potash corporation, Mr. Cliff Wright, was the chairman, and they met somewhere in the

neighbourhood of eight times a year. Now what we have here is Mr. Schoenhals – the former cabinet minister, the defeated cabinet minister, the man who admitted in this House he had no business experience – being put on a very substantial amount of payment.

So what we're asking here is straightforward information for the people of Saskatchewan because after all many of these same people are banting about how they want the free enterprise system. It's very strange that once the people of Saskatchewan have rejected one after another, these same people who say they want to go to the private enterprise come creeping back into the government at extraordinarily high pay. And this government is refusing to give to the people of Saskatchewan the amount of money that they're paying to these patronage appointments.

And as I say and my colleague has said, this is a straightforward request whether he is employed and the basis of employment and the exact duties and responsibilities, his total remuneration, and the procedure used to employ him and the date his employment took effect. That is straightforward, and I think that it's becoming of the government who came in on the promise that they would have an open government, that they would communicate with the people of Saskatchewan, and now they're hiding behind ... and refuse to provide basic information and respect to these highly political appointments of defeated candidates, cabinet ministers who were rejected by the people of Saskatchewan.

And so I urge all members, and particularly the back-benchers on that side, not to just say no without even knowing why you're saying it – to listen; to read this here; to think some day you may be in opposition then within a short period of time, and you will want information similar to this. So I ask you, the back-benchers, don't just echo their words, but to join with us to bring open government to the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion negatived on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 14

Blakeney	Koskie
Tchorzewski	Rolfes
Upshall	Kowalsky
Atkinson	Hagel
Calvert	Lautermilch
Trew	Smart
Van Mulligen	Koenker

Nays — 26

Muller	Meiklejohn
Duncan	Martin
Andrew	Toth
Berntson	Sauder
Lane	Johnson
Taylor	McLaren
Smith	Petersen

Swan	Baker
Schmidt	Gleim
Hodgins	Neudorf
Gerich	Kopelchuk
Hardy	Saxinger
Klein	Britton

Return no. 7

Mr. Kowalsky moved, seconded by Mr. Lautermilch, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 7 showing:

Regarding one T.B. (Tim) Embury: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to move a motion asking for information regarding the employment of one Tim Embury on any boards, corporations, commissions, or agencies that may have been hired by this government. We know that one Tim Embury has had some contracts given under Coopers & Lybrand. Coopers & Lybrand were the people this government went to in desperation after they found that they were into a \$3.4 billion deficit and they found that the lenders, the money lenders of New York and elsewhere, would no longer give them low interest money unless they made some definite changes in their direction of spending and spending wildly. They had to curb their spending habits so they employed the firm of Coopers & Lybrand for some – again, unknown to this government at this stage – but suggested in the vicinity of \$3 million of which Tim Embury, Tim Embury's contract could come to as much as 50 per cent of that. Perhaps it's only 500,000, but it should be known to the public. And we ask you to come up with the numbers so that we know exactly what the numbers are.

Because these members are very quick, are very quick to use public money for private enterprise and we're saying, you don't use public money for private enterprise. If you want to do that, you open it up and you let us know exactly what it is.

So I move, then, this order of the Assembly, that we do issue for a return no. 7 showing that:

Regarding one T.B. (Tim) Embury: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

I make that motion, seconded by the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be moving a friendly amendment, seconded by the member for

Saskatoon Centre.

That in the first sentence after the word “is” we add the words “or has been.”

Because of the significant question involved in this instance and because of the continued patronage of the government in hiring ex-MLAs, ex-members of this Legislative Assembly, that the Saskatchewan public has every right to know just who is on the public dole and who is not; and in this case we want to know if Mr. T.B. (Tim) Embury is in fact taking money at public expense – indeed, whether Mr. Embury is at the public trough.

So for the reason stated by the member from Prince Albert, I am moving the amendment to the motion.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, after the word “is” in the first sentence – I wonder if you mean the first line.

Mr. Speaker: — Is that what the hon. member means?

Order, please. Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order, order. Order, please.

The member asked a question and he’s had a right to ask that question.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, not only do, not only do I . . . Mr. Speaker, I’m trying to get . . . I’m trying to . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order. It seems that that query has caused a little bit of consternation in the House.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the query. Now if we can settle down for a minute, I’ll try to explain what I would propose that we do with this because I have no objection, I have no objection to the amendment, Mr. Speaker. I don’t know why they didn’t draft it that way in the first place. It is their motion . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. We’re not going to get through this motion if we have constant interruptions, and I just ask once more for your co-operation.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Let me just wrap it up by saying, Mr. Speaker, that I will be urging all members to vote for the amendment – for the amendment – the amendment, Mr. Speaker, that will cause the motion to ask the question that they wanted to ask in the first place. But they’ve now got it fixed, and I will, following that, Mr. Speaker, be urging all members to vote for the amended motion.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having listened to the House Leader for the government side, I couldn’t help but to get up and find out, once again, that the only reason that we’re here, the only reason we’re here considering these motions is because, although they were put on the order paper last December, the government has stonewalled and has not allowed these motions to come forward until nine months hence, which is now in September. So for the member opposite to stand up and say that somehow the motion is not timely, it is

only . . . If it isn’t timely, it’s because the government has deliberately stood in the way of trying to allow this Assembly to get the information that it has the right to have.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. I’d like to ask the members for their co-operation. The Leader of the Opposition would like to make a few remarks, and I now recognize him.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don’t want to make many remarks except to make the point that members opposite are obviously attempting to impede the work of the House.

The member for Souris-Cannington – and we all heard him – raised a point saying, you couldn’t have meant the first sentence; you must have meant the first line. Now I invite him to read that and see if he can find another “is” in the first sentence. I invite him to read this. I invite him to read this, and he will find that the first sentence and the first line mean exactly the same thing, and when he raises an objection, all he’s doing is impeding the work of the committee because he doesn’t want to give this sort of information.

If he had been thinking that he would like to expedite the work of the committee, he wouldn’t have raised that totally frivolous objection – frivolous objection – to which there is not one scintilla of merit.

I noted the member for Qu’Appelle-Lumsden indicated that we had got it wrong. May I ask the member for Qu’Appelle-Lumsden to bring all his legal talents to bear and explain to the House how there is any single difference between “is” in the first line and “is” in the first sentence. There is none, and accordingly, when you raise these points, you are impeding the work of the House and I invite all hon. members to get on with the job of getting these passed. We’ve already waited eight or nine months, and may I ask you not to raise frivolous objections and get on with the job of giving us the information we asked for last fall.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. The Minister of Finance has not been recognized because there’s too much noise in the House – I’m afraid on both side of the House in this instance – so I would ask all members to co-operate so we may hear the words of the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a rather interesting debate tonight that the opposition has taken more time tonight amending its own motion – that they had nine months to get correct in the first place – than they have on speaking on potash this whole session.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, they’ve had nine months to try and get the motion correct and they obviously couldn’t do it.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, with all respect, I think tonight is an example of what happens when the opposition back-benchers in particular try and do something on their own without the Leader of the Opposition. After what we've seen tonight, Mr. Speaker, I think for the good of the people of the province that the Leader of the Opposition should stay because they certainly can't perform without his participation in action. And, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. Order, please, order. Order. I'm not sure that the Minister of Finance is discussing the motion before the House. However, I will allow him to continue.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, my point, I think, was rather a salient one in that nine months to try and get a motion correct — they couldn't do it; that they've debated, amending their own motion and, like I say, taking more time to amend a motion than to debate potash, which I think is a rather telling story of the actions of the opposition in this session.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 8

Ms. Atkinson moved, seconded by Mr. Calvert, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing:

Regarding the announcement in the March 26, 1986 budget address that the provincial government would fund the establishment of a second day surgery unit at the Saskatoon City Hospital: (1) the date the second day surgery unit at the Saskatoon City Hospital opened, and the number of patients it has served; (2) the amount of funding the provincial government has provided to hire additional staff for this unit; (3) the total cost of establishing this unit, and the amount of that total provided by the Government of Saskatchewan; (4) the current waiting list for elective surgery at Saskatoon City Hospital.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, after a few remarks I would like to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return 8 showing.

In this return, Mr. Speaker, what we're basically trying to get from the government is information with regard to the second day surgery unit at the City Hospital in Saskatoon.

In March of 1986, all members will recall that the government thought that they were in the midst of a provincial election. At that time we had a serious problem in Saskatoon with hospital waiting lists. Well I can assure you now, Mr. Speaker, that if we had a serious problem in 1986 with hospital waiting lists in Saskatoon, we now have a critical problem. We now have over 11,000 people in the northern part of Saskatchewan waiting for elective surgery in the city of Saskatoon at the three major

hospitals.

(1930)

We have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where people with cancer or the possibility of cancer are waiting for over six weeks to get into hospital. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, our hospitals are so underfunded that the three hospitals in Saskatoon had to move to close over 300 beds this summer.

It's a critical problem, Mr. Speaker. Those beds are still closed and we're into September. We now have more people than ever before in the history in Saskatoon waiting for a hospital bed. We have people that are waiting for over two years to get into hospital for such minor surgery, and yet the Government of Saskatchewan refuses to fund those hospitals so we can keep those beds open and get on with the job.

Mr. Speaker, I would therefore like to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 8 showing:

Regarding the announcement in the March 26, 1986 budget address that the provincial government would fund the establishment of a second day surgery unit at the Saskatoon City Hospital: (1) the date the second day surgery unit at the Saskatoon City Hospital opened, and the number of patients it has served; (2) the amount of funding the provincial government has provided to hire additional staff for this unit; (3) the total cost of establishing this unit, and the amount of that total provided by the Government of Saskatchewan; (4) the current waiting list for elective surgery at Saskatoon City Hospital.

I move that, and it is seconded by the member from Moose Jaw South.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 9

Ms. Atkinson moved, seconded by Mr. Calvert, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing:

Regarding the statement in the March 26, 1986 budget address that the provincial government would fund nearly 700 new health care positions for Saskatchewan hospitals and nursing homes in 1986: (1) the number of these 700 new health care positions that have been funded and are in place; (2) the hospitals and nursing homes where these new health care positions have been created; (3) in each instance, the number of these new health care positions that are nursing positions; (4) the total cost of these new positions, and the amount of this total that has been contributed by the provincial government.

Ms. Atkinson: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, after a few remarks, I would like to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing.

Once again, in that March 1986 budget, that famous

budget when the government thought that they were going into a provincial election, and after the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses had brought to the attention of the people of Saskatchewan the sad underfunding and understaffing of hospitals and nursing homes, the government once again announced that they would create over 700 new health care positions in Saskatchewan hospitals and nursing homes.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can report today that the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses don't know where those 700 positions went to. They can't find them in our hospitals and nursing homes, and the patients in this province can't find them either. I've had report after report of people in hospitals not being able to get a nurse, not being able to have other health care workers come to their room, because of the understaffing in Saskatchewan hospitals and nursing homes.

The situation is critical. We have a situation in Saskatoon where this government announced a huge nursing home, and it opened — a huge new nursing home — where we have 38 beds that haven't yet opened because there aren't staff, people to look after those patients.

That's what's happening in Saskatoon. We have people on the waiting list to get into that nursing home and they can't get in. There are 38 beds that haven't opened because of underfunding of our health care system by this province and by this government — this government that said it was so committed to health care — that we have a situation where patients are worried about entering hospitals because they're worried about the level of care they're going to be receiving because of the understaffing.

We have lots and lots of nurses in this province that tell us that they are getting out of nursing because they can't cope with the stressful situation of having all of these patients and not having any colleagues to assist them because of the underfunding and understaffing of our hospitals and nursing homes.

So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing:

Regarding the statement in the March 26, 1986 budget address that the provincial government would fund nearly 700 new health care positions for Saskatchewan hospitals and nursing homes in 1986: (1) the number of these 700 new health care positions that have been funded and are in place; (2) the hospitals and nursing homes where these new health care positions have been created; (3) in each instance, the number of these new health care positions that are nursing positions; (4) the total cost of these new positions, and the amount of this total that has been contributed by the provincial government.

And that is seconded by my colleague the member for Moose Jaw South.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment to offer for this motion. And the reason for the amendment, Mr. Speaker, is that while the government funds the various health care facilities in the province, the

positions and when and how and etc., that recruitment takes place are the responsibility of those individual facilities and not under the direct control of the government.

So I simply want to make the amendment, Mr. Speaker, to reflect that, and I therefore move, seconded by the Minister of Justice:

That return no. 9 be amended by deleting the words "and are in place" in subsection (1) of the motion.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, it is hard to understand why the House Leader for the government would want to make this amendment that he has just made because, clearly, what his explanation for it was, was not the real facts of the situation as it is.

It is true that the government provides funding to health institutions, hospitals, and nursing homes, but it does it only after the hospitals and nursing homes have provided an indication of what their staffing positions are going to be and so on. But be that as it may, what the former minister of health announced when they announced these 700 positions was that this was a special allocation of money which was going to provide enrichment to staff over and beyond what was in place already. And that can only happen, Mr. Speaker, if indeed there is an agreement between the Department of Health and the individual hospitals as to what those positions will be.

So what the member opposite is asking by his amendment and in his explanation, Mr. Speaker, is really not accurate. The government can provide that information. And this amendment that he is making, I suspect, is an attempt by the government not to provide the real facts because the announcement which the Minister of Health made a little over a year ago has never been put into place — has never been put into place.

It was an enrichment announcement made prior to what was going to be an election in the spring of 1986. They decided, because they were in deep trouble, not to have the election until the fall of 1986, and in the meantime these positions that were announced have not been into place, and the difficulties which the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses brought to the attention of the Saskatchewan public are not only as bad as they used to be, Mr. Speaker, in fact they are much worse today than they were before the announcement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 10

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

Regarding one G.E. (Gordon) Dirks: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of

Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be moving a motion for an order of the Assembly to issue for the following return which I shall state to you in a minute, but briefly I just simply want to state that since October of 1986 there are not many defeated members of the government who have not been rewarded by this government for the fact that the public rejected them in their constituencies.

This motion which I am going to move involves one Mr. Gordon Dirks, a cabinet minister of the former government, who along with his other colleagues lived high on the hog for the time this government was in power from 1982 until 1986, along with other members travelled the world, and then when the public said to these individuals, we will have no more of that and therefore voted them out of office . . .

An Hon. Member: — Kicked them out.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — . . . kicked them out of office unceremoniously and with huge majorities, what does this government do? They make sure they line up at the patronage trough and they give them all lucrative positions which they are not worthy of.

Mr. Speaker, this former minister of the Crown is one of those individuals. Taxpayers are spending their dollars to pay for the salaries so that these people can live well while this government is telling to the parents of Saskatchewan that their children cannot have the best possible education because of cut-backs that they have to make to the education system — whereas in the Department of Education, I understand, there is Mr. Dirks hired to do some studies simply so that he can be put on a salary at the taxpayers' expense.

I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, because the public should know what the amount of that salary are and what the other costs are, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10, showing:

Regarding one G.E. (Gordon) Dirks: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, Crown corporations, commissions or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him; (5) the date his employment took effect.

Seconded by the member from Prince Albert.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 11

Mr. Tchorzewski moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 11 showing:

Regarding the Regina plant of Nardei Fabricators (Saskatchewan) Ltd.: (1) the public expense involved in the Premier's appearance at the plant's official opening on October 14, 1986; (2) whether any provincial government industrial incentive grants have been approved with respect to the plant; (3) the number of people currently employed at the plant.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to move another order of the Assembly to issue a return. This is involving a Regina plant, which I understand no longer exists, called Nardei industries or Nardei Fabricators. This is one of those raving success stories of this government's open for business policy which was announced after 1982 and heralded as being the solution to Saskatchewan's economic growth and employment.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, that this information is so very important is that during the election campaign the Premier, as part of his election campaign, had arranged for him a grand opening of Nardei industries in Regina with a lot of hoop-la and a lot of expense, once again at the taxpayers' . . . at the taxpayers' expense. It should have been considered an election expense that the members opposite should have claimed, but I suspect it was not.

(1945)

Mr. Speaker, right after the election was over, Nardei industries closed its doors and stopped its business. Now it is hard to believe that the Premier and his handlers didn't know the state of that business just a few weeks before it collapsed when they arranged this official opening so that the Premier could give himself a media hit for the purposes of getting some publicity for the election campaign.

This kind of abuse, Mr. Speaker, this kind of abuse of the public's money, the public purse, should be unacceptable on the part of any government, but because it has happened it is only right that the information be made public, and I would hope that the government comes clean and supports this resolution, or this motion, so that indeed that information can be provided.

I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 11 showing:

Regarding the Regina plant of Nardei Fabricators (Saskatchewan) Ltd.: (1) the public expense involved in the Premier's appearance at the plant's official opening on October 14, 1986; (2) whether any provincial government industrial incentive grants have been approved with respect to the plant; (3) the number of people currently employed at the plant.

Mr. Speaker: — I didn't get your seconder. You may have given it, but I don't believe I got it.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, you're correct. I didn't name my seconder, the member from Quill Lakes.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, we are prepared to give the information asked for by the members opposite except as to it relates to the number of employees at the plant. And the reason . . .

An Hon. Member: — Why?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And the member asks why and so I'll explain why.

The reason that we are not prepared to give the number of employees at the plant, Mr. Speaker, is that Nardei has asked us not to do that because it's the kind of information they're not prepared to let their competitors have. But as it relates to the . . .

An Hon. Member: — The number of employees?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, phone them up and ask them, you know. I'll telling you what we're prepared to give. And we're prepared to give you the public cost, if any, as it relates to the Premier's appearance. We're prepared to give you the industrial incentives, if any. We're not prepared to give you the number of employees. If they are, you can get it from them. They've asked us not to give that information and we respect that, Mr. Speaker.

I therefore move, seconded by the Minister of Justice:

That return no. 11 be amended by deleting all the words after "plant" in subsection (2).

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 12

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

Regarding the employment of one Glen Penner as associate deputy minister of Education: (1) the date his appointment took effect; (2) his duties and responsibilities; (3) his salary.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I'm asking that a motion be passed by this Assembly to issue information "regarding the employment of one Glen Penner as associate deputy minister of Education . . ."

This one Glen Penner was formerly a Liberal member elected from Saskatoon. I believe he is now the only remaining employee of the Department of Education who has any corporate memory or possesses any corporate memory of what was done by the department in the field of the core curriculum. And as such, Glen Penner would have, what I think our minister would call, an awesome responsibility.

In doing so I cast no aspersions whatsoever on his professional qualifications, I wonder what it is, Mr. Minister, that set him apart from the 20-some people that did get the sack from the department when it came to working on the core curriculum.

So I do hereby, Mr. Speaker, move that an order of this Assembly do issue for return no. 12 showing:

Regarding the employment of one Glen Penner as associate deputy minister of Education: (1) the date his appointment took effect; (2) his duties and responsibilities; (3) his salary.

Seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I would only make one observation: the Department of Education was in estimates for about a month or three weeks in this House, and the members opposite asked a series of questions, including the staffing of the senior people within the Department of Education. The minister provided the information, undertook to provide that information to them, all the stuff that is here.

But the nature of this particular question is that Glen Penner has served in a public field for a long period of time. And the members opposite, with this type of motion, want to cast questions about Mr. Penner only for the fact that he happened to stand for office and run for office and become elected to this Assembly by a party neither the NDP or the Progressive Conservatives.

Following that time in the legislature, Mr. Speaker, he went on to become a director of education in the Saskatoon school district, hired by the people in that particular school district. Now, he then came from there into the government to work for the government — both very significant and senior positions.

The members opposite would have one believe that just because someone served in this legislature that he is not capable of doing that type of a job, and I think that is a shameful type of motion to bring before this House.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 13

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

Regarding one Myles Morin: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, commissions, Crown corporations or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him, and the date his employment took effect.

Mr. Kowalsky: — I will ask the Assembly to give us information regarding one Myles Morin, who was a former member elected from North Battleford and defeated in the last election — a good choice by the people of North Battleford, I might say. This Mr. Morin was even in the cabinet. We want to know whether Mr. Morin has been or is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or by any of its boards, or commissions, or Crown corporations, or agencies.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, that an order of the

Assembly do issue for return no. 13 showing that:

Regarding one Myles Morin: (1) whether he is employed by the Government of Saskatchewan or any of its boards, commissions, Crown corporations or agencies; (2) if so, his exact duties and responsibilities; (3) his total remuneration; (4) the procedure used to employ him, and the date his employment took effect.

Seconded by the member from Moose Jaw North.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 14

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

Regarding the Executive Council's Saskatoon cabinet office: (1) the number of people employed by the office; (2) in each case, their names, duties, and current rates of pay; (3) the 1986-87 budget for the office.

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 14 showing, and it's in regards to the Saskatchewan cabinet office. I remember full well, Mr. Speaker, in the mid-1970s when some of the members opposite spoke most vociferously against the establishment of that office, and I have . . .

An Hon. Member: — Untrue.

Mr. Rolfes: — Oh, the records will show that, because they indicated that our government at the time were establishing nothing but a political office. And I think, if my memory serves me well, it was the present Minister of Finance who spoke very vociferously against this establishment.

And, Mr. Speaker, what concerns me is now that we no longer see any ads in the *Star-Phoenix* indicating which minister will be in Saskatoon. The purpose of establishing that office was to give access to northern Saskatchewan to Executive Council members so that they wouldn't have to drive all the way to Regina and they could meet with the members of the cabinet and have their concerns heard.

As I indicated, I don't see any ads in the *Star-Phoenix* advertising when the Minister of Health will be there or when the Premier will be there or even when the Deputy Premier will be there, so that people can come and see them.

So I'd really like to know what the office is being used for at this particular time and how many people are employed.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the former minister of Health, if he wishes to speak to it, should get off from his seat and stand in this House and speak, Mr. Speaker. Otherwise I would kindly ask him not to interrupt.

But, Mr. Speaker, I moved therefore an order showing, which asks:

(1) the number of people employed by the office; (2) in each case, their names, duties, and current rates of pay; (3) the 1986-87 budget for the office.

I so move, seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 15

Mr. Rolfes moved, seconded by Mr. Koenker, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 15 showing:

Regarding the announcement in the March 26, 1986 budget address that the provincial government would fund the expansion of in-patient surgical capacity at St. Paul's and University Hospitals in Saskatoon: (1) the amount the in-patient surgical capacity at these two hospitals has been expanded, and the date the expansions went into service; (2) the number of patients who have been served by these areas; (3) the amount of funding the provincial government provided to hire additional staff for these expansions; (4) the total cost of each expansion, and in each case, the amount of that total that was provided by the Government of Saskatchewan; (5) the current waiting list for in-patient surgery at each hospital.

Mr. Rolfes: — I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 15 showing. This deals with the announcement made in the 1986 budget of in-patient surgical capacity at St. Paul's and the University Hospital. And my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana has already alluded to this.

Mr. Speaker, I remember well when I was the minister of Health some years ago that we had a waiting list, a total waiting list in Saskatoon of little over 4,000, and everybody in the medical profession thought that that was a real crisis situation, and I tried to address the problems at that time and did so to some extent.

Never, Mr. Speaker, never had we ever experienced that the waiting list in Saskatoon would ever get to over 11,000. I phoned the various hospitals today, Mr. Speaker, and asked them to give me the exact numbers of the people who are on the waiting list, and I would like to put them on the record.

At St. Paul's the in-patient surgical waiting list is 3,742 — that's the in-patient waiting list; that is almost as large as the total waiting list in the worst year, Mr. Speaker, when I was the minister of Health. In the day surgery, Mr. Speaker, at St. Paul's we have 648. So in the last days of August at St. Paul's alone, we have over 4,400 people waiting to get into a hospital.

At the university, Mr. Speaker, we have a waiting list of in-patients of 1,800, and I am told that many, many of those are for orthopedic surgery which is major surgery and they are long-stay patients, and the out-patient is 600; so another 2,400, over 2,400 at University Hospital.

At City Hospital, Mr. Speaker, we have 2,310 as of the end of August, in-patient; and out-patient of 2,123, for a total of 4,433 – for a total, Mr. Speaker, of 11,223 people waiting to get into the Saskatoon hospitals.

(2000)

Mr. Speaker, there was an announcement made – and that's what my motion is asking about – there was an announcement made in the 1986 budget that they would address the problem, that they would address the problem, and yet, Mr. Speaker, this year we see over 300 hospital beds closed in Saskatoon, not for one month, not for two months, and nor for three months, but for a period of at least four months. People are waiting not weeks; they're waiting months, and in some cases, well over a year to get the necessary surgery that they require in Saskatoon and northern Saskatchewan.

And I'm asking all members in this House to support the motion that I have put forward so that we can get this information and again we can address the problem and press the government and the present Minister of Health to come to grips with that problem in Saskatoon so that our people can receive the medical attention that they need.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 15 showing – and I will not read through it, Mr. Speaker, — seconded by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 17

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, on this particular motion, item no. 17 . . . We have a series of motions here, I think – 17 through 60 – that are essentially the same motion, but for various departments, agencies, and Crowns of government. And in discussions previously with the opposition House Leader and today with the whip, I think we have an understanding that we can amend the last one of this series, which would be item no. 60, in such a way as to provide all of the information asked for in one return.

Now the only way we can do that and be in order is that if we drop items no. 17 through 59. The reason we can't do it on 17, I understand, is because we are dealing with anticipating other motions that are still on the order paper, and it's a far smarter guy than I that figured that out. But I will give you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We can if we drop them first, I guess.

But I will give you the amendment now, and then ask for leave to proceed to item no. 60, or return no. 60, having dropped 17 through 59, and the amendment that I would propose on 60 is as follows:

That return no. 60 be amended by deleting all words after the word "by" and substituting:

all government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations for the period of April 1, 1986

to the date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, the purpose, and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the amendment that I would propose, assuming that we would drop 17 through 59.

Mr. Koskie: — What we want here, in agreeing with this, Mr. Deputy Premier, is we would agree to it but we want for each rather than all. In other words, we want it individualized as we have requested it, from 17 up to 60 for the individual departments, not a global figure of a combination of all of the departments, agencies, or Crown corporations.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The intent is, for instance, in one return to give you the global number for Agriculture broken down as I've described in the amendment, and then in, say in Sask whatever – crop insurance, if it's an agency or economic development – each one will be treated as a separate item but I'll give it on the same return. And the only purpose for this is so we have it in one return to expedite the matter, number one; and number two, so we can expedite matters in the House here.

Mr. Koskie: — It just seems to me that if you wanted to expedite you could . . . Each department could attack this here individual motion for return, and, very simply, get it in very rapidly. It seems to me that there is going to be less than expediting, if I may say so, and I wish you would assure me that there would be every intent to get it co-ordinated all together. Because it seems to me, it seems to me what you're doing is packaging it all together which may, in fact, take much longer than if you had the individual departments submitting it. But if you give us the undertaking that when you will indeed get that information to us as fast as possible, we're prepared to proceed on that basis, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I agree with the undertaking, and I will act in all due dispatch.

Mr. Speaker: — Is leave granted then to proceed to motions for return no. 60?

An Hon. Member: — Drop 17 through 59 inclusive, and go to 60.

Mr. Speaker: — Drop 17 to 59 inclusive and go to 60. I believe the member for Regina North East will still have to move motions for return 60, and then the amendment will come to the motion.

Return No. 60

Mr. Tchorzewski moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. Blakeney, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 60 showing:

The total amount paid by the SaskExpo '86 corporation, for the period April 1, 1986 to the

date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought that would be the case. We have had the discussion of the clarification so I simply would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 60 showing – and I will wait for the amendment – seconded by the member from Elphinstone.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I therefore move, seconded by the Minister of Tourism and Small Business:

That return no. 60 be amended by deleting all words after the word “by” and substituting:

all government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations for the period April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 61

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, similarly we have a group of motions here, 61 through 103, that are essentially asking for the same information in government departments, agencies and Crowns, and so I would advance the same explanation if we could drop to 102 inclusive I would move, virtually the identical amendment:

That return no. 103 be amended by deleting all words after the word “by” and substituting:

all government departments, agencies and Crown corporations during the fiscal year ‘85-86 to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

This is almost identical to the previous amendment, Mr. Speaker, except that this one deals with the fiscal year previously, and the previous amendment dealt only with the year to date. Do you see what I’m saying?

In addition the other amendment is giving much more information than was asked for, because they only asked for about 45 departments, government agencies and Crowns and we have given for all departments, agencies and Crowns. So this is essentially the same thing except for the fiscal year ‘85-86.

Mr. Speaker: — First of all, is it agreed, then, that motions 61 through 102, inclusive, be dropped? That’s agreed.

Return No. 103

Mr. Upshall moved, seconded by Mr. Van Mulligen, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 103 showing:

The total amount paid by SaskExpo ‘86 corporation during the 1985-86 fiscal year to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

Mr. Upshall: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 103 showing, seconded by the member for Regina Victoria.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Is this where I should put my amendment?

Mr. Speaker: — Yes, this is where you should put your amendment.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I therefore move:

That return no. 103 be amended by deleting all words after the word “by” and substituting:

all government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations during the ‘85-86 fiscal year to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fare, including in each instance: (1) the names and positions of those for whom the fares were authorized; and (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points for each trip; (3) the air carrier on which each trip was taken.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

(2015)

Return No. 104

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I beg your indulgence for one minute, Mr. Speaker. We have similarly here two groups of similar motions, one dealing with year to date and the other dealing with the previous fiscal year. And I would like to do two things here, Mr. Speaker, I would like to drop 104 through 147 inclusive and then amend the final motion to give the information for all government agencies . . .

An Hon. Member: — Departments, agencies, and Crown corporations.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Exactly – departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. And the amendment that I would propose, Mr. Speaker, on return no. 148 is as follows:

That return no. 148 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "showing" and substituting:

for the fiscal year '85-86, (1) the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants for each government department and agency and Crown corporation; (2) the names of those consultants; and (3) the final costs.

And that's the amendment that I would propose for no. 148.

I'm sorry, there's somebody else that . . . Okay, the amendment that I would propose for no. 148, which is the last one in this particular group. Okay?

That return no. 141 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "showing" and substituting:

for the fiscal year ending '85-86, (1) the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded for external consultants by each government department and agency and Crown corporation; (2) the names of those consultants; and (3) the final costs.

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Deputy Premier could indicate to me why his amendment didn't include the purpose of the report or the study or investigation or project, which his amendment does not include, and the method by which the work was awarded. We are interested in both of those informations. The purpose of the report, I think, is fairly important to us, and the method by which the work was awarded. I believe we have the rest.

An Hon. Member: — Did he name the external consultants?

Mr. Rolfes: — Yes, I think he did say the name of the external consultants. If not, I was wondering . . . Yes, I think he did say that. And the recommendations or analysis provided to the government, that was not included, I believe, in your amendment also. Could you explain as to why possibly those were not included in your amendment?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The explanation, Mr. Speaker, is as follows: the amendment refuses particulars of the information and gives total cost only. The reason for this is to provide for the contingency that release of such information may be prejudicial to the government by giving confidential information that ought not to be given, etc.

The amendment is not new. It's not one that we invented. This is out of a long-time NDP practice of the previous administration, and we've taken it right out of the attorney general's arguments of 1980. And a matter of fact, it was a return that I had placed on the order paper that the attorney general of that day was responding to, and those were the arguments that he advanced. So we have taken the amendment right out of that wise gentleman's verbatim here and offer it in that respect.

Mr. Koskie: — I would like to ask: what confidentiality is it by not giving us the method by which the work was awarded? What are you protecting there? And you've excluded that from your amendment as indicated in the original order for return.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The argument that I will advance, Mr. Speaker, is . . .

An Hon. Member: — It's weak.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — It may be weak, but not one that was invented by me. This is to quote one Mr. Romanow of March 25, 1980; and he says:

One could or might interpret . . . (an outside prosecutor for instance) to be an external consultant. I am assuming there is no difficulty in that regard. You want the names of all reports and studies not of that kind of a category incorporated in the return, and in that regard that's understood by everybody. I think with a great deal of work and a lot of effort, we'll probably be able to come up with some answers on this. So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Provincial Secretary (Mr. Cowley) that . . .

. . . (we provide) all that reports and studies commissioned by the . . . department to external consultants during the period . . . the names of these consultants and final costs.

And that's how the attorney general of that day was amending similar motions for return in 1980, and I simply advance the same argument.

Mr. Rolfes: — I would appreciate it very much if the Deputy Premier could send a copy of his amendments over to us so that we can have a look at it. I think it involves a little more than just listening to it.

I am concerned about referring back to 1980. I have no idea what question you had drafted at that time, whether it was similar to this or whether you even at that time . . . I'd like to have one, the one that you're referring to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Yes, it's on page 1076 of 1980, March 25 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm explaining to him and he's asking me a question. And it's in response . . . This particular one is in response to advertising for the attorney general's department, and similar to tonight, it was one of a list that long. And it asks for:

. . . or consulting firms (that) have been awarded a contract with the Attorney General's department. (a) If so, the nature of the contract or contracts, the name and address of each consultant or consulting firm, the value of the contract, and the purpose of the contract. (b) In each instance, whether the contract was advertised, or awarded without advertising.

So, you know, it's essentially the same thing and the amendment of that day is as I've set out, and that is:

To be amended by deleting all the words after

the word "showing" and substituting:

for the fiscal year '85-86, (1) the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations; (2) the names of those consultants; and (3) the final cost.

Essentially the same thing except a little broader, that was provided by the House leader of 1980.

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, I just have a few comments on it. I think the Deputy Premier recognizes that it does not meet our request for information that we want . . . that we would like on these various questions. I mean, for example, it is imperative that we get the purposes or objectives of the reports and also how the reports or the projects are awarded by the government. Was it done by open tender? Was it done by closed tender? Was it simply pulling somebody out of the hat and that's how it was done? Was it done through patronage? We'd like to know that, and the last thing we really would like to know is the recommendations or analysis provided to the government by these reports so that the people of the province have something at least to measure against whether their money was worthwhile spent.

I'm sure you will agree that this is not just a few hundred thousand dollars; this is in the millions of dollars that this will amount to, and I think we do have a right, as the official opposition, to get this information regardless of how the questions were phrased or answered in the past.

I think we are a legislature of our own, this one, and we should not necessarily just go back to the past and say this is what was done in the past. And I'm not certain that was done in the past.

Well the questions were phrased different . . . The motions were phrased differently than what we have here, so I'm reluctant to accept the amendment, but maybe somebody else wishes to speak to it. But I think, having said that, to expedite the matter I am prepared to accept it but with great reluctance.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I, too, as my colleague from Saskatoon South, am concerned about the desire of this government, as has been displayed throughout the day, to conceal information from the public.

I know that the government will have its way. They have the majority by quite a few members, so if they wish to amend these motions and hide the information that the public ought to have, that's a judgement that the government has to make. I object to that, as do my colleagues on this side of the House. I fail to see how divulging information on the method by which the work was awarded in any way takes away from the confidentiality, if in fact it needs to be there, as the minister argued a few moments ago.

Especially, Mr. Speaker, it is important to know the method used when everyone in Saskatchewan knows only too well that there have been so many people and

organizations that have been paid frivolously by the government for doing almost nothing at all. And that is the reason the public needs to know whether in fact there was a tender, or was it proposal bids requested by the government in which the government went to a few select individuals or consultants and simply said, okay, you, you, and you give us a proposal and we'll forget all about the others who might be able to do quite an adequate job.

(2030)

And that is the reason we object to what the House Leader for the government side of the House is doing here this evening. He's using, I think, to his advantage, the spirit of co-operation which we have extended to try to expedite some of the work of this House, and conglomerating a number of motions into one because they should be able to cover all of the departments, Crowns, and agencies. And therefore is now going to use his majority, the government's majority, to have the government's will and carry out their intention not to provide the information that could quite easily be provided. I can't see any arguments that can be made why it should not be provided.

Mr. Speaker: — Then I would like to ask, first of all, the member for Saskatoon South if he is agreeable to dropping motions for return no. 104 to 147.

Mr. Rolfes: — I think he wants to speak, sir.

Mr. Speaker: — What is it that the member from Prince Albert wants to speak to?

Mr. Kowalsky: — Well I want to address the same matter that my colleagues have been referring to, and I have before me the copy of the debates from 1980, page 1076, which I believe the Deputy Premier is referring to.

In this case the motion was moved — by the leader of the opposition at the time — asking for, and I would read it:

Whether . . . any consultants or consulting firms have been awarded the contract with the Attorney General's department. (a) If so, the nature of the contract or contracts, the name and address of each consultant or consulting firm, the value of the contract, and the purpose of the contract. (b) In each instance whether the contract was advertised, or awarded without advertising.

This motion is fairly similar to what we were asking for and the wording is somewhat different.

The difficulty that I see with the sort of amalgamated motion, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the Deputy Premier, the House Leader, to accept that when you get only part of this information that the whole batch . . . It sometimes makes the whole batch of information unworkable.

Now, when . . . It's like a missing link in a chain. The chain is no longer worth what it would be if you add the one link in the middle keeping the whole works of them together. And in this case, the missing link is, in particular, the method by which the contract and the

work was awarded.

So without arguing the contents of the 1980 motion, or 1987 motion, I would simply ask him to add that into his amendment, and I think the members on this side would certainly appreciate that addition.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The member has correctly taken it right out of 1076, as I had previously, and put it on the record. And it says clearly: “In each instance” and this is in the English language. It’s a little different language than is used in their particular motion, but it says clearly: “In each instance, whether the contract was advertised, or awarded without advertising.” Or in effect, was there a competition for the awarding of the contract or was there not?

And the amendment of that day, by that administration, said, Mr. Speaker, we will not provide that information. And I’m offering a similar amendment, and the member for Saskatoon South, however reluctant, has said that . . . And I take him, you know, at his word, that he will reluctantly accept that. Now we very reluctantly accepted it when we were sitting over there. And so I don’t understand the point that is being raised by the member from Prince Albert because it’s not different from what was happening. It’s the practice of the NDP of many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Rolfes: — I want to express my reluctance, Mr. Speaker. I hope this does not become a precedent for future legislatures to go on, what has been agreed to here tonight. I want to put that on the record because I think this certainly should be investigated further for the future as to whether we can accommodate the opposition in getting that information. As I said, yes, I will reluctantly accept it and therefore agree to dropping all the motions preceding as you indicated before, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — Thank you, then. To 147 inclusive – 104 to 147. That’s correct.

Return No. 148

Mr. Rolfes moved, seconded by Mr. Upshall, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 148 showing:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a detailed list of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by the Saskatchewan Development Fund Corporation including in each case: (1) the name and purpose of the report, study, investigation, or project; (2) the total cost; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the name of the external consultants who performed the work; (5) the recommendations or analysis provided to the government.

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 148 showing:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a detailed list of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by the

Saskatchewan Development Fund Corporation including in each case: (1) the name and purpose of the report, study, investigation, or project; (2) the total cost; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the name of the external consultants who performed the work; (5) the recommendations or analysis provided to the government.

Mr. Speaker: — I’m afraid I didn’t catch the seconder.

Mr. Rolfes: — My humble apologies. Seconded by the hon. member from Humboldt.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I therefore move:

That return no. 148 be amended by deleting all the words after the word “showing” and substituting:

for the fiscal year 1985-86, the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded for external consultants by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation; the names of those consultants, and the final cost.

Seconded by the Minister of Justice.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 149

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — A similar explanation. The next group of motions would take us to return no. 193, and I would therefore ask that up to 192 inclusive be dropped and I would move an amendment similarly to 193.

Mr. Speaker: — Perhaps you should read the amendment. The members might want to hear it.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — It’s the identical amendment except it’s dealing with year to date, as opposed to the previous fiscal year. And that is:

That return no. 193 be amended by deleting all the words after the word “showing” and substituting:

for the period of April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation; the names of those consultants and final costs.

Mr. Speaker: — I would like to ask then the member for Prince Albert if he is agreeable to dropping motions 149 to 192.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the government House Leader is asking that we use exactly the same procedure that we used previous and I would indicate that I would be willing to do so, and again reluctantly – that I would prefer and I think it would be much better if we had in there the method by which the work was

awarded. But I will do so.

Mr. Speaker: — Therefore, I would like ask you, sir, to move motion 193.

Return No. 193

Mr. Kowalsky moved, seconded by Mr. Solomon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 193 showing:

For the period of April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by the Saskatchewan Expo '86 corporation including in each case: (1) the name and purpose of the report, study, investigation, or project; (2) the total cost; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the name of the external consultants who performed the work; (5) the recommendations or analysis provided to the government.

Mr. Kowalsky: — So I therefore move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 193 showing:

For the period of April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by the Saskatchewan Expo '86 corporation including in each case: (1) the name and purpose of the report, study, investigation, or project; (2) the total cost; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the name of the external consultants who performed the work; (5) the recommendations or analysis provided to the government.

Seconded by the member for Regina North West.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs:

That return no. 193 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "showing" and substituting:

for the period of April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, the names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded for external consultants by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation; the names of consultants; and the final cost.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 194

Hon. Mr. Blakeney moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 194 showing:

For the period April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, a list of all those employed by the

Executive Council, including: (a) names and job titles; (b) duties and responsibilities in each case; (c) salary and benefits in each case; (d) date of commencement of employment in each case and, where applicable, date of termination.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if before the hon. member moves this motion, if we can lump 194 and 195 together. They are essentially the same thing, and one is dealing with the previous fiscal year; the second is dealing with year to date, and I would propose that if we drop 194, we could move 195 with the following amendment, and that is:

For the period April 1, 1985 to the date of this return, a list of all those employed by the Department of Executive Council, including names, job titles, duties, and responsibilities, remuneration, date of commencement of employment in each case and, where applicable, date of termination.

Mr. Speaker: — Is the Leader of the Opposition agreeable to dropping 194?

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I think the answer is no. It's hardly worthwhile to couple two together, and the wording suggested by the minister allows him to agglomerate the salaries over two periods of time, and I wanted the salary for the year, and the salary for the next year. So the answer is, I would not regard that as a friendly amendment.

(2045)

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier has properly identified this as asking the same batch of information: one, for the year 1985-86, that being return no. 195, which I'll come to in a moment; and the one we're now dealing with, 194, is for 1986 to date. All other information is the same. It's for a different fiscal period, and it is the standard material which one might get in estimates. I think we can save the Premier and his staff some time if we have this information in advance to save the passings across of the information which would be asked for and no doubt given in any case. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return No. 194 showing.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I have no reason to believe that the information wouldn't be forthcoming, but since . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Excuse me. I'm sorry to interrupt. I'm sorry to interrupt, be we don't have a valid motion. I don't believe we have a seconder.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — You're quite right, Mr. Speaker. I neglected to advise you that my seconder is the member for Quill Lakes.

Mr. Speaker: — Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I have no reason to believe that the information wouldn't be forthcoming in any event, Mr. Speaker, but since I don't, everything I know about this

and since the department offered this amendment for me to carry without much of an explanation, I would like to adjourn debate until next private members' day and deal with both 194 and 195 at that time. I'll adjourn debate on the next one as well.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 195

Hon. Mr. Blakeney moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 195 showing:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a list of all those employed by the Executive Council, including: (a) names and job titles; (b) duties and responsibilities in each case; (c) salary and benefits in each case; (d) date of commencement of employment in each case and, where applicable, date of termination.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 195 showing:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a list of all those employed by the Executive Council, including: (a) the names and job titles; (b) duties and responsibilities in each case; (c) salary and benefits in each case; (d) date of commencement of employment in each case and, where applicable, date of termination.

Just before I take my seat, I couldn't imagine any reason why the government wouldn't want to pass that tonight.

Mr. Speaker: — Once more, I didn't catch the seconder.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Yes, and once more, Mr. Speaker, I neglected to introduce my distinguished seconder, the member for Quill Lakes.

Mr. Speaker: — Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Leader of the Opposition, my guess is that there is likely no excuse for not ordering the information forthwith, but out of an abundance of caution and since, as I explained previously, they may well have reason that I am not aware of, I will just ask to adjourn debate on this one as well, Mr. Speaker.

Debate adjourned.

Return No. 196

Hon. Mr. Blakeney moved, seconded by Mr. Koskie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 196 showing:

A detailed list of all payments made by the Government of Saskatchewan to corporations or individuals under the industrial incentive program, including in each instance: (1) the dates payments were provided; (2) the amounts provided; (3) the names and locations of the manufacturing or processing firms assisted

through these payments; (4) the number of permanent employees at these firms at the date payments were approved, and the current employee totals.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, this order seeks to obtain information with respect to the industrial incentives program, which is a grant program and which simply asks for information with respect to the recipients of the grant and the dates of the payments, the amounts, and the number of permanent employees respecting those grants.

And it will be known that the grants are predicated on and conditional upon permanent jobs being created. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I moved, seconded by the member for Quill Lakes, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 196 showing.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment to offer here as well, and this amendment deals only with the last, subsection (4), if you like, of the motion for return. And the reason for the amendment is it deletes the release of the information disclosing the number of employees at various times of private firms. This information is confidential at the option of the firm, and the information can be obtained directly from the firms involved, should they wish to release that kind of information.

And I therefore amend or move an amendment to this return, Mr. Speaker, and seconded by the Minister of Small Business:

That return no. 196 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "payments" in subsection (3).

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I speak to the amendment only, and I'm a shade baffled by at least part of the amendment. I've followed — I don't agree with, but followed at least — the argument of the member for Souris-Cannington about not wishing to disclose the number of employees of a business from time to time.

But when you are calculating a grant based upon the number of employees — which I think the incentive grants are and never have been anything else — and when you therefore are declining to give us the number of employees, then you are not giving the information which is necessary in order to calculate whether the grant was proper and appropriate. And that, surely, is the information requested when one is requesting the number of permanent employees of these firms at the date of payments.

If I am not mistaken, Mr. Deputy Premier, the payments are supposedly predicated on the employees being there.

An Hon. Member: — Then it should be a simple calculation.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, if it's a simple calculation, then you're disclosing no information that isn't public information, but since I don't know whether or not you make any exceptions or other calculations, and since the public don't know, we ask for this information.

And I'm baffled to know why you wouldn't tell us when you pay a grant – allegedly on the basis of the number of employees – you wouldn't tell us the number of employees on which you make your calculations, but you apparently believe that the public are not entitled to know that. I don't know why, and I suspect they won't know why.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

Return No. 197

Mr. Solomon moved, seconded by Mr. Kowalsky, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 197 showing:

With respect to the Free Trade Commission announced by the Premier on June 18 1986, and chaired by Mr. Wakabayashi: (1) the total cost of the commission; (2) all groups and individuals the commission met with in public hearings; (3) all groups and individuals the commission refused to meet with in public hearings and why; (4) all reports and recommendations from the commission to the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to expedite matters, I would refer the Deputy Premier, the House Leader, from 197 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Oh! I'm sorry I didn't realize. The member from Regina North West is here. When I looked around before he wasn't here, and I was going to expedite matters by moving to stand some, but since he's here I turn it over to my colleague.

Mr. Solomon: — I thank the Speaker for recognizing me, and I thank my colleague, the member from Quill Lakes, for recognizing me as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, after I say a few remarks, move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 197 showing:

With respect to the Free Trade Commission announced by the Premier on June 18 1986, and chaired by Mr. Wakabayashi: (1) the total cost of the commission; (2) all groups and individuals the commission met with in public hearings; (3) all groups and individuals the commission refused to meet with in public hearings and why; (4) all reports and recommendations from the commission to the Government of Saskatchewan.

And primarily what I need to know, Mr. Speaker, and we as members of the loyal opposition need to know, is more information about this Free Trade Commission that was funded by the provincial government.

The Premier has been a devoted supported and promoter of free trade throughout Canada, and in particular in Saskatchewan, and we are hearing now a change in that decision and that promotion alignment. And we would

like to know precisely some of the costs that the province has incurred. This government has become, over the last three or four years, Mr. Speaker, a very secretive government. They have centralized power in cabinet and they have not given information that has been requested of them in regular question periods. They have been very evasive; they have not co-operated in any sense of the imagination.

In my view, I think that straightforward questions that have been put to them in writing and verbally have been basically neglected, or they've been ignored, and in my view that's a position of a government that's in deep trouble. I think it's a reflection of a government that is totally mismanaged – that it is a government that has no competence whatsoever. As a result, Mr. Speaker, their credibility is as great as the federal government of our country right now and the federal Prime Minister. And that, I should add, is not very great at all.

What really amazes me, Mr. Speaker, with respect to information that this government refuses to provide, is that when they were in opposition, and I recall vividly the member from Kindersley in 1980 got up in this House and spoke quite eloquently, I might add, about the need for a freedom of information Act. The member from Kindersley spoke on many occasions, not only when he moved his Bill, his private member's Bill, but he spoke on other occasions around the province and in this Assembly about the need for a government to be more open, the need for a government to provide more information not only to other members of the Assembly but certainly to the public.

And it's our job as an opposition, Mr. Speaker, and as a responsible government, to provide the information with respect to taxpayers' dollars. Taxpayers provide government funds to implement services and programs and to carry out those services and programs, and if we are not prepared as an opposition or a government to provide to the taxpayers how those dollars are spent on those services and programs and special projects such as this one, then we shouldn't be in this Assembly, we should be in another country where there is no democracy.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Kindersley went on about his freedom of information Act, and he talked about what a great job they would do in government. As a matter of fact, he influenced his party during the '82 election campaign to the point where the party adopted his desire for a freedom of information Act. And of course we saw that promise in all of the literature in all of the constituencies that ran Conservative candidates – all 64 constituencies, Mr. Speaker.

And you may recall yourself, as other Conservative members do that ran in 1982, that that was a commitment of the Conservative Party and the Conservative government if they became government. We see now, Mr. Speaker, a total lack of credibility because they have failed to carry out that commitment. They have not provided not only a freedom of information Act, but on the contrary they have squashed the opposition's attempt to obtain information.

(2100)

So, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by my colleague from Prince Albert, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 197 showing:

With respect to the Free Trade Commission announced by the Premier on June 18 1986, and chaired by Mr. Wakabayashi: (1) the total cost of the commission; (2) all groups and individuals the commission met with in public hearings; (3) all groups and individuals the commission refused to meet with in public hearings and why; (4) all reports and recommendations from the commission to the Government of Saskatchewan.

And I would urge the member from Kindersley to support that.

Mr. Speaker: — I didn't catch the seconder.

Mr. Solomon: — I indicated when I moved it, Mr. Speaker, the member from Prince Albert.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, just a minor amendment here. The reason for the amendment, Mr. Speaker, is the return is worded in such a way as to imply that there were groups with whom the commission refused to meet. This, Mr. Speaker, is in fact not the case. But there were groups with whom the commission was not able to meet for reasons other than refusal.

The amendment, Mr. Speaker, firstly corrects this impression. The amendment also deletes the disclosure of information on the commission's recommendations to the government. As free trade talks are continuing, Mr. Speaker, it is felt that the public release of this information is not in the best interests of Saskatchewan.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of the Environment:

That return no. 194 be amended by deleting the words "the commission refused" in the fourth and fifth line and substituting therefor the words:

who requested to meet with the commission but with whom the commission was unable

and by deleting all words after the phrase "in the public hearings and why."

I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, the amendment in my view prevents the opposition from obtaining information which is very important for public consumption. What the member from Souris-Cannington is saying in this motion — and he's said it on his feet just a few moments ago — was that he does not wish to make public the cost of the commission.

Well just yesterday, or over the weekend, we have heard some public pronouncements that there are other organizations beside government who are spending a fair amount of money to ensure that the free trade

negotiations are successful with the United States.

And I recall some of the names — the Royal Bank of Canada, providing somewhere around \$400,000 to the free trade group that has been put together to promote, through advertising and other means, a good feeling about free trade, to educate from their perspective what free trade means to multinational and large businesses.

What the member from Souris-Cannington is saying this evening, Mr. Speaker, is that that information should not be made public. I might add that the Royal Bank's contributions are made from the profits the bank makes that should be paid to shareholders. And that's fine. They can make that decision through their board of directors. It's an independent corporation in this country, and they answer to their shareholders. They are saying to their shareholders what they are doing with their money.

And here we have the House Leader of the government saying that the shareholders in this province, that is the taxpayers of this province, should not have any idea what this free trade commission has been spending around the province to gather information which is secretive; to provide advice and consultation to our government which is not being made public. And who knows what it's costing. I think the amendment basically destroys the question and it reaffirms our position, as the New Democratic Party, that this government is concentrating power in their cabinet, is refusing to provide information to the public and to the opposition for their own gain and their own political gain.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 198

Mr. Solomon moved, seconded by Mr. Kowalsky, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 198 showing:

For the period March 23, 1984 to the date of this return was ordered, with respect to the use of law firms: (1) the name of each law firm which has received remuneration from each department, board, commission, Crown corporation and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the amount of remuneration received by the law firm, and the purpose of the work performed.

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of remarks to make with respect to this order and after my remarks I will move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 198 showing:

For the period March 23, 1984 to the date of this return was ordered, with respect to the use of law firms: (1) the name of each law firm which has received remuneration from each department, board, commission, Crown corporation and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the amount of remuneration received by the law firm, and the purpose of the work

performed.

Mr. Speaker, again the comments that I made a few moments earlier are relevant with respect to this order. And the comments that I would like to remind members of the government about is that information that this question is attempting to obtain is an information which is important to the public.

Here we see again taxpayers of this province spending a great deal of money through their government, through this Conservative government, on law firms and other legal questions which are not being made public. This is a very important question of credibility. It's a very important question of the taxpayers, and I feel that if we can obtain this information, we will see other major disasters, I'm sure, and make them public through the information, as we've seen recently with, for example, the law firm, the George Hill law firm out of Estevan, where Mr. Hill was appointed the chairman of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation because he was a former president of the Conservative party; where we see his partners, Mr. McLellan, who's appointed to the position of Ombudsman because he was a partner of the former president of the Conservative party; and we see Dennis Ball, who was a partner in the same law firm appointed to a part-time position which has been provided a triple salary of somewhere around the \$100,000 a year.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, because I spoke with some people from Estevan just on the weekend, and they were telling me that this kind of patronage is just unbelievable. These people were not supporters of the New Democratic Party until this latest appointment. When the appointment of the Ombudsman was made, they were just shocked. They had no idea that this would continue. As a matter of fact, they're curious to know how many lawyers are left in the law firm that will be begging for appointments by this government opposite.

An Hon. Member: — Twelve.

Mr. Solomon: — And there are 12. The member from Souris-Cannington says there's 12 more. Well, if this information is provided to the House, Mr. Speaker, that we're requiring, then I'm sure that will shore up the comments from the House Leader, and we'll get them in some more hot water.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, the serious point here in question is that information is very important for our party and the opposition to do its job. This information is important because it will prove and reassure the people of Saskatchewan that this government is as patronage-riddled as they have claimed, and opposition members have claimed that they are, and also that this government really doesn't have a grip on providing decent government in terms of responsible government and responsible spending of taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 198 showing, seconded by the member from Prince Albert:

For the period March 23, 1984 to the date this

return was ordered, with respect to the use of law firms: (1) the name of each law firm which has received remuneration from each department, board, commission, Crown corporation and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the amount of remuneration received by the law firm, and the purpose of the work performed.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a small amendment to offer for this particular return, Mr. Speaker, and the reason for the amendment, and an explanation of what the amendment does.

The amendment deletes the disclosure of the purpose of the legal work performed on behalf of the government. Such information, as all members know, is subject to a solicitor-client privilege and may in certain instances prejudice the government's legal position on a particular case or matter.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Consumer Affairs:

That return no. 198 be amended by deleting all the words after the word "firm" in subsection (2).

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, I can understand why the House Leader of the government wishes to delete that final section. It means one of two things in my view: one, that they are trying to hide something, or two, that in fact the purpose of the work performed by these law firms and lawyers that they've hired has really no purpose other than patronage.

I think if this amendment is passed that will confirm the suspicions of the people in this province, and certainly the suspicion of the opposition that in fact a lot of these law firms that have been hired will indeed have been either hired on the basis of patronage and for the purpose of patronage, as opposed to other purposes which the government would surely share in a general sense with us.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 199

Mr. Speaker: — The member for Regina Centre has not been recognized.

An Hon. Member: — Oh, have I not?

Mr. Speaker: — No. However I will recognize the member for Regina Centre now.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, you are so kind. I'm just so overcome by the gesture that I'm having difficulty carrying on, but I will try.

To save the House some time, we can stand — the reasons I think are obvious — motions for return items no. 199 to 216 inclusive.

Return No. 217

Mr. Hagel moved, seconded by Ms. Smart, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 217 showing:

Regarding the period December 4, 1985 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by the Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amounts charged on behalf of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels (c) ground transportation, (d) means, (e) entertainment expenses.

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will be shortly moving an order for return no. 217. But before doing so, Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments I would like to make.

There is a common perception in Saskatchewan, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that PC cabinet ministers are fat cats out to see the world at taxpayer expense. I think we have all heard that a one-sentence sarcastic statement that has been on the lips, I think, of virtually every Saskatchewan citizen at some point in time or more over the past several months, and the phrase very simply is: join the PC cabinet and see the world. I think it represents a very sinister view of the motives for the PC cabinet minister in the use of transportation at public expense. There have been a number, Mr. Speaker, of very questionable trips that have been taken over the past period of time.

(2115)

In this order for return, Mr. Speaker, I'm requesting information having to do with out-of-province trips since the period of December 4, 1985. I'm not saying that I don't recognize that there is a need at times to engage in out-of-province trips. There is, although I think we have to question in this time of developing communications and communications technology, the need to have to appear in person out of province to deal with a number of business items.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the opposition's responsibility to hold accountable government members, particularly cabinet members who are travelling at taxpayer expense on the stated reason of conducting government business.

For that reason then, Mr. Speaker, I will move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Centre, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 217 showing:

Regarding the period December 4, 1985 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by the minister of parks and renewable resources; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each

case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amounts charged on behalf of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels (c) ground transportation, (d) means, (e) entertainment expenses.

And I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm sorry I wasn't a little quicker in getting onto my feet. What we have here, Mr. Speaker, is another batch, if you like, of similar motions — 217 through 261 are essentially all the same motion, asking for the same information from the various departments, agencies, and Crowns of government. And so I would simply ask the same as before to drop 217 to 260, inclusive, and amend 261 to give the information on one return to all Crown departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. With an amendment, Mr. Speaker, that would have the effect of deleting the disclosure of the breakdown of the total cost of each trip. And there's nothing terribly inconsistent about this either, Mr. Speaker.

The past practice has been to provide in each instance the total cost of each trip. That was the past practice of the previous administration; it is the practice of this particular administration — has been in previous years, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Cover-up, cover-up.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And I know that members opposite will holler cover-up as we did, Mr. Speaker, when we were sitting on that side of the House. Back at that time, Mr. Speaker, I also recall that the House Leader of that day said:

Mr. Speaker, I don't know when our officials can be expected to do the job. I don't know how long it will take. I'll be very interested to knowing how many man-hours or man-years, depending on the measurement, that will be used in this area.

And he laboured on and on, the member for Riversdale, the House Leader of that day, Mr. Speaker, as to the detail that was being asked for by the opposition of the day.

And so the amendment was advanced, Mr. Speaker, to provide the total cost and not the breakdown. And so I simply offer the same amendment here today, Mr. Speaker. And since 217 to 261 are identical throughout, I ask that we drop 217 to 260 inclusive and then deal with 261 in the way that I've just explained.

Mr. Speaker: — Is the member from Moose Jaw North willing to drop his motions as requested by the Deputy Premier?

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, and members of the Legislative Assembly, we object to this. Mr. Speaker, the information that is thus provided is of very little use, and gives us very little assistance in

breaking down and knowing whether or not the government is responsible in its travelling.

We have the spectre of members of the treasury benches opposite spending \$300 a night on hotel rooms when they could well do better than that. We have no way of knowing . . . If transportation costs are provided in a lump sum, Mr. Speaker, we have no way of really knowing whether or not these ministers have been responsible in their travel, and it's part of our responsibility to do so.

I say to the members opposite, if you have nothing to hide, give us the information as was requested. If you don't, I think we will fairly assume that your travel expenses cannot stand the public scrutiny.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I protest the amendment suggested by the Deputy Premier and the House Leader of the government. He may be interested in living in the past. I'm not sure what his motives for that would be, Mr. Speaker, but I know that seven years ago I was not a member of this Assembly, and I am interested in living in the present and holding the present day government accountable for its expenditures.

Now if the Deputy Premier, the government House Leader, wants to bring forth some kind of nefarious arguments as to why he wants to change this motion, in effect, Mr. Speaker, to make the government unaccountable for the expenditures for out-of-province travel, as I said before, there are a number of people across Saskatchewan — I would suggest the majority of people in Saskatchewan — who are firmly of the opinion that PC cabinet minister travel is nothing other than fat cat travel to see the world at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And to suggest an amendment, to suggest an amendment which denies a breakdown of the expenditures of those trips by way of the amounts spent for air fare — that's probably fairly predictable — but then we come to items like hotels.

Mr. Speaker, we've all heard reports of government cabinet ministers. Maybe the House Leader would like to report on some of the hotel rooms he's stayed in at expenses of over 200 and \$300 a night. And I don't know that the people of Saskatchewan want their cabinet ministers seeing the world and staying in 200 and \$300 a night rooms, and if that is happening, they have a right to know that.

Ground transportation is probably fairly reasonable, although as we found in the federal House, Mr. Speaker, there were some questions about one of the members there and her ground transportation. How do we know that that's not the case here in Saskatchewan?

Meals, Mr. Speaker, and also entertainment expenses. I think Saskatchewan people have a right to know. At a time in which the Minister of Social Services says that we cannot afford to pay more than \$3.60 a day for poor people in this province — \$3.60 a day for three meals to feed themselves — I think the people of Saskatchewan

have a right to know when their cabinet ministers are out seeing the world at their expense, what they're spending on their food and entertainment.

Now for the House Leader to suggest that it is a reasonable amendment to eliminate the breakdown of these costs, to simply give a lump sum total report of the expenditures, I think, is highly unreasonable. Mr. Speaker, I think Saskatchewan people have a right to know what that breakdown is, and they are particularly concerned about the amounts spent on hotels, meals and entertainment expenses by their cabinet ministers who are out seeing the world at their expense.

And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I strongly protest the amendment suggested by the House Leader.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — The member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake is involved in this as well because his amendments are from 244 to 259, so would he agree to drop those motions?

Mr. Lautermilch: — Under no circumstances, Mr. Speaker, would I agree to this amendment. It's not often, as a matter of fact, that I get invited to get up and take a shot at a government that's been spending taxpayers' money over the last five years, flying from one end of this globe to the other. And I think you have a responsibility to account to the people just exactly how you're spending their tax dollars.

A minister the other day stands up and indicates that he flies to Calgary at government expense to attend a wedding. Now I ask you, I ask you, do you feel — and Mr. Speaker, do you not feel that the people of this province who this cabinet represents, have a right to know exactly how they're getting there; to know what they're spending while they are there; to know how many staff people they're taking; to know if they're renting limousines; to know those kinds of things. Of course they do. Most certainly they do.

And I think it's irresponsible of the Deputy Premier to stand up in this House, propose an amendment that will absolutely put a shutter on the window, the only window and the only opportunity that the people of this province will have an opportunity to know exactly what they're about and what they're doing.

Given the fact that this government has built up since 1982 a deficit of some \$3.4 billion; given the fact that they've turned Crown corporations into money losers that used to be money makers, and have just at every opportunity and every wheel they've turned they've proved that they can't manage anything, that they're out of control, why would the people of this province be any less willing to believe that that cabinet and their travel expenses aren't out of control than on any other situation?

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, as I listen to the proposal, the amendment from the Deputy Premier, I thought, how I would explain supporting that kind of amendment if I went downtown and talked to some of the small business people in downtown Prince Albert. And how I would

explain to them the fact that I, along with my colleagues on the opposition side of the House, weren't willing to scrutinize in some form of detail the expenditure that cabinet has made.

I tell you, I'd be ashamed to go back there and report that to them. That's why I wouldn't be supporting that kind of an amendment, and I also want to say, if we were government I would fighting any move to offer that kind of an amendment because it's not fair.

These guys promised, in 1982, open, accountable government. And what do you get from them? You get Bill 5's. You get changes to the committee quorums, and you get amendments of this nature put before the people of this House – the legislators of this province. And we're to accept that? I say, Mr. Speaker, this amendment is unfair, it's uncalled for, and I don't believe it's any more acceptable to the people of this province than it will be to the members on this side of the House.

Motion negatived.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, 217 has been dispensed with, and so I simply go back to ask hon. members to lump 218 to 260 inclusive, and drop them and deal with the amendment on 261.

I don't mind a broad-ranging debate on 261 dealing with all government's agencies and Crowns. The reason, as explained before, to bring them all together all these motions of an identical nature is simply to facilitate the expedition, if you like, of bringing the information together and getting it to the House.

So I simply ask members if they would drop 218 to 260 inclusive and then deal with the amendment on 261.

Mr. Speaker: — That's correct. So I once more ask then . . . I first of all asked the member for Moose Jaw North if he's willing to drop the amendments which apply or, rather, the motion which applied to him.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the Government House Leader would send across a copy of that amendment so that we could see it.

An Hon. Member: — I'll send it over to you if you send it back.

Mr. Hagel: — We'll send it back.

(2130)

Mr. Shillington: — I think, to expedite matters here, I would have, if I had been the Government House Leader, I would have proceeded a little differently. However I think, Mr. Speaker, we'll give the Government House Leader leave to introduce a motion which drops 216 – no, not 216 – 218, I guess we're now on, 218 to 260 inclusive, and substitutes therefor the motion which he just read.

I think that's probably a more . . . The proper way to go about it is for him to get leave to introduce a motion, dropping those other motions, and moving his in

substitution.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I know that the hon. member from Regina Centre would have done things differently, and I appreciate his suggestion. I think that we will find that his suggestion is out of order because, for whatever technical reason they will come up with, it is anticipating motions that are still on the order paper before they are dropped. And so to deal with the final solution, as it were, in the motion, the same motion that is dropping the previous motions is out of order.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to proceed as we have been doing previously this evening. I think it would be proper to have the member from P.A.-Duck Lake move 261, and then the minister, the House Leader, move his amendment, as we have been doing in grouping them together previously.

Mr. Speaker: — Yes, this is what we have been doing, but just so the record is clear, I would just like to indicate then that, unless I hear contrariwise, the member for Moose Jaw North and the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake have agreed to drop their motion.

I now ask the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake to move motion for return no. 261.

Return No. 261

Mr. Lautermilch moved, seconded by Mr. Smart, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 261 showing:

Regarding the period December 4, 1985 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by the Minister of Agriculture; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amounts charged on behalf of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels (c) ground transportation, (d) meals, (e) entertainment expenses.

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 261 showing:

Regarding the period December 4, 1985 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by the Minister of Agriculture; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amounts charged on behalf of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels (c) ground transportation, (d) meals, (e) entertainment expenses.

Mr. Speaker: — And your seconder?

Mr. Lautermilch: — Seconded by the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Maple Creek:

That return no. 261 be amended by deleting the words “the Minister of Agriculture” in subsection (1) and substituting therefore the words, “all government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations,” and by deleting all words after the word “trip” in subsection (5).

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 262

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I think we have another group here, from 262 to 306, that are similar in nature, and I wonder if we could drop from 262 to 305 inclusive and deal with 306 in this group, and I will offer an amendment to no. 306 that will, in effect . . . yes, no. 306.

This one deals with public opinion polls, Mr. Speaker, and the reason for the amendment is simply to negate the disclosure of the results and the analysis of the polls and of the market research projects. And the amendment will be as follows:

That no. 306 be amended by deleting all the words after “ordered” in the first line and substituting therefor the words:

the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed, and commissioned by each government department, agency and Crown corporation, including a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the name of the individual or company conducting the poll.

Mr. Speaker: — Is the member for Regina North agreeable to dropping motions for return no. 262 to 305?

Okay? It is agreed. I would now ask the hon. member to please move motion 305.

Return No. 306

Mr. Trew moved, seconded by Mr. Solomon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 306 showing:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a detailed list of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed or commissioned by the Department of Agriculture, including in each case: (1) the purpose of the poll or project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the names of the individuals or organizations who performed the work; (5) the results and analysis provided to the

government.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking to motion . . . I will be moving order 306. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 306, showing, and I will be reading that at the conclusion of my remarks.

What we have here is a government that is run strictly by opinion polls. It has long been known that that is the manner in which Saskatchewan has been governed for about five years now. The people, that is the taxpayers of Saskatchewan who are footing the bill for the various opinion polls conducted in all of the Crown corporations, all of the departments, and so on, of the government, have a right to know the details, Mr. Speaker, of who is involved.

We would have liked to know how they became involved and the details of the tendering — and indeed, I regret that the amendment has deleted that, but for purposes of facilitating, getting some information at least, we’ve agreed to it because these orders have been sitting around for so long.

We have a situation where we should be having a government by the people, and indeed we have it by the people, in that the people are paying for these opinion polls, but it should also be for the people. So we want the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and, indeed, us as the opposition, to have the information that was garnered in these various opinion polls.

There is — surprise, surprise — a crisis in agriculture dealing specifically with item 306. And I think that farmers and other taxpayers will be most interested to know what it is that your government proposes to do to deal with this crisis situation, and, indeed, what the public opinion polls show will be a good indicator of where you will be six months from now with your various legislations.

So I am moving that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 306:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a detailed list of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered . . .

And then from there, Mr. Speaker — my shorthand is not what it should be — there is the amendment from the Hon. Deputy Premier, and so I will move that motion as amended, seconded by the member from Regina North West.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment that return no. 306 be amended:

By deleting all the words after “ordered” in the first line and substituting therefor the words:

the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed, and commissioned by each government department and Crown corporation, including a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project;

the total cost of the poll or project; the name of the individual or company conducting the poll.

Seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I notice in the amendment that the third item we were asking for was “the method by which the work was awarded.” In other words, what tendering process did you go through, if any? The only reason that you would be not forthcoming with that information is if there indeed was no tendering.

I remind the members opposite – the government – that this is taxpayers’ money, public money that has been used in an expenditure to garner some information; some of it may have been for very good cause, some of it may have been just crass get the Conservative government re-elected polls. In either case, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan paid for those polls and, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan should understand the method. In other words, how were these pollsters selected?

I am going to be urging my colleagues to vote against the amendment because of the deletion of item no. 3 in the original order.

Another disturbing aspect is item no. 5, which the Deputy Premier deleted completely. In item 5 we were asking for the results and analysis provided to the government. These are polls that had been conducted for the fiscal year 1985-86. I think that any argument that what results came out of that are confidential really does not hold a great deal of water when you look at the timing of the polls.

Anything that the government is going to be – or has wanted to act on – surely they will have acted by now. And again I keep coming back to the argument: the taxpayers of Saskatchewan paid for these various and numerous polls. You’re telling us that the taxpayers are not entitled to know what the results of those polls were, what the recommendations that came back to the government for, what those recommendations were.

(2145)

I think it’s just a real shame that we don’t know how the pollsters were selected, and indeed we don’t even know what the results of those polls are. You’re indeed being very, very secretive in withholding that information.

I will, as I say, urge my colleagues to vote against the amendment, and indeed I urge the government to make a further amendment and include items 3 and 5 in the original Bill.

Mr. Shillington: — I don’t want to be drafting this for the government, but I’ve obtained a copy of it. It says by deleting all the words after the word “ordered” in the first line – the word “ordered” doesn’t appear in the first line of this motion. It then goes on. “Ordered” appears for the first time in the second line. But if you then read it as it’s supposed to be, it doesn’t make any sense. It says:

For the fiscal year 1985-86, a detailed list of public opinion polls and market research projects

ordered . . .

And then it spins on:

The number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed and commissioned by each government department and Crown corporation including . . .

I’m afraid it doesn’t make much sense. Would you take a look at it?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I can beg the indulgence of the House to offer the corrected amendment. Mr. Speaker, it should have read:

That return no. 306 be amended by deleting all of the words after 1985-86 in the first line, and substituting therefor the words:

the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed and commissioned by each government department and Crown corporation including: (1) a brief description of the purpose of the poll or the project; (2) the total cost of the poll or the project; (3) the name of the individual company conducting the poll.

Mr. Shillington: — We posthumously, I guess, give the minister leave to withdraw the old amendment and move the new one.

I want to add my voice and my complaint to that of the member from Regina North with respect to what has been left out. Specifically, what has been left out is the method by which the work was awarded. Once again there’s no pretension that if the system for awarding polls were done fairly and above board, there’d be any reason to hide that. The only reason there may be not to disclose the information is the government isn’t awarding it fairly or giving everybody a fair chance. They are, in fact, feeding their friends.

Mr. Speaker, I just note it’s . . . I would note that patronage is a very expensive way to run a government. This government is running its affairs based on patronage. They’re wanting an enormous amount of money, and some of the more difficult and painful cuts in their budget could have been avoided if they ran a more honest administration.

Mr. Speaker: — Would the Deputy Premier perhaps withdraw the original amendment and then . . .

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Can I withdraw the original amendment, Mr. Speaker, and offer the second one in its stead, the corrected version? And I have moved that, seconded by Urban Affairs.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 307

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, we have another group here that takes us from 307 to 351 inclusive, and I will be offering a similar amendment here, Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — Similarly screwed up?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And this one is not similarly screwed up, Mr. Speaker. This one is right, because this one deals with year to date, and so the wording for this one is as it should be. It's the same as the other was, which it shouldn't have been. So Mr. Speaker, if, with the co-operation of the hon. member, 307 to 350 could be dropped, I would move this amendment on return no. 361, and it would read as follows:

That return no. 351 be amended by deleting all the words after "ordered" in the first line, and substituting therefore the words:

the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed and commissioned by each government department and Crown corporation including: (1) a brief description of the purpose of the poll or the project; (2) the total cost of the poll or the project; (3) the name of the individual or company conducting the poll.

It's essentially the identical amendment to the previous one.

Mr. Koenker: — Mr. Speaker, I do intend to concur with that, but before I do, I must say that I object to the amendment. The Deputy Premier has said that this amendment is not right. I don't think it's a right amendment. The public have a right to know what the government has done with respect to polling; what the polling has cost them; who's done the work; what the results of the poll are.

The public simply doesn't get that information as a result of this amendment, and that's the reason I object to it. I think it's symptomatic of a government that is looking for survival, that needs to resort to polls in order to survive. I think that's a poor stewardship of public funds.

There was no consultation with the public when the dental program was cut, and there was no consultation or polling of the public to determine, as far as we know, when the drug plan was cut, or when educational cuts took place. But there was polling done on a whole number of scores in secret, and we don't really know the results of those polls, and we won't as a result of this amendment.

And so I object to it on the grounds that the public has a right to know this information. There's a pretext of open government, but there's a reliance on secret polls, likely performed by friends of this PC government.

Return No. 351

Mr. Koenker moved, seconded by Mr. Upshall, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 351 showing:

For the period April 1, 1986 to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed or commissioned by the Department of the Provincial Secretary, including in each case: (1) the purpose of the poll or project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the names of the individuals or organizations who performed the work; (5) the results and analysis provided to the government.

Mr. Koenker: — Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Humboldt, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 351 showing.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment, seconded by the member for Maple Creek, that return no. 351 be amended by:

deleting all the words after "ordered" in the first line, and substituting therefor the words:

"the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered performed on commission by each government department and Crown corporation including a brief description of the purpose of the poll or the project, the total cost of the poll or the project, the name of the individual or company conducting the poll."

Mr. Solomon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with my colleague in saying that the deletion of item no. 3, "the method by which the work was awarded," is a deletion, in my view, which is a guilty deletion. They don't want the people of this province to know how they've awarded their contracts. By that deletion the people of Saskatchewan can easily conclude that they are guilty of patronage again, in this circumstance, and the circumstance of awarding polls and other studies being done by the government and other departments and agencies.

So I will certainly not support the amendment as put forward by the Deputy Premier on the basis that with the amendment being passed proves their guilt in awarding contracts purely on the basis of patronage.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.