

July 11, 1989

## EVENING SITTING

## MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

## Return No. 4 (continued)

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

## Return No. 5

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving an order of the Assembly do issue, with respect to D-Mail Services Inc., which in fact will request information in respect to the contracts of this company, received from May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, from all departments, Crown corporations, boards, agencies, commissions, or the Government of Saskatchewan, including in each instance: (1) the amount of the original contract; (2) the amount of any contract cost overruns; (3) the purpose of the contract; (4) the work performed by the company; (5) whether or not the work in question was awarded by public tender.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, in respect to this, that it should be drawn to the attention of the Assembly that D-Mail Services Inc., is run by a Tory supporter individual that worked in the Premier's office. And what is the problem as we see it in respect to this government, is the unbridled way in which they use public funds in advertising and in polling and in mailing. And they provide this extra taxpayers' money is spent in this way to promote the Tory party rather than from Tory funds.

We've estimated that millions of dollars are spent annually, Mr. Speaker, in the way of self-serving advertising. And when this government was in opposition, Mr. Speaker, one of the indicators that they pledged to the people of this province is that they would cut back on any unnecessary advertising. And today we see the abuse and the waste in respect to advertising and to mailing services and public relations in order to try to keep a discredited government in office.

And what I want to say, we have seen this in every aspect whether the people of the province want it or not. We find it with their privatization; what they are doing is constantly polling and advertising. And the people of Saskatchewan in respect to SaskEnergy have overwhelmingly indicated that no, they don't want a public utility privatized.

This is certainly another indication of this government's spending uncontrolled, unlimited fashion any amount of money they deem necessary in order to elect themselves to another term of office, if indeed that's possible. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that it's incumbent upon the opposition, because the public of Saskatchewan is outraged the way the taxpayers' dollar has been wasted by the incompetence and mismanagement. And accordingly I move, seconded by my colleague from Humboldt, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to make a few short, short comments on this motion for return. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think it reasonable that the members of the opposition ask the dollar amount paid to this particular firm on a contractual arrangement by the departments and Crown corporations and various agencies of government. Certainly with respect to the work performed by this company, it consisted as the heading or the name of the company displays: it is a direct mail service whereby letters of communication have gone to various people throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

And I would seek to make an amendment to the motion that would provide to the members of the opposition the amount of dollars, and indeed they are taxpayers' dollars, and I think it fair that the members of the opposition and the taxpayers know how many dollars was paid to this firm.

I believe that that is a fair and a reasonable question to ask, and I would like to move the following motion in respect of that, Mr. Speaker. And I would move, seconded by the member for Kelsey-Tisdale:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words and numbers appearing after the words "D-Mail Services Inc." and substituting therefor the words:

the total amount paid to them from May 17, 1988 to the date this return was ordered, by all (and I repeat, all, Mr. Speaker, all) departments, Crown corporations, and agencies of the Government of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Speaker, if one takes a look at what we asked in the original motion, and then take a look at what the amendment indicates, they are a total cover-up of the information that we have to have in order to be a responsible opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koskie:** — But what we have asked for is the amount of the original contract. And we asked if there was any contract overruns, the purpose of the contract, the work performed by the company. Why shouldn't we know what work performed by the company? Why wouldn't he provide that? Whether or not the work in question was awarded by public tender.

Can you give any conceivable reason why the minister would get up and amend those types of information on behalf of the taxpayers of the province? He got up and said, oh amend it. But he can't justify not giving the information to the people of the province in the expenditure unless there is cover-up and corruption within the government, which the people of Saskatchewan know.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

### Return No. 6

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by my desk mate, the member from Regina North East, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return (No. 6) showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered: (1) a list of all advertising firms employed by each department, board, commission, Crown corporation and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan, with the exceptions of Dome Advertising Limited, Dome Media Buying Services, and Roberts & Poole advertising company; in each case provide the amounts paid, and the nature of the work performed.

I so move.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, as well, would like to be rather brief on this particular motion.

And without, I say, Mr. Speaker, without going into past arguments and justifications and rationalizations that have been made over history, I would simply say, Mr. Speaker, that my amendment will provide substantially to the opposition, I think, what they really need to know, and that is the total amount paid to each firm over the said period.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that indeed this type of information is readily available and I would think that we should be able to provide, with not a significant amount of work by the civil service, we should be able to provide this type of information.

And I would like to make the amendment, moved by myself, seconded by the member for Kelsey-Tisdale:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words and numbers after "Saskatchewan" and substituting therefor the words:

and the total amount paid to each firm over the said period.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

### Return No. 7

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to move this motion no. 7 dealing with advertising. I want to make a couple of remarks. First of all, I think every time we ask questions about advertising, we're dealing with probably one of the sorriest examples of waste by this government, to exemplify in a very big way the kind of money that this government wastes almost daily.

I say that, Mr. Speaker, because in the advertising that this government does, the vast majority of it is political advertising. It has nothing to do with providing

advertising or knowledge about services the government provides. It simply has to do with political propaganda.

And I think the public therefore needs to know and has a right to know, because it is their money, for what purpose this advertising dollar is being spent, who is it being spent for. And the one thing we don't ask in this question, but I think there is good reason to believe, Mr. Speaker, that in these tens of millions of dollars that they spend every year through basically two advertising firms, there is an involvement of some money that is put aside for political campaign purposes.

(1915)

So when the deputy House Leader rose before 5 o'clock and said that these types of requests have to deal with integrity and these kinds of things, well I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I believe that these kinds of requests have a lot to deal with accountability and with honesty and with integrity.

So I do hope that the House Leader will not rise and amend this motion because the information being asked here is perfectly legitimate information. There's nothing unusual about it, nothing that would take a great deal of preparation, but it simply asks for the amount of money that has been spent, and it asks for what purpose it was spent.

Surely the public has a right to know, when the government spends their money, what it was spent for. If the government isn't prepared to do that, as a minimal, then the government isn't doing its responsibility. So I hope that the House Leader will take those remarks seriously and will agree to the following order.

So at this time, seconded by the member from Riversdale, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 7 showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the amounts of money paid to the firm of Roberts & Poole advertising corporation by each department, board, commission, Crown corporation, and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the nature of the work performed.

I so move.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I do want to inform you and the Assembly that I will not be amending this return, but I would want to bring to the members' opposite attention the fact that by the nature of the immediately preceding motion that substantially this information has been provided.

And I would say therefore, Mr. Speaker, that I would urge members to vote this motion off because in the prior motion, as amended, for the advertising firm, Roberts & Poole, the total amount of dollars spent with or through Roberts & Poole will be provided to members of the opposition.

I do say further, Mr. Speaker, that within each

department's estimates and within the forum of Crown corporations and/or public accounts, members of the opposition do have an opportunity to review with each minister affected some of the annual expenditures, and particularly with respect to advertising. And I do know, just last evening or last afternoon, when I myself was on estimates there certainly were some questions on advertising.

I say further, Mr. Speaker, that the whole subject of advertising and advertising agencies used by governments has not altered a great deal under this administration, that it's fairly common in all administrations that there are some agencies that certainly are used to a larger extent than others. I do know members opposite, in their days in power, used some advertising firms. I do know that their work significantly changed as a result of the election of 1982 and yet, Mr. Speaker, with the information provided in the return immediately preceding this, I would urge all members to defeat this particular motion because substantially the information has been provided, both in the preceding return and in other forms.

Motion negated on division.

### Return No. 8

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my remarks, I will move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 8 showing, worded as follows:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, the number of public opinion polls and market researcher projects ordered, performed, or commissioned by or for each government department, agency, and Crown corporation, 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.

What we're seeking here, Mr. Speaker, is an explanation of the expenditure of some of the taxpayers' money in the province of Saskatchewan. I think it's quite clear, Mr. Speaker, that the life and substance of the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan, to say nothing of other Conservative parties, but of the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan, is made up of polls and subsequent advertising. They take a poll and then they advertise; and they take another poll and they advertise.

The number of items which we've dealt with previously, the records show that over a four-year period this government spent over \$46 million on advertising. We would like to know the companion amount of money that was spent on the polling that led them to do the advertising, this huge amount of government advertising, an unconscionable amount of advertising. We want to know what were the polls that this government took, what were the results of those polls which were paid for by taxpayers' dollars, and who got awarded the job of doing the polls.

The reliance of this government on polls and consequential advertising has led this province, in part, into the deepest debt situation that we've ever had in the history of the province of Saskatchewan. The amount of mismanagement which has been turned up in just this session alone is startling — startling, Mr. Speaker. It's necessary that the public know how their money is being spent.

We have a dark suspicion, Mr. Speaker, that the big, blue Tory machine in Saskatchewan needs a lot of money to make it operate, and it gets a lot of money, we suspect, from its friends in the advertising and polling business. What we want to do is uncover this amount so that taxpayers of Saskatchewan will know where their taxpayers' dollar is going and if in fact it is being wisely spent. Let the people of Saskatchewan be the final judges here, Mr. Speaker.

If the motion that is before us follows the path of the previous motions which were before us, we will see a government member rise and attempt to amend this motion, this order, in order to prevent the presentation of the necessary information to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

**An Hon. Member:** — Not this time, John, they won't do it.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I think they may do that. I think they may do that, and that will be unfortunate for the taxpayers because the suspicions of the taxpayers, as I talk to them in Saskatchewan, both in urban and rural Saskatchewan . . . And I've done quite a bit of this recently, Mr. Speaker; I've been around rural and urban Saskatchewan talking to people. And I find that people are becoming more and more concerned every day with the amount of advertising they see on television, the ads in newspapers, the radio, magazines, billboards, all over Saskatchewan. They're being phoned up on polling all the time and I suspect a lot of these polls are being commissioned by this Government of Saskatchewan. It's necessary that we discover in detail how the government is spending our money on polls and advertising.

I realize the government, by their amendments, has short-circuited our opportunity as the official opposition to find out how the advertising money is being spent. They've either amended or denied the motions that have been before this House. I would hope that the government will not employ that same technique in providing the information about public opinion polls and market research projects that have been undertaken by this government which we feel are numerous, very numerous.

So therefore I move, Mr. Speaker, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 8 showing, seconded by my seat mate from Athabasca.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to offer just a few brief comments on this particular motion for return, and I believe that the amendment that I will be offering will once again provide to the members of the opposition substantially all of the information that they would like.

And I would offer the following comment, Mr. Speaker. The amendment that I'm about to move is very consistent with past practices in this legislature. I stress, Mr. Speaker, not only consistent with past practices under the current Progressive Conservative administration, but I say, Mr. Speaker, very consistent with past practices under the former NDP administration in years 1982 and prior.

The amendment, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of all members, would be such that I will read it to you right now. And it is moved by myself and seconded by my colleague, the member for Kelsey-Tisdale:

That the motion be amended by inserting the words "a brief description of" after the (1), and by deleting all words after the (3), and by substituting therefor the words:

the name of the individual or company conducting the poll.

And by that, Mr. Speaker, the information provided to the members opposite will be a brief description of the project or a brief description of the poll, and I think that would be useful information for members opposite. Also provided to the members opposite within this amendment would be the cost of such poll, and furthermore there would be the name of the individual or company who has conducted the poll.

So, Mr. Speaker, I therefore move the amendment that I have just read, seconded by the member for Kelsey-Tisdale. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. This will be seconded by the member for Regina South.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

#### Return No. 9

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, one of the weeping sores in this government has been the extent of its advertising. It has become an embarrassment to members of this Assembly and to the public. Mr. Speaker, I don't hold out much hope that the government would actually provide us with the information which has been requested in this motion. I suspect that there's a great deal here to hide, and the government will indeed go ahead and hide it.

(1930)

This motion asks for roughly the amount of advertising which has been put through Dome Advertising Limited. I might be pleasantly surprised, Mr. Speaker, but I doubt it very much.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move for an order of the Assembly:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the amounts paid to the firms of Dome Advertising Limited and Dome Media Buying Services Limited by each department,

board, commission, Crown corporation, and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the nature of the work performed.

I so move, seconded by the very willing member from Moose Jaw North.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, if you would closely examine the amendment made to motion or return no. 6, you would find that within that amendment, that amendment as amended by the government will provide for the amount of moneys paid to this particular advertising firm; that is, the advertising firm of Dome, Dome Advertising or Dome Media Buying. And, Mr. Speaker, I would therefore urge all members to defeat this particular motion for return in that the amount of dollars provided to or spent with the Dome companies has been provided for in the return no. 6 as amended.

No, I didn't make any motion. I just stated, Mr. Speaker, that I urged all members to vote this return off.

Motion negated.

#### Return No. 10

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be moving a motion along the following lines:

The total amount paid by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation for the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and position 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.

And it's fairly obvious why we're asking this question, with a cabinet that spends most of its time in the air, most of it out of Canada, taking trips around the world, literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in travel at taxpayers' expense, that this cabinet uses. And the list is long. Even the Deputy Premier alone, in his term as Deputy Premier, has travelled extensively to exotic places like Saudi Arabia and Paris and many, many, many places around the world.

And we know the results of his trips. We know the result of his trip to Montreal. We have seen the result of his air flights to Montreal — meeting with Mr. Guy Montpetit in the back of a limousine and ending up with a GigaText deal. So we know the kind of deals that these people make when they travel on these high-flying trips.

The other part of the question is who they take along with them when they go. We want to know the list of the names who accompany the ministers when they travel, because the people will want to know why they're going and for what reason and how much it costs the taxpayers.

And I say as well that each of the carriers . . . We want to know, of course, the airline, so that we can check the actual airline, whether in fact the tickets were used properly. We've heard of cabinet ministers in other

jurisdictions who don't use their tickets properly. We would want to check and make sure that those tickets were all used and that money wasn't siphoned off for some other purpose with tickets that were purchased.

So for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 10 showing.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I will be moving an amendment to this motion to make this motion consistent with the same order that was asked for last year.

And I would simply indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the reasons for this amendment today are indeed the same reasons given over a period of time, ever since the Leader of the Opposition first introduced or made the argument as government House leader of the day, that to fail to amend this return as it is stated would indeed entail a fair bit of time, a fair bit of time that I feel, and the Leader of the Opposition felt at the time he was government House leader, that it would be time that could be better spent by many of the people employed by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

And the amendment that I will be recommending and moving in the legislature in a moment will allow for the total amount paid by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation for the period, May 17 to the date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares.

So that those dollar amounts certainly will be provided, but I would like to make the amendment, moved by myself, seconded by the member for Regina South:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after the word "air fares."

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I think it's really unfortunate for the taxpayers of the province that the minister refuses to give the information that's requested here, that is the names of the individuals, for example, who accompany the ministers when they travel, as I say, to all these exotic places around the world. Why wouldn't you give the names of those people and the cost of those air fares? Why wouldn't that be in the best interest of the people, the taxpayers of the province?

As well, Mr. Minister, you've indicated now and on several occasions that lists were not provided. I can remember very clearly that the names of people who rode on executive aircraft, while we were in government, were provided.

**An Hon. Member:** — All the time.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Yes, they were. They were provided to the Assembly. And for you to mislead the Assembly in that manner by quoting from the now Leader of the Opposition that it took time, simply is not appropriate. The fact is that names of people who rode on executive aircraft were provided, were provided to the people of the province. And your statement is simply not accurate and, in fact, you're misleading the Assembly when you say that.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. On a point of order, I wonder how you can keep saying that these votes are in favour of the government when there are more people on the opposition side voting than on the government side. Can you explain how you make that decision?

**The Speaker:** — Yes. Well the hon. member, who's spent a good many years in this House, realizes that at any time a standing vote can be called if they want an accurate count. These are voice votes, and if they do want an accurate count, they can call for standing votes.

### Return No. 11

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been an interesting trend developing as we've gone through these motions for return (debatable). Every time the opposition has proposed a motion to this Assembly asking for specific information about the expenditures of this government, to hold this government accountable to the taxpayers of this province, every single motion has either been defeated by the government outright refusing to provide an answer to the question, or amending it to in effect neuter the question, to make the question meaningless.

Let me just give you an example, Mr. Speaker. When we . . . And I will be, at the conclusion of my remarks, moving a motion that will inquire into the expenditures of this government on out-of-province trips. Let me just give an example so that the people of Saskatchewan can understand what's going on here. In the period from September 8, 1987 to May 17, 1988 . . . And I will be moving a motion asking for expenditures from May 17, 1988. So in that period, Mr. Speaker, of approximately eight months, this government spent nearly \$3.5 million just on commercial airlines alone, just on commercial airlines alone in an eight-month period, and are refusing to provide specific data in response to questions from Her royal Majesty's Loyal Opposition in respect of the taxpayers' rights of this province to know what this government is doing.

Mr. Speaker, in that same period, we also find, in that same eight-month period, that the Deputy Premier was trotting off to Geneva at a \$2,635 expenditure, the taxpayer expenditure; trotted down to New York for \$1,872. I wonder what kind of bang for our buck we got for that. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, in that eight-month period the Minister of Justice was a globetrotter looking for justice in other parts of the world while he was trying to compose his ideas as to how he can bring justice to Saskatchewan. It cost the people of Saskatchewan, to send the Minister of Justice to Brazil — to investigate justice there, I presume — \$4,207. The Minister of Justice also trotted off to Japan for \$3,562, investigating Japanese justice for the people of Saskatchewan without an explanation as to what he was doing there.

The Minister of Finance, raising money, one would presume, to try and cover the expenditures, the deficit, to pay the bills for our deficit, our total deficit of \$3.9 billion, some \$380 million in interest this year alone, was he trotting around Saskatchewan talking to the people of Saskatchewan as a public participation exercise to meet these financial obligations? In that eight-month period, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance trotted off to Zürich and London and Toronto. That cost the taxpayers \$2,976 to fund his little trip. And then that wasn't enough; he had to go and look for finances in China and Japan. It cost the taxpayers of Saskatchewan \$4,324.

Mr. Speaker, these are expenditures without explanation. And it is totally incomprehensible to me, as I have listened to the response of the opposition to the questions posed today, as to why they are doing what they are doing to either refuse to answer the questions of the opposition or to neuter those questions, except, Mr. Speaker, if you have a government that is corrupt and dedicated to covering up its very operations, then that explains their behaviour today. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that is clearly unacceptable to the opposition and unacceptable to the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — So, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a very specific question of the Government of Saskatchewan, and I will hope that this government will have the fortitude to accept the question as it's presented and to answer the question as it's presented without moving a corruption and cover-up amendment or moving to defeat it, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to know about out-of-province travel from this government. They may want to include some explanations as to out-of-province trips involving the Premier being couriered around Montreal in the back seat of a limousine owned by Guy Montpetit.

Or they may want to make reference, Mr. Speaker, to the airline trip that involved the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the minister responsible for SEDCO, and the Deputy Premier, and the Minister of Justice going to Winnipeg to look at the GigaText computers.

They may even want to, Mr. Speaker, include some information as to what it was that Guy Montpetit and Grace Sim were doing in San Francisco for a weekend at \$15,000 expense to the people of Saskatchewan.

(1945)

Mr. Speaker, I will then ask the government's co-operation to comply with this motion, which I move, seconded by my seat mate from Cumberland, that an order of the Assembly to issue for return showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by each minister of the government; (2) in each case the destination and the purpose of the trip (surely that's not too much to ask); (3) in each case the names and positions of

those who accompanied the minister at government expense (who went along); (4) in each case the amount charged on behalf of each person travelling at government expense (to break that down for us); (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.

That does not sound to me, Mr. Speaker, as though that is unreasonable for the people of Saskatchewan to know how their tax dollars are being spent, when this group of high flyers are travelling out of province, supposedly to do government business.

And I so move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Cumberland.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer an amendment on this return. And the amendment would yet provide for the information that is readily available, and that is the information on the total number of trips, out-of-province trips made by each minister. The amendment would also provide the destination of each trip and, thirdly, the total cost of the air fare.

I do believe that this is information that members opposite would want and could put to good use. And I would only ask the members opposite, when they are perusing this information, that they also bear in mind not only the cost of these trips, but let the members of the opposition bear in mind and consider the benefits of such trips.

And I speak of the benefits of bringing, for instance, a turbine manufacturing plant to Saskatoon, a plant by two Japanese corporations, Marubeni and Hitachi. I would think the success of bringing that particular industry, that I use by way of an example, could only have been made by making out-of-province trips to Japan, for instance, or out-of-province trips to bring Hunter's Manufacturing in North Battleford, or a whole list of others, Mr. Speaker.

So I would like to move, seconded by the member for Regina South:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words and numbers after the number (2), and by substituting therefor the words:

the destination of each trip; (3) the total cost of the air fare.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is an example of exactly what I just finished saying. I asked for specific information and the minister stands in his place and gives us reason to believe once again that the government has reason to cover up corruption in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I looked very carefully at the amendment that was proposed. I asked for information as to the destination and the purpose of each trip, and I notice that the minister very carefully eliminated being required to explain the purpose of a trip outside of the province.

Mr. Speaker, why would a government refuse to say what

the purpose of a trip of the cabinet ministers outside of this province, what the purpose is, if it is not intending to cover up?

Mr. Speaker, I also note that in response to my question, the minister, in his amendment, agrees only to provide the cost of the air fare — not the cost of the entire trip, only the cost of the air fare. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, he is not obliged to provide for the people of Saskatchewan information about the cost of champagne being consumed by ministers and their friends. Who knows who those are because they refuse to tell us when they go out of province?

So we don't know who's going along with the ministers. We don't know how much champagne they are consuming at public expense because they refuse to provide that information. They won't even say, Mr. Speaker, how much the total cost of the trips will be.

The amendment says that they will provide only the cost of the air fare, only the destination, will refuse to provide to the people of Saskatchewan the purpose or the reason why the ministers are travelling outside of the province, and will refuse to break down the expenditures of the total trips, only to give the information as to what the cost of the air fare itself is.

Mr. Speaker, if this amendment goes through, and I suspect it will as every other amendment has, along the same line proposed by the same minister for the same reasons from this same government, then we can only conclude one thing in the province of Saskatchewan, that there is gross reason to expect that there is cover-up and there is corruption going on in the province of Saskatchewan, because we have a government that refuses to be accountable to the opposition and to the taxpayers of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to.

### Return No. 12

**Mr. Goulet:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, at the end of my short talk I will be moving the following:

The names, titles, and remuneration of all non-clerical staff employed in or assigned to the ministers of the Government of Saskatchewan for the period May 17, 1988 to the date this return was ordered.

As I begin, Mr. Speaker, I must state straightforward that it's very important in a democratic society that issue of information is brought out to the open and that one of the main essential elements of a democracy is information-sharing to the public.

As I listened to the previous motions, time after time, when we wanted direct information, I noticed that the government added in motions that denied that information. It presented a situation where we have a

secret government, that in every situation we have detected a bit of corruption and quite a bit of secrecy.

So as I present this motion for return, that's the essential basis of my argumentation, that indeed many of the things that we'd like to know, whether it's flights, whether it's, in this case, the names of people that are employed by the ministers, and their titles, and how much they're being paid — these things we are unable to get.

This particular one that I'm presenting is a very straightforward one. I'm pretty sure that the minister, the member from across, should be able to say, hey, this is information that the people of Saskatchewan should know. This is information that should be straightforward and this information should not be covered up. So I'll be waiting to find out exactly what he says.

Now when I looked at the aspect of this particular motion, I see in it the aspect of name, and one only has to look at the famous names in regards to patronage in this province, and one doesn't have to look very far back in the recent past. Even the other day we were looking at the aspect of Ralph Katzman, a former PC MLA who is working for Highways, and we never knew what he had got. We never knew anything about how much he got paid, what the educational requirements were, anything like that. Nothing was known in that specific case.

The same thing occurs in regards to Larry Birkbeck, you know, in another case, where he was working for EMO (Emergency Measures Organization). We asked precisely the same type of questions: titles, how much money they made, what were the basis for hiring, but none of that was brought forward into the open. In other words, there is not only secrecy, there is straightforward patronage from this government, and that's the basis that I see in regards to this motion.

So not only do we have corruption in this, implied by the secrecy in this government, we also have patronage. And we also . . . This hiding of the facts, this whole basis of cover-up goes against the very essence of democracy.

And it is on this basis that I will move then the following: that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 12 showing:

The names, titles and remuneration of all non-clerical staff employed in or assigned to the ministers of the Government of Saskatchewan for the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered.

This is seconded by the member from Moose Jaw North.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to recommend to the members of the legislature that this information be supplied. However, I would offer an amendment that I feel is more of a technical nature, or more of an oversight, in all likelihood, by the members opposite, and that is the following, Mr. Speaker: that the motion for return as stated calls for a listing of non-clerical staff, not only employed but assigned to various ministers' offices.

And I'd use the following example, Mr. Speaker, of the complications in attempting to provide this type of information. I'd use the Minister of Justice's office as an example, that certainly from time to time, and I would think on an almost regular basis, legal advice would be sought and legal advisers from various areas may be technically assigned to the office of the Minister of Justice.

And I would therefore move an amendment, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "or assigned to," and by substituting therefor the words:

the office of.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

#### Return No. 14

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my comments I'll be moving that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 14 showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, list of the executive motor vehicles purchased by the central vehicle agency, including in each instance: (1) the make, model, and cost of the vehicle; (2) the name and location of the dealership from which the vehicle was purchased; (3) the name and position of the individual to whom each vehicle was assigned.

Mr. Speaker, in a democracy, as you well know, a government must be accountable to the people. In other words, they must provide the people with information so that the people can properly assess whether or not they want this government as their government in the future. Further, the government is spending the moneys of the citizens of Saskatchewan and therefore has a responsibility to account for the manner in which this is done.

I believe that this request for this information is a reasonable request. There are no tricks or gimmicks in it. It's very straightforward and reasonable, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the government should make this information available to the people of Saskatchewan and particularly in light of the fact that they have a dismal record of waste and mismanagement; that they have a dismal record with respect to providing information. I think it is time for them to stand up and be forthcoming with the information, Mr. Speaker, that has been requested tonight and that we are requesting in this motion.

(2000)

We can recall the recent events where the Provincial Auditor has indicated, Mr. Speaker, that he did not have access to large amounts of information with respect to government spending, and therefore I think it's even more imperative and more crucial that the government be

forthcoming with information and fulfilling their democratic responsibilities of accountability to the public of Saskatchewan.

On that, Mr. Speaker, I move the motion for return . . . I move that an order of the Assembly, rather, do issue for return no. 14, as I read earlier, seconded by the member from Regina North East. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, although I disagree with some of the points raised by the member opposite, I must say that, and I must congratulate the member opposite on some very genuine, sincere, and compelling arguments. And I would recommend to all members of the Legislative Assembly that they vote in favour of this particular motion.

Motion agreed to.

#### Return No. 15

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Until the last motion, I was starting to feel that the minister was starting to look like a little boy with his hand in the cookie jar and as soon as you catch him he puts his hand behind his back and says, I haven't got anything; I'm not hiding anything.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — But, Mr. Speaker, some of the questions that we're asking in these motions, I think are very relevant and very pertinent, especially in terms of the kind of government that we've seen in this province since 1982.

I want to say that I intend to move a motion that says:

For the period from the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText translation services began, to the date this return was ordered, a list of all payments by the Government of Saskatchewan to Terry Leier, and the date and purpose of each.

And the reason, I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is such an important motion, as will be ones that follow this particular motion, is the scandalous situation around the expenditure of \$5 million of taxpayers' money on the GigaText scandal, a shameless situation where the Deputy Premier takes public funds and throws them lavishly around this province, throws them around the country, and most of it ends up in the pockets of a Montreal business man.

And, Mr. Speaker, what have we to show for this service that was to translate French . . . English statutes into French. Sweet nothing. And I would guess, Mr. Speaker, in light of the comments made by the Deputy Premier earlier this week, that he will confirm that with that \$5 million we bought absolutely nothing. He went down East and he got conned by a French Canadian business man, conned out of \$5 million of public money — small in terms of the money that this government has squandered over the years, but nevertheless very relevant. It's symbolic of what this government's been



about — basically incompetence.

I want to say that while the Premier scoots around Montreal in Mr. Montpetit's limo, the people of this province run around looking for work. While the Deputy Premier flies around this country in Montpetit's private jet, small-business men and women in Saskatchewan run around looking for funds in order to keep their businesses afloat.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — And while half of the cabinet flies to Winnipeg for a brunch, young people in this province are getting on buses and leaving because they can't find employment in Saskatchewan any longer.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — But that's what we've seen in this province, and that's why the information that we're asking in this motion is so important. Five million dollars, as I said, is a small amount in terms of what they've squandered, what this government and this Premier has squandered, but it's really significant and it really indicates what this government is about.

I want to say that the public response to the GigaText scandal, and to the way this government has been spending public funds, really requires this government to come forward with the answers that we're asking in these motions, and not hide their hands behind their back like a little boy that stole cookies out of the cookie jar.

They're not asking for that kind of government, Mr. Minister. Mr. Speaker, they're asking for a government that's open and honest and that's willing to be straightforward with the way they expend public money.

We've asked motion after motion today that this government come clean and come straight to the people of this province and tell them exactly how they've been spending their money. But on just about every occasion that minister stands up and moves an amendment to the motion that basically makes it irrelevant — other than the motion 14, the one that the member from Regina Lakeview just proposed; every other one he stands up and amends.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we're not very comfortable, as opposition, not being able to have access to the way this government spends money. The public auditor isn't very comfortable with the way this government spends money, and furthermore the people of this province will one day be able to pass judgement on how you're expending public funds.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 15 showing, seconded by the member from Regina Lakeview:

For the period from the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText

translation services began to the date this return was ordered, a list of all payments by the Government of Saskatchewan to Terry Leier, and the date and purpose of each.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like for the member's benefit to remind all members that respecting GigaText translation services it was this government and this administration, with some concern noticed, that did initiate and begin the RCMP investigation. Now, Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do is to amend this motion so that rather than having a fuzzy time period, as the motion put forth by the members opposite did, which stated the date that the RCMP investigation into . . . and on and on, that we submit in there the actual date when the RCMP investigation began, as we know it, Mr. Speaker, and that could only be the day on which we advised the RCMP . . . And that is one amendment that I would be making.

Further to that, Mr. Speaker, I believe the opposition would want to know if there are any extraneous, if you like, payments made to Mr. Leier. And the amendment that I would propose would provide for any payments made to Mr. Leier, excluding usual payments for salary, benefits, or expenses per se.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that that is the information that is at the root of what the opposition might want to know, and I would like to make the following motion, seconded by the member for Rosetown-Elrose:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText translation service began," and substituting the words and numbers, "November 18, 1989."

And further, by adding after the word "Leier", the words:

excluding usual payments for salary, benefits, or expenses.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess one of the reasons that the comments and remarks that have been made today about accountability really become clear when we talk about motion 15, what we're asking, for goodness' sakes, is what you are paying him for travel expenses, what you are paying him for other expenses; what we are asking for is what his salary is; what we are asking for is what you term usual payments are. I'm not clear on what usual payments are, and I'm not clear what you've paid him for expenses.

And if you have nothing to hide, why would you exempt expenses from this particular motion? What would be the rationale? Has he been flying on chartered jets down to San Francisco on weekends with Ms. Sim? And where has he been? This is what we're asking. How much of public funds has he been expending? And I mean that's why the motion was worded the way it was. And we understand, of course, your benevolence in terms of your words when you're talking about making amendments to the motion.

But what we're asking is what it cost the taxpayer to have this friend of the PC Party around. That's basically what we're asking. And we, sir, have a right to those answers. The people of this province who are funding these things have a right to the answers. And by moving this amendment, you've exempted expenses, you've exempted wages and whatever usual payments may in fact be. We're not sure.

So what I want to say, Mr. Minister, is that we're not at all comfortable with the amendment to this motion, and the people of this province won't be. You're going to be one day, sir, accountable for these expenditures, because one day there will be another government in this province that will be able to have a look at what you've done from 1982 until 1989 or '90, whenever we can get rid of you. And you're going to have to be accountable.

And just remember, Mr. Minister, that you and the members on that side of the House, if you want to stay in Saskatchewan and be comfortable with your friends and neighbours, have two options: you clean up your act and remove the suspicion that there are wrongdoings on that side, or you leave the province. And basically those are the two options you'll have. And what we're asking you to do is to straighten up the way you're operating and the way you're throwing taxpayers' dollars around this province. That's what we're asking you to do. And that's why it would be, I think, a little prudent on your part to give the opposition and the people of this province a chance to have a look at what's happened regarding these different areas that we're enquiring upon. If you've nothing to hide, let us have a look. But apparently you do, because it's every motion with the exception of two, I understand, that you've moved an amendment to neutralize the effect of the motion.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that . . . And I said before, but I think it bears repeating, that the opposition won't accept this, and the people of the province won't accept it. And what I'm asking is members not only on this side of the House but on that side of the House, to vote against this amendment because it's unfair and it removes the people's ability to have a look at how this cabinet and how this Executive Council are spending their money.

(2015)

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, a number of questions . . . A question arises . . . Just before I make my substantive objections to your amendment — and they are profound — I want to point out to the member that your amendment makes no sense at all. You have deleted the phrase, "the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText translation services began," and substituted "November 18, 1989."

So, in other words, we will get nothing until . . . Only something that happens after November of this year is going to be given to us. It doesn't make any sense at all. Now this may be a typo. If the minister wanted to clarify that, and if I didn't lose my right to speak, I really would like to know . . . But I do not want to lose my right to speak by taking my chair, Mr. Speaker. . .

**The Speaker:** — Having looked at the motion myself, the amendment is, as it reads, out of order. And unless the deputy House Leader takes the opportunity to clarify the motion or change it, unless the member is given the opportunity to amend it by leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave not granted.

**The Speaker:** — The amendment is out of order.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much.

**An Hon. Member:** — Who cares?

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well a goodly number of people in this province care. I believe that comment came from the member from Thunder Creek. I see by his face it was not; it was the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

I say to the member from Kelvington-Wadena, and other members on the Conservative benches, that the public of Saskatchewan care a good deal about this matter . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The amendment is out of order, but the member can speak to the main motion. You can speak to the main motion, the amendment to the main motion.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, I am speaking to the main motion. I understand that. Mr. Speaker, and members of this Assembly, this is undoubtedly the worst scandal that this government has visited on the public of Saskatchewan during the period of time that you're in office.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Shillington:** — The member from Maple Creek takes violent exception to that. It is no doubt that the member from Maple Creek does take violent exception to it. This scandal is going to result almost certainly in the defeat of a number of members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I have not . . . I don't think, in the years I've been in office, I have seen public attention focused upon a single event as much as this one. This is one that the public of Saskatchewan want to get to the bottom of. This motion will go some distance towards doing that.

I cannot imagine in any other province or any other government, a government behaving in this fashion. I ask the member from Maple Creek, if she can control her notorious temper for a moment, to listen to the following argument — listen to the following argument. In Ontario where the scandal is not anywhere near this bad, the Premier of Ontario called a judicial inquiry so that the facts might be known.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Shillington:** — And the scandal was nowhere near this bad. It involved . . . Well the member from Maple Creek . . . I am going to be interested to hear the comments from the member from Maple Creek when she gets a chance to speak. I say to the member from Maple

Creek, you know there's a theory that your jaw locks shut when your knee straightens, because nobody's ever heard you speaking. I say to the member from Maple Creek . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I think we should not make personal remarks against other members in the House, and I'd like to draw that to the member's attention and ask him to continue with his remarks on the motion.

**Mr. Shillington:** — I accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I just simply point out that such a comment would have been less likely if I hadn't been trying to shout above the member from Maple Creek.

Mr. Speaker, I say to members of this Assembly that the public of Saskatchewan have a right to know what happened. The public of Saskatchewan have a right to know what the truth of this matter is, and this motion will go some distance towards doing that.

The minister from . . . And I know it was ruled out of order. The Minister of Highways moved an amendment which would have permitted . . . which would have largely emasculated the motion for return — would have meant the motion for return largely useless.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a question of the proper expenditure of funds. It's a question of a conflict of interest. It's a question of influence peddling at the highest levels.

I say to the members opposite that if you believe that this issue is of little interest to the public, if you believe that by voting down our resolution you're following public will, then I suggest you try that in some practical means. An election might be one way of determining whether or not there's any interest still remaining in GigaText. I say to members opposite there's a good deal of interest in it. This is a matter which this Assembly has every responsibility to resolve.

I cannot imagine, in any other province, a government simply stonewalling for this length of time on a matter of this sort. In any other jurisdiction there would have been a public inquiry; the government would have, in some fashion, responded — and they didn't do so. That means that if the government is not prepared to give us the facts, if the government is not prepared to set up a judicial inquiry, which is what would have been done at any other time by any other government, then this Assembly has every responsibility to ask for these facts and we have a right to these facts.

We have a right to know, Mr. Speaker, we have a right to know what moneys were paid to Mr. Waschuk and what moneys were paid to Mr. Leier. One should just briefly recount the role of these two individuals in this affair. As Mr. Speaker will recall, this is an episode in which the government got fleeced for \$4 million. There's no kinder way to put it. There is no kinder way to put it.

This government got taken to the cleaners. You bought for \$3 million some antiquated computer equipment which a company dealing with GigaText did not even bother to place a value on, and apparently for the other million you

bought an idea for translating English into French and French into English which nobody believes can be worked. So for \$4 million you got nothing.

And the role, the fashion in which this government handled the investment, also is relevant. All of the elementary principles, the elementary business principles of sound management were ignored, including, and perhaps most notoriously, you allowed the promoter, Guy Montpetit, sole signing authority. The question arises: how could any sane and sober group of people in a government be guilty of such incompetence?

Well one of the possible explanations for that is that you relied upon the advice of others. You relied upon the advice given to you by Mr. Waschuk and Mr. Leier. And why did they give you that advice, which they should have known -

— and were very, very reckless if they did not know — was very bad advice? Well one of the possibilities was raised in the Montreal court-house. One of the possibilities is that they were given money to arrange for the government's investment in this company.

It is noteworthy that, in the case of Mr. Waschuk, he got the money and it wasn't until four months later that there was anything signed which suggested it was a loan. He simply got \$150,000 which disappeared to the Bahamas. Some four months later, the documentation that suggested this was a loan was signed. Now that is mighty, mighty suspicious.

In the case of Mr. Leier, he's a piker by comparison. In the case of Mr. Leier, he got apparently \$5,000 — has never been able to provide anything that approaches a satisfactory explanation for having got such money. It should be recalled, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Leier was not a freebooting entrepreneur. Mr. Leier was a public servant either employed in the Public Service Commission, or if he wasn't, he was under contract. He should not have been accepting any sum of money from any third party who was doing business with this government. That violates the elementary principles by which all public servants in this country work. He violated those principles.

Mr. Speaker, there is every reason to believe that these two did not conduct themselves with the kind of integrity which is asked of public servants, not just in Saskatchewan, but elsewhere.

The facts, the known facts, the admitted facts cry out for some sort of an explanation. What has this government done in the face of that demand for an explanation, these facts which cry out for an explanation? This government has done nothing but to stonewall it. This government has fumbled and flubbed its way through perhaps a dozen question periods on this issue, provided no information.

I have never seen the member from Souris-Cannington handle questions as badly as he did on this one, and I think there is a reason for that. I think it's because there are no answers, and nothing which could be fabricated into an answer.

Let us recall, let us recall what explanation Mr. Leier gave for the \$5,000. He said it was for unspecified expenses.

One should . . . Mr. Leier is one of the senior public servants in this government. He was part of the infamous transition team back in 1982 at an exorbitant salary that the former member from Thunder Creek described as obscene . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — How much do you charge?

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well I'll tell you I don't get \$1,000 dollars a day, I'll tell you that. The members opposite are getting a little touchy about all of this, getting a little touchy about all of this. I can say well they should be . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order.

(2030)

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well they should be touchy about all of this, well they should be.

We have Mr. Leier, who took money for unspecified expenses, in clear violation of his responsibility to the Government of Saskatchewan. His responsibility to the Government of Saskatchewan is that he is only paid by the Government of Saskatchewan; that is a fact with everybody who works with the Government of Saskatchewan. That's true of Mr. Leier. It is true of any other public servant. It's true of the people who work in this Assembly; it's true of public servants everywhere. The only money they receive is from the Government of Saskatchewan. They're not prohibited from carrying on some of their private business, but it's elemental that you don't take money from people who are doing business with the government. That is surely a principle which everybody accepts.

Mr. Leier violated that for \$5,000. Mr. Waschuk was in a slightly different position. Mr. Waschuk was not a public servant. He was indeed an independent business man.

**An Hon. Member:** — What's that got to do with the motion?

**Mr. Shillington:** — The two are tied together. The member from Saltcoats wants to know what Mr. Waschuk has to do with the resolution dealing with Mr. Leier.

I say the two are part of one seamless mess. The two are part of one seamless mess. Both of them were employed by Mr. Montpetit to do what has every appearance of being influence peddling. There's no other rational explanation for the facts. Nobody has suggested there is a rational explanation for Mr. Leier's behaviour and Mr. Waschuk's behaviour except influence peddling. That appears to be the explanation.

If there is any other rational explanation for how Mr. Waschuk behaved and how Mr. Leier behaved, it has never been provided to this Assembly. It has never been provided to this Assembly. All this government has done for some two months now is to stonewall. And I will say to the government opposite that we object, and object to that sort of treatment very much. It shows a contempt for this legislature, a contempt for the democratic processes, and what is more fundamental, a contempt for the public of Saskatchewan.

I call upon the government to pass this resolution, start to give the public of Saskatchewan some facts with which they may judge this government, Mr. Leier, and Mr. Waschuk, and the whole GigaText affair.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, I just want to bring it to the attention of the Assembly that the House Leader had asked for leave to explain the problem in the amendment. It really was just a typo. Leave was not given. But certainly it was just a typo. And with that we would . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Let us just allow the minister to proceed with his remarks.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Therefore, in view of that, I would put forth the following amendment, moved by myself, and seconded by the member from Meadow Lake:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText Translation services began," and substituting the words and numbers:

November 18, 1988

and further by adding after the word "Leier" the words:

excluding usual payment for salary, benefits, or expenses.

I so move, seconded by the member from Meadow Lake.

**Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, the minsters opposite just don't seem to realize what's at stake in this question involving GigaText and payments made to certain people, including Mr. Leier. And the amendments that have been introduced to the motion will only add fuel to the public's concern about what payments have been made and why they've been made.

This whole GigaText affair is, they must know, a great cloud hanging over this government, a great cloud hanging over the reputation of this government and the image which people who had heretofore had not had any particular bone to pick with this government. And now you go around this province, as many of us have, talking to the people and bring up the subject of GigaText or more often have the subject brought up to you, and hear what people have to say about that scandal and about this government.

I mean, it's . . . The most common joke that you hear around the coffee shops of Saskatchewan have something to do with GigaText. The Law Society of Saskatchewan, at its annual meeting in Yorkton last month, had a skit night in which various law societies from different cities put on a skit. And I'm told that four or five of those skits were concerned with the subject of GigaText.

So there you have the Law Society of Saskatchewan, which is hardly peopled with a bunch of radicals, a relatively conservative profession, taking advantage of

that opportunity on skit night to poke fun at the GigaText translation idea. And that's a sorry state when a government gets to the point where people are telling jokes about the government at the government's expense.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I'm having difficulty hearing the member and would like to ask the co-operation of the members to allow the member to proceed with his remarks so that we can hear the remarks he's trying to make.

**Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I think the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster wants to speak next. I think that's what he's trying to convey to you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mitchell:** — More seriously, Mr. Speaker, than the fact that the people are making this the butt of their jokes, is the fact that the people seem to assume that the government is guilty of wrongdoing in this case, and the government isn't doing anything to answer those allegations.

The government hasn't tabled any documents. The government hasn't provided any full explanation. The government hasn't even answered all of the questions that have been asked over numerous, probably a dozen, question periods in this House. Questions have been taken notice of and not answered. Questions have been refused answers on the basis that an RCMP investigation is ongoing. But the answers have not been given. And the public look at that, Mr. Speaker, and they have come to the conclusion, they have come to the conclusion, in the case of a vast majority of them, that there has been wrongdoing in this case.

And so what we're trying to do in this resolution is to give you the opportunity to start to clear the air. And the place that we've suggested that you start is with respect to Terry Leier. As has been observed by my colleague, Mr. Leier is one of the most senior public servants in the service of this government, and yet we know from documents that have been made public in the Montreal court case that Mr. Leier was paid \$5,000.

Now we know that when money was paid to people for expenses on that particular expense sheet that was filed in the Montreal court case, those expenses had been referred to as expenses. In the case of Mr. Leier, the explanation for the expense of two payments totalling \$5,000, was "represent" — represent, Mr. Member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Represent is not expenses. It's not expenses, it's something else. Well what is it? We asked for that kind of information and we were told we couldn't have it because the RCMP were looking into the matter.

We're starting here in a small way by just giving you the opportunity to provide information as to payments made to Mr. Leier from the date that the RCMP investigation started. In other words, forget what happened before that — those matters, as you say, are under investigation — but from that date onwards, provide a list of payments made by the government to Terry Leier.

Now your response to it is that you'll provide that information but not information relating to expenses paid to him. Well that's part of the issue. That's part of the problem that people are having. People want to know what money has been paid to Mr. Leier, and why it was paid.

It's no secret what his salary is, I don't think. I mean, I think that's a matter of public knowledge, what his salary is. And if he is genuinely entitled to expenses in connection with his employment, that's not a big deal. That's the sort of thing that'll come out in public accounts anyway.

So why are we ducking away from that? Why don't you just make a clean breast of it here, and come clean and tell us how much money Terry Leier has been paid since the RCMP started their investigation, and not leave this cloud hanging over this whole situation by trying to exempt, by trying to exempt certain payments made to Mr. Leier?

This leaves the question open for the same kind of criticism and the same kind of doubts and the same kinds of suspicions that have dogged you on this case from the very beginning.

So with respect, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the amendment proposed leaves unanswered questions which go to the very heart of this matter, and that the House should not accept the amendment proposed by the Minister of Public Participation, and that we begin the process of making a clean breast of this whole situation.

Now we're going to be asking you to do other things in connection with Waschuk and with Tanka Resources in subsequent resolutions, but let's start it off on the right foot with Terry Leier and disclose all of the payments that have been made to him since this matter was turned over to the RCMP.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — This is the amendment, not on the amendment.

**The Speaker:** — Just to clarify the matter for the hon. member, the member is speaking to the amendment and he has the right to do that. The deputy House Leader may continue.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm certainly glad that I was able to get into this debate, and I do not want to be long. I just want to clarify the position of the government and I want to make a suggestion to members opposite.

I want to at the outset say, Mr. Speaker, that I was disappointed by the members opposite when clearly a mistake, and I take full responsibility for a typographical mistake that had the date, November 18, 1989 — typographical, I'm sorry, typographical — that had the date, November 18, 1989. And for that, Mr. Speaker, I apologize, and we have tried to clear the matter up by offering an amendment that corrects that typographical error.

The reason for the date, Mr. Speaker, was so that we could be very clear and certain as to when this RCMP investigation began, so it does not fundamentally alter the issue one iota, Mr. Speaker. And really, Mr. Speaker, this is not a large issue with the government. We certainly want to be open about this matter. There is nothing particularly wrong with the way the opposition members had their motion worded. And, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not certain of how the rules work on this issue, but I would like for the members' opposite benefit to withdraw the amendment and we will certainly go with the motion as written by the members opposite.

So if that would help to clarify the matter, if that would help to clear the air, if that would be more acceptable to the opposition, we're certainly willing to withdraw that amendment and provide all of the information that you had requested.

If it is necessary for a written motion to that effect, or amendment, I will move that.

(2045)

**The Speaker:** — We've had a little delay because I've been trying to get the exact citation to clarify the issue with the members. And the amendment can be withdrawn with the unanimous consent of the House. By leave it can be withdrawn. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Amendment withdrawn.

Motion agreed to.

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'd like to ask the hon. members to co-operate and we'll get through these motions a little quicker and we'll be able to hear the Clerk.

### Return No. 16

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving that an order for the Assembly do issue, which will provide information in respect to any moneys that have been paid to one Ken Waschuk, and the date and the purpose of the payments, for a period from the date of the RCMP investigation into the matters regarding GigaText Translation services began, to the date of this return was ordered. And I want to say a few remarks before I move that motion, Mr. Speaker.

The members of this Assembly will know, as my colleague from Regina Centre indicated, that we have before the House and during this session one of the most wasteful, one of the demonstrations of incompetence of this government, the like of which we have never seen before. In fact, we have seen the actions of this government which is so incompetent that it has itself had to initiate RCMP investigation of some of their own people. That is the facts.

They put into place with GigaText . . . And let's get into the history of it so the people of Saskatchewan know. They went down and came in contact with a French

Canadian business man from Montreal by the name of Guy Montpetit, and also a Douglas Young, a computer expert so-called, from Winnipeg, who was going to apparently sell them a bill of sale which would indeed do one thing and one thing only, and that was the fast translation of statutes from English to French.

We have seen uncovered in the court case in Quebec where a Japanese business man dealing with the same French Canadian business man, Guy Montpetit, loaned or provided some \$39 million. And evidence in that court case indicates that this same individual has essentially squandered \$39 million invested by the Japanese business man. This Assembly's knowledge of what had transpired has been documented in that court case in Quebec. And we find, in respect to the government's handling in the investment of some \$4 million initial investment for an unproven technology, a technology that there was also reports around indicating that it would not do the job. And they went ahead and they set up a company called GigaText.

And how was this company . . . how did the Government of Saskatchewan come in contact with the so-called computer expert and the French Canadian business man, promoter. Well it was one person that this Government of Saskatchewan had been dealing with by the name of Ken Waschuk. Ken Waschuk is well-known to this government. Ken Waschuk has a key into the offices of high influence. Ken Waschuk does polling for this Tory government. Ken Waschuk is the key person, and the one in which Guy Montpetit signed over a loan, interest free, of \$150,000. And he admitted in court that his influence with the Saskatchewan government was through Ken Waschuk. He provided the contact with the influential member of the cabinet that deals in billions of dollars, the Deputy Premier.

And what has been the sorry results of this incompetence and waste and mismanagement of this government? Well the taxpayers lost the initial \$4 million. They set up this company, GigaText, on the understanding that they were going to get a technology for translation of statutes from English to French. The taxpayers put up \$4 million into the company, and they gave 75 per cent of the shares to the guy from Quebec, the business man.

And on the board of directors is the same person that we're talking about in respect to this resolution, a representative of Guy Montpetit. Ken Waschuk sat on the board of this company, and 75 per cent of the shares were turned over to Guy Montpetit and into his company called Norlus — 75 per cent. He never put up one single dollar.

And do you know what they gave to him, this so-called business acumen . . . people that are supposed to be business men? This is supposed to be the business government. They turned over absolute signing power to Guy Montpetit and, by Heavens, he used it. He went across North America, and I'll tell you, he lived like a millionaire. He lived like a millionaire until he had spent the 4 million bucks, and it took him about six months to do it. That's what he did — taxpayers' money that was squandered by the incompetence of this government.

And who was involved? As I indicate here, we want to know information as to whether or not the person, this outstanding Tory hack, Ken Waschuk — and he has some pretty close associations with the Tory Party, because his brother works now for GigaText, I understand; has no particular training. I understand his second wife of Ken Waschuk also orchestrated the little tour of energy symposiums that they sent around the civil servants trying to sell off SaskEnergy.

So it's a very tight group. And what we're dealing with here is finding out information about one Ken Waschuk, because Ken Waschuk is tied in intricately in this deal. First of all, he is the one that made the contact that got GigaText going. He was the one that was able to see the Deputy Premier and other so-called influential members of cabinet. And he is the one that, it's reported in court-documented testimony, received an interest-free loan of \$150,000, and interestingly enough it was deposited to his account in Bermuda.

Now I'll tell you, there's no coincidence about it. I mean, if he needed a loan, you'd think he'd put it in his Saskatchewan bank account. But no, no. They went to . . . they both had several Bermuda companies, and the money that was paid here to Ken Waschuk in the interest-free loan, as purported by Guy Montpetit, is traced to be directly from the proceeds of the sale of the outdated computers by Montpetit to the government or the GigaText, which is the Government of Saskatchewan put in the \$4 million — sold \$2.9 million outdated computers, took over a large portion of that money, transferred it in his own personal account, and then over into Bermuda he transfers 150,000 to one Ken Waschuk.

And so we're interesting whether this cosy little relationship is continuing to flourish, because we know that the Waschuk family is being looked after. The wife of Ken Waschuk has employment with the government; we know the brother has employment with the government; and Ken Waschuk has the key to very important ministers' offices.

It's the government that was concerned after they gave total unrestricted authority to spend this 4 million bucks. And, Mr. Speaker, you will know the manner in which it was spent, and my colleague from Regina Centre alluded to the waste of taxpayers' money on trips to California, cost \$15,000. There's evidence of buying luxury boats. There's evidence of paying off personal loans. We have evidence that he took taxpayers' money and paid out debts not even related in respect to GigaText.

Waste, mismanagement, and corruption — so bad, Mr. Speaker, that the Government of Saskatchewan had to, on its own, initiate a RCMP investigation. And in this House they had to admit that their representative, Terry Leier, who was under investigation by the RCMP, they indicated their contact for Montpetit, Ken Waschuk, their person which they used for polling and has had other work with the Government of Saskatchewan, is under RCMP investigation. And they indicate that Guy Montpetit, the one that lived as a millionaire for the six months until he blew the \$4 million, was under RCMP investigation.

And so we want to know and we want accountability, and so accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I want to move an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 16 showing:

For the period from the date that the RCMP investigation into matters regarding GigaText translation services began, to the date this return was ordered, a list of all payments by the Government of Saskatchewan to Ken Waschuk, and the date and the purpose of each.

I so move.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koskie:** — My seconder is the member from Humboldt.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to speak shortly on this motion. I want to say with all the clarity that I can that we will be pleased to provide all of the information asked for by the opposition in this return. I want to stress, Mr. Speaker, that the government will provide, as in the prior return, that is return no. 16, all of the information that the opposition requested.

I want to stress, Mr. Speaker, that I'm still a little bit disturbed that typographical error was made — typographical, I'm sorry — typographical error was made on the prior return, and there's been quite a lengthy number of speeches by the opposition since then.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say with certainty that the information requested by the members of the opposition will be provided in the direct form asked by the members opposite.

And I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Quill Lakes just minutes ago made a number of arguments. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that this information will be provided to this legislature and to the public of Saskatchewan, not because of the arguments made by the member for Quill Lakes, but I say, Mr. Speaker, to clear up, to clear up many of the misconceptions caused by the member for Quill Lakes and other members.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reinforce and restate the fact, and I repeat — fact — Mr. Speaker, that it was this government that took notice that indeed there were some unusual things happening with respect to GigaText Translation services. And it was this government, Mr. Speaker, that initiated, that began, that called for an RCMP investigation.

(2100)

So I stress, Mr. Speaker, that we will be pleased to provide this information without amendment in order to clear up any misconceptions and to arrive at the exact facts for the people of Saskatchewan and for this legislature.

So I would recommend, Mr. Speaker, to all members of this Legislative Assembly, as I have in the past motion for return, that all members vote in favour of providing the information as requested by the members of the

opposition.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member opposite is going to bring forward the information that's requested, and I'd like just to give a few reasons why that information is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province, I think, don't fully understand the depth of corruption in this government. And I say that because most people in Saskatchewan live on a basis of honesty, where they share with their neighbours and they co-operate with each other, and the only time that the people of this province are led to see the corrupt depths of some people are in the movies of the gangsters.

And I think that we have to have this information because I believe that this is the same level as that gangster movie level. Because the people of Saskatchewan now will have an opportunity to find out why one Mr. Ken Waschuk just so happened to get a loan, an interest-free loan, so-called interest-free loan of \$150,000 and have it deposited in a Bermuda bank account.

Is that coincidence? Is that what the ordinary Saskatchewan person lives to believe happens in this province, governed by a government elected by the people? I don't think so.

I think that the same time that this Ken Waschuk was putting \$150,000, given to him by Guy Montpetit, who this government gave sole signing authority to from this GigaText corporation — the same time that money was being deposited in the Bermuda bank account, people of this province, the farmers of this province, were suffering stress, were suffering bankruptcy, were suffering from the ills brought upon them by this government and the federal government in Ottawa.

Now there's two different levels, Mr. Speaker, the one level where the farm families of this province are being downtrodden because of low prices, because of lack of production; and at the same time we have another world going on, another world of this government, the gangster world, where you have corruption, patronage, the go-betweens, the people who are living in and operating in this world for only one reason; that is, to maintain themselves and get as much money for themselves and their friends as they can. And that's what's happening — the same time the farm families of this province are in dire straits, where the stress level is so high in some cases that some of those farm families or members are taking their own lives, and that to me is a sorry state of this province.

The two levels, the one level where the high rollers are taking in money from the taxpayer, and the other level where the taxpayers are being put in a position where they don't know no longer what to do.

And I think the whole GigaText affair, from Ken Waschuk, the go-between with the pay-off, through Guy Montpetit, the boss, who suckered the government in for 5 million bucks, and now this government is so headstrong, or so unwilling to admit that they were wrong, that they continue to pay \$50,000 a month to keep the GigaText corporation going, just because they won't admit that

they were wrong.

And I see the Deputy Premier, when this whole scandal started, saying that GigaText was put in place to translate the statutes of this province from English into French. And as we proceed, as the corruption unfolds from the court case in Montreal, as the police investigation continues, we see this Deputy Premier, with the blessing of the Premier of this province, start to back-pedal, saying, well, oh no, GigaText wasn't put in place to translate statutes; that's only one small part of it; in fact, we don't even need that portion at all. Well we've seen a complete reversal of the arguments from the members opposite, especially the Deputy Premier, where he said GigaText at first was put in place to translate statutes, and now was saying that no, that's just a side issue. The statutes couldn't be translated, but there's much more than we can use with GigaText.

In that light we have to consider the federal government's offer of paying three-quarters of the cost of translating the statutes if it was done in the normal manner. But they said no, if this technology was put forward, they would not pay it because they knew it was not possible to do. It was poor technology. It wasn't available. The government of Manitoba said the same thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have this government in Saskatchewan telling the people it's fine to spend \$5 million on worthless technology, too arrogant to admit that they were wrong. So they continue to spend \$50,000 a month to keep the corporation going when all they would have to do to save a little bit of face was say, yes, we were wrong; we will drop the GigaText corporation; we will translate the statutes in the normal fashion at a lot less cost. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the cost would still be less than keeping this corporation going for \$50,000 a day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are really unacquainted with scandal in this province. I must say, in all my time that I've served in the legislature, nothing has ever approached the GigaText scandal. People have seen scandal imported on the TV tube. They see Watergate, and they see Oliver North, and they see other scandals uncovered elsewhere, and scandals in the Government of Canada. But by and large it's foreign to the people of Saskatchewan, and as a consequence the people of Saskatchewan are in a bit of a state of shock about what they see.

In my travels about the province, invariably, in rural or urban Saskatchewan, people ask me about the GigaText scandal. They want more information about it. They can't believe this kind of incredible performance is going on right here in the province of Saskatchewan and that our government is involved in this scandal. Now scandals, by and large, when they're discovered, have a tendency to bring down governments. They've done it all over the world, and I think it will be the same in Saskatchewan, that this scandal may bring down the government.

The government, of course, attempts to defend itself against the scandal being discovered. The first thing they do is they ignore the criticism. They ride over the criticism



and ignore and pooh-pooh it and say there's nothing there. Later on when it becomes more intense, the signs are there, the smell of scandal is there, then they start to make fun of their critics, the people who are raising questions about this. They're the critics of the government, and they make fun of them whether they're in this legislature or whether they're outside of the legislature demanding an accounting of the government. They start to make fun of them.

When that doesn't deter the critics, then they attack the critics. We saw this in the auditor's report. We've seen it in the Montpetit situation as well, where they attacked their critics.

Then comes the attempt to hide the information, to keep the information away from the public, or in the words of that famous Saskatchewan Conservative, Mr. Thatcher, deny, deny, deny.

I've seen a strange twist taking place in this Chamber this evening. The members across the way, after attempting to amend no. 15 and being ruled out of order, and then moving an amendment and then withdrawing the amendment, have now said they will provide the information to 15 in the unamended form.

And the Minister of Highways rises on this particular motion and says that they will provide the information. Well, Mr. Speaker, I detect a change in the government's strategy here. The government is not going to hide and deny, deny, deny. They're going to change that 3-D formula to delay, delay, delay.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and mark my words, that the information on 15, 16, and 17, and perhaps 18 on the order paper, will be delay, delay, delay. I think that's why the government has reached the position where they dare not try to deny these resolutions, to vote them down. They won't vote them down because that, in the public's eye, would be difficult to explain.

So what they're going to do now is proclaim that they're open-minded about this and they're going to provide the information to the people of Saskatchewan and this legislature. But I suspect, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be delay, delay, delay, and we'll be lucky if we ever see the answers to these questions before this government is defeated — before this government's defeated.

Now why should we see the answers to the questions about GigaText corporation? We should be able to see the answers; it's taxpayers' money. We should be able to see the answers and know what's happening.

A number of years ago, Mr. Speaker, there was an interesting program on television. It was called *Paper Chase*. It was about a lawyer and student lawyers in a law college, and it provided some interesting twists and turns in the plot of *Paper Chase*.

What we have here in GigaText is paper trail. We've seen some very interesting twists and turns. The paper trail of GigaText corporation stretches from Saskatoon to Montreal, to California, to Bermuda, to Regina. It's everywhere. It's intercontinental. The paper trail of

GigaText corporation is intercontinental. It even goes to the Asiatic continent, because there's an Asiatic tie-in. That's where the matter was disclosed in the first place.

The people of Saskatchewan deserve the information requested in these motions, and they deserve it without delay. I challenge this government to come clean, to provide this information completely and in a timely fashion. Anything less than that, they will have modified and adapted the Thatcher theory about deny, deny, deny in favour of delay, delay, delay to avoid public scrutiny of this issue. I say the people have a right to know, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

## Return No. 17

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a couple of moments to explain what this motion is about. What we have here is asking for the information from the period that the RCMP investigation started into the matter of GigaText Translation to the date that this return was ordered for all of the payments by the Government of Saskatchewan to Tanka resources. This is the polling company that is owned by Kenny Waschuk, the Tory pollster.

(2115)

Now of course what we want to know here is that during the time that Mr. Waschuk and that company was under police investigation, how much money did the government pay to that company. Now it's very unusual for governments to put, and the Justice department to put someone under investigation and then continue to use them to do work for the government.

And we would like to know how much money is involved in this operation . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member in charge of privatization says that he's sure we are interested, and he should be interested as well, because he's one of the members on the front bench who would obviously be around the cabinet table when the pollster would be in to advise the cabinet on issues of privatization.

I understand Tanka resource has done many polls on privatization at taxpayers' expense, and it seems to me that when someone is under police investigation, the flow of taxpayers' money to them should come to a halt.

So when the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, the critic for privatization . . . or the minister of privatization is making statements from his seat, I'm sure that he believes as well that that money should not be going to Tanka resources during the police investigation.

I want to say here, Mr. Speaker, that many of the arguments have been made about the GigaText translation services here tonight, the fact that millions of dollars of taxpayers' money have been squandered in order that certain privileged people in this country — Mr. Guy Montpetit, cabinet ministers — can fly around the North American continent. San Francisco for weekend flights, \$5,000; travel around in the limousine of Mr. Guy

Montpetit while they're in Montreal — the court documents state that the Premier of this province often used the limousine of Mr. Guy Montpetit while he was in Montreal. It's in the court documents.

And then you wonder why \$5 million was given to this individual. Well if that isn't influence peddling, I don't know what is. Obviously the Premier was part of the little deal that was cooked up. He got to use the limousine when he was in Montreal, and then he as the Premier signed over the money to this individual.

And so I say to you that in moving this motion, I think that the cover-up that has gone on to this point, it's time it came to the end. It's time that we got to the bottom of the issue and that these questions are answered. So I therefore move than an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 17 showing.

**The Speaker:** — Does the member have a seconder?

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Yes I do. I would ask the Assembly that the member for Regina Centre second the motion.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to recommend to all members of the legislature that they approve this motion for return, and I say, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily because of the arguments presented by some members of the opposition, but rather to clear up many of the misconceptions that have been floating around regarding this whole issue, and I'd recommend to all members of the legislature that they vote in favour of providing this information as requested.

Motion agreed to.

### Return No. 18

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to move this motion no. 18, which will ask the question which will require the following information:

For the period January 1, 1988 to the date this return was ordered, a list of all air trips taken by Saskatchewan cabinet ministers and government employees on any aircraft owned by Mr. Guy Montpetit, indicating in each case: (a) date of trip; (b) minister(s) or official(s) on the trip; (c) purpose of trip; (d) firm or agency to whom trip was charged.

Now I'm not going to, Mr. Speaker, repeat many of the arguments that have been made here tonight. I think they've been made very well, but I think that this is clearly another example of information which the public should know.

What we have seen here is a fast-talking, smooth operator from Montreal in the Province of Quebec, who took both the Premier and the Deputy Premier and several of the ministers for a ride. And he took them for a ride, more than just for a ride in his limousine and his airplane, Mr. Speaker, he took them for a ride to the tune of over \$5 million of taxpayers' money.

Now the fact — and there's evidence that has been

clearly disclosed that in this process there have been cabinet ministers who took advantage of services offered by Mr. Montpetit in his airplane for which the Saskatchewan taxpayers were paying because of an arrangement for the use of that aircraft by GigaText. I'll give you an example, Mr. Speaker. A flight taken — Montreal to Regina and then back to Montreal again — included Mr. Montpetit, Mr. Berntson and Mr. Terry Leier. Now, Mr. Speaker, this clearly is a clear indication of the kind of things that were going on.

And there's another flight that was taken by Mr. Montpetit, Mr. Berntson, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Kearns — Montreal to Bedford, to Peterborough, then back to Montreal again.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when there are this kind of a case of influence peddling, this kind of a case of spending taxpayers' money, over \$5 million to an individual, giving him full authority to sign cheques, full authority to make all the decisions even though there wasn't any of his money involved in that amount, I think is a clear case of the kind of mismanagement that has brought this province to a deficit of some \$4 billion. It's this kind of mismanagement and misexpenditure of funds that has brought us here.

So it's only right, and I hope that the member from Melfort, the Minister of Highways, will agree that the public has a right to know which ministers travelled on this airplane of Mr. Montpetit, at which time they obviously were being influenced on each of these occasions, to the point where we now have lost over \$5 million of taxpayers' money and have absolutely nothing in return.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 18 showing.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I would certainly want to urge all members to approve this return and provide the information as requested. Without going into a long and lengthy debate or rebuttal on the remarks of the member opposite, I do want to remind the legislature that some of the remarks made by the member opposite were totally inaccurate.

The member opposite referred to a \$5 million investment in this corporation and absolutely nothing in return. I say, Mr. Speaker, that the jury is still very much out on that; that time will prove whether or not this has proven to be a wise investment; time will prove how many dollars in actual value this corporation has.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that contrary to members opposite, that I believe that the jury is still out and it would be fair to give this whole issue a fair analysis. And regardless of the outcome, Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you that the investment in this corporation will far exceed the return that the members of the NDP gained on the Nabu investment and a computer corporation a number of years ago, whereby \$5 million, or the equivalent of \$8 million in today's money, was absolutely thrown to the wind, had a basic insolvency value of something like 4 or \$5,000, if I'm not mistaken, or 3 or 4 cents on the dollar,

or whatever the case was, Mr. Speaker. There was an investment that had literally nothing in return.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that the jury is still out on this issue, and I ask all members to look at the information, that it will be provided, and to give this corporation and this issue a fair hearing. And I trust that this information will clear up many, many of the misconceptions that have been perpetrated by members opposite.

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Highways and Transportation Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 16

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Chairman, yesterday . . . or the last time we had these estimates before the House, Mr. Minister, I was asking you about ministerial assistants and salaries paid thereto. And it appears whereas the last time you were asked this in the House you had two ministerial assistants, now you have three. Why is that, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, I do not recall the specific date on which the first question of which you refer was asked. I can say, Mr. Chairman, that I would expect that it was at a period of time when we had had changes in staff and that I believe, if you look over history, the Minister of Highways and Transportation has always operated with a similar number of executive assistants that I have in my office, and I don't find anything unusual about the number of staff members that I have in my office.

When you give consideration to the fact that my office is directly responsible for the Department of Highways and Transportation, the Highway Traffic Board, we are also responsible for the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and in addition to that the Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, is it accurate to say that you have no ministerial assistants in any of those other areas you mentioned other than Highways? You have no other ministerial assistants other than — let me read you the names — Anderson, Dickson, Burns . . . pardon me, Dickson is no longer with you. Anderson, Burns, Wiegiers, Sheridan, and Dugalo.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — What was the last name?

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Dugalo, D-U-G-A-L-O. It's a ministerial assistant hired March 21, '89, ministerial assistant C.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, in answer to your question, indeed there is one other executive assistant that is primarily responsible for the Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Well you not only have one more assistant here but you have one somewhere else. And

then you have Mr. Katzman, of course. But he's like two ministerial assistants.

I noticed, Mr. Minister, that you pay your ministerial assistants quite well. For example, Anderson, who the last time we inquired was getting \$3,392 a month — and that's what you list here: April 1, '88, \$3,392 a month — is now getting \$3,753 a month, or an increase of \$361 per month. Burns, ministerial assistant, was getting on April 1, '88, \$1,951 a month, now getting 2,293 a month, or an increase of \$342 a month increase. Wiegiers was getting \$2,750 a month on April 1, '88, is now getting 3,199 a month or an increase of \$449 per month. Sheridan was getting — in September, '88 that person was hired — getting 2,955, now getting 3,167 a month, an increase of \$212 a month. And Dugalo, the new person on staff, gets \$1,978 a month, low person on the economic scale there.

Has your special assistant, or whatever you call him — you call him Ralph — has Ralph got any increases since he was hired on December 15, '87?

(2130)

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would remind the member opposite that Mr. Katzman is not an employee *per se* but is rather on a contractual basis. The term of his contract has been on a yearly basis. The contract that has been renewed is substantially the same as it was before. Total amounts under that contract would not change substantially at all from the initial contract to the contract that was renewed.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — So you're saying that he signed a new contract. And what date did he sign that? And there were absolutely no changes in the contract?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — The new contract was signed January of '89, and essentially there would be no differences at the end of the year in any significant amount of change in the amount of remuneration paid to Mr. Katzman.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — And what would that bring Mr. Katzman up to?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I indicated to the member opposite last questioning period that the terms of Mr. Katzman's contract were very similar in dollar figures to some of those signed by the former administration, the former NDP administration.

It was subsequently reported in the *Leader-Post* of today's issue, I believe, or yesterday's, that Mr. Katzman's salary was in the same neighbourhood as an NDP ex-MLA that was hired, and I believe the *Leader-Post* quoted that figure to be around \$48,000, and I would say that that would be very close.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — So this PC MLA is accurately reported in the *Leader-Post* at yesterday's issue, or today's issue?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would say there would be a difference. The figure that was paid to the ex-NDP MLA of 48,000 was not CPI (consumer price index) or inflation

adjusted. If it was, Mr. Katzman would be getting significantly less.

In short, to conclude this issue, if you like, I would say that the figure reported in the *Leader-Post* is very close to what the salary or the terms of Mr. Katzman's contract are.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Yesterday I asked you, Mr. Minister, about Lillian Gorrie, and you acknowledged at the time that you didn't know the whereabouts of Lillian Gorrie. She doesn't show up on the sheet that you sent over, but the information I have is that Lillian Gorrie worked in Highways. She was an MA-2, November 17, '86, at 2,985 a month, and on January 1, '88, she became an MA-3 at 3,143 a month. Have you lost track of Lillian Gorrie, or where is Lillian Gorrie?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I certainly have not lost track of this person of whom you speak. I can tell you, hon. member, that that person, to the best of my knowledge and to the best knowledge of my advisers, has not worked for the Department of Highways and Transportation, is not working for the Department of Highways and Transportation. Your information, frankly, must be incorrect. I do not fault you for that. It could be a misprint in some public account document. If my memory serves me correct, that person, I believe, worked in the minister of SGI's office — certainly not Highways and Transportation.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Okay, Mr. Minister, we'll put that one down to a typographical error of some type.

I want to know if Mr. Katzman gets . . . You said he gets a CVA car. How is he entitled to a CVA car? Is it because he drives over a certain amount of mileage in a year, and as a consequence has a CVA car full time?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — He is entitled to the central vehicle agency automobile by terms and conditions listed in his contractual arrangement with the Government of Saskatchewan.

I would say to the hon. member that Mr. Katzman does make very good use of that central vehicle agency automobile, and does put on a significant number of miles, travelling throughout rural Saskatchewan, and once again, primarily dealing with sign corridors, access problems, and other negotiated issues between landowners and the Department of Highways and Transportation.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — You said yesterday that Ralph was very instrumental in settling a dispute with a farmer about a gravel pit, or something of that nature. Would you mind giving me the details of that arrangement that Mr. Katzman worked out, that satisfactorily settled the issue, and who it was with, the principals involved? It need not be in the House, but aside from the estimates.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, I would be happy to send you whatever information we have on that particular case. I recall it not in detail but in general terms, and I do believe that if you were to follow that up with the individual landholders, you would find that indeed Mr. Katzman did play a role.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, I would like to . . . because we had a minister in the past in the Department of Highways, it's been a pretty high flying minister, and in one year he ran up a higher personal expense account as a minister than the Premier did. And he was one of your predecessors in that position.

So I want to, Mr. Minister, get a listing of your personal expenses as a minister for the years '87-88, '88-89, and estimated '89-90. Could you provide that to me?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would be pleased to provide to the member opposite a list here, that I will send across, that has my out-of-province travel expenses for April '87 to March '88, and April '88 to March '89.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, what do you estimate will be your expenses for '89-90 in this particular estimates?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, I would respond to the hon. member by saying that I do not have a figure available for you right now. I can advise the member opposite that over the course of time that I have been involved in Highways and Transportation, my expenses have been, in my view, rather modest. My out-of-province travel has been limited — limited by the nature of the portfolio but also limited by the fact that I have been exceedingly busy travelling to many areas within Saskatchewan. And you would find that my expenses are certainly not abnormal or . . . in fact, I would view them as being rather modest.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. The other day at the conclusion of the discussion about highways, I was asking you about day-labour rates, and you suggested the contract that is used for day-labour rates is a fairly standard form or agreement.

What I wanted to receive in addition to this explanation and a standard contract is, Mr. Minister, the number of day-labour contracts that have been issued by you where it was issued to the same person more than once, leaving out all the ones where it's just one day-labour contract issued in, say, last year and the year before, for comparison's sake, where there was a repeat of the day-labour contract or it was an extension of the day-labour contract, and the figures to support the extension and what it was for and who it was.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — That is information that we don't have with us this evening, but I'd be pleased to provide that information to you. It's information that certainly is kept by the department, and we would provide it in a form that I am sure will be satisfactory to you.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Okay, Mr. Minister, I appreciate that information when it arrives. I wanted to talk about . . . ask some questions about announcements of highway projects and reannouncements of highway projects. These are the highway sheets. You'll be familiar with them, the project sheets, and I want to dwell on those for a minute.

Dealing with 1988-89, I detect there are 30 projects

under grading, and eight of those are reannouncements: one on Highway 3, Manitoba border westerly; one on, I believe it is, the vicinity of Martin's Lake Regional Park south to Shell Lake; another one is west of Ethelton to east of Yellow Creek; a further one is in Standing Buffalo reserve; a further one is junction no. 35 easterly; a further one is Alida to grid no. 603 — that's Highway No. 361; and the final one is the Cowan Lake road.

Could you go over those, Mr. Minister? I've identified them for you so that you can comment on them and indicate why these are reannouncements from the previous year.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I say to the member opposite that there is nothing devious, in any sense of the word, in the way this issue was handled. What we are speaking of is something called carry-over, something well known in the construction industry, anticipated by the construction industry, something that has been done, and frankly I don't know any alternative to doing it this way.

What happens on a yearly basis, the budget is announced, an array or number of projects are listed, and they are staggered and tendered throughout the year. The projects that are tendered later in the year and for that reason or other reasons do not get finished, are carried over into the next year.

And certainly if you want to use the term reannounced, that is correct — reannounced on the next year's program. And at the bottom of that year's program there is an estimate of what will be carried over into the next year. So for every project array bulletin that you see, there is always in clear, plain language an estimated carry-over that will take place into the following year.

(2145)

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — What might be the, in the order of priority, the reasons why there would be carry-over? Would it be weather conditions, would it be contractor unable to perform or some such . . . Could you give me the principal reasons why there's carry-over?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — The primary reason — the primary reason — is the date of the tender, and that is if a job is tendered, let's say in the middle of April, it would be reasonable to expect that that project would get completed that construction season. If a project is tendered as at, let's say October 15, and some of them are, quite clearly that project has a very small probability of being completed unless it was a very small project.

But it's primarily an issue of timing; that is, the contracts that are tendered later in the year will be carried over to a large extent into the following year. So the number one factor by far is the timing of them. Certainly there may be some other projects that could have other factors, such as problems with the contractor, weather conditions may be different than expected, and let's say if it rained the whole bloody fall, certainly there would be more carry-over than had been anticipated.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — You said that the estimated

carry-over is listed on the bottom of the sheet. If you look at '88-89 construction projects and grading, the estimated carry-over into '89-90 is 73.14 kilometres. But if you go over to that equivalent, '89-90, the actual carry-over appears to be 119.41 kilometres, which is a substantial difference from 73 kilometres.

How would you account for that, Mr. Minister? And in order to arrive at the 119.4 kilometres, I've gone down and identified 11 reannouncements on that sheet. They're on Highway 24, 31, 46, 56, 304, 307 — twice — 384, 378, 922, and 942, the Cowan Lake road again.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would have to take the member's additions to be correct when you talk about 109 figure of carry-over. I would assume that your additions are correct, although I have no quick way of verifying that. Given that that is correct, 109 versus an estimate of 73, I don't think that that is really a significant difference when you're talking an estimated carry-over. Being out by that much is certainly not unusual whatsoever.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — On the 73.14 kilometres, carry-over from '80 . . . estimated carry-over into '89-90, do you also estimate an expense figure there or is that not done? In other words, I want to know what your estimated dollar carry-over is on those 73 kilometres.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — The hon. member asked about the estimated dollar value of that 73 kilometres of earth moving or grading work. We do not have that broken down right with us. I can provide for you, and it might be even more useful for you, the total estimated dollar value of carry-over for both earth moving and paving, and that is an approximate figure of \$12 million for that fiscal period.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — So that covers what's identified as grading and surfacing here.

Let me just take a specific example here which is fairly close to home for me, and perhaps I can get you to explain it, Mr. Minister. Under the '88-89, bridges, it lists railway underpass east of Borden on Highway 16. That's a reannouncement from the previous year. And if we go to '89-90, we see railway underpass east of Borden reannounced for the second time. Now I'm aware that there is work going on on that underpass on Highway 16, that's under the CP Rail. Would the minister care to explain why this is being announced and announced and announced again?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Quite simply put, this particular project was a project that had money spent on it over two fiscal years. It's a project, a fairly significant project that took more than a single construction season to complete, and fundamentally it's a two-year project, money spent over two years and announced on both of the schedules.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — On this project, Mr. Minister, or other projects under grading, is it possible in the carry-over that you add to the size of the package? In other words, expand the amount of work that's carried over in the process of carrying it over into a new year, or is the amount that's carried over the same amount that was not completed in the year under consideration, was

carried over into a new year and it never expands, or does it expand?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Simply, in answer to your question, no, it would not be expanded. Simply, the work that is not completed and listed in this year, work that's not completed but listed in this year is carried over to the next year. If there are additional projects, they are not part of the carry-over package, if you like, and they are simply new projects.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — All right, Mr. Minister, I want to leave this area. I don't want to take more time of the committee on it. If I can get you to provide me with . . . attach the dollar figures to the carry-over, going from '88-89 to '89-90. Can you give me the dollar figures for the carry-over on the items in grading, surfacing, and bridges at a later date.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, I'd be pleased to provide that information.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I think that will give me a better understanding of it, Mr. Minister. I want to move to an area of permits, and I notice in the annual report listing the number of permits that are issued, Mr. Minister, and the permit revenue, the number of permits has gone up fairly progressively from 42,617 in 1983 to 1987 figure of 55,966. And the revenue has climbed from under 2 million to over \$3 million. And that is an annual amount of revenue. The total over that period of time, '83 to '87, has been 12.6 million. I would like to know, Mr. Minister, if you can provide me with a list that will show the frequency of occurrence of permits to people that receive a lot of permits. Take the person or the company that receives the greatest number of permits and work down. Can you tell me how many permits, where they were required for in the province?

And I don't want them all, but I want a sampling, starting with the person or the company that gets the largest number of permits from the central permit office unit, say in '87 and '88 if you've got those figures available, and the dollar amount of the permits that they paid, and whether one company or one person is continuously getting permits of this nature. Can you provide that to me, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I appreciate the member's question, and I would respond simply by outlining to the member that within the central permit office, what you are speaking of is a tremendous number of permits, last year something like 55,966 permits — just a tremendous volume of permits.

Your question on the surface would appear to be easy to get. You're frankly just asking for the prioritization on some of the big permit users, if you like, and yet in a very practical sense of digging that type of information out, extremely difficult and extremely time-consuming to attempt to get that information.

If there's something else that you might want to know in more general terms, I would do whatever would be fair to try and get that for you, but I do find that that particular information is just almost impractical to get.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Perhaps, Mr. Minister, I could ask you a further question and then I may be able to amend my request to you. It lists in the description, permit authorizations for operating authorities, fuel tax, vehicle registrations, and weight and dimension authorities are provided.

My concern is about overweight use of the highways — overweight permits that are granted. Can we identify those that are for weight, and just get me those ones for that area, and the most frequent users and what area they're in, where they're using it.

Would that simplify . . . I don't want to put you to a great deal of bureaucratic work, but my concern is the overweight on the highways of Saskatchewan, and I want to know where it's concentrated.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, I have consulted with my advisers and they will attempt to get a satisfactory answer for you. I would only ask your indulgence that if they do have trouble in providing it in the exact form that you ask, that you grant some leniency to what I have been advised is a very difficult type of a task. But I think we should be able to provide some sort of information that should give you, in a general sense, some of the heavy users of permits, if you like.

(2200)

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I might ask one further question. My understanding of the agreement with Weyerhaeuser corporation is that they are not restricted. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — No, that is not correct. They certainly do and are required to comply with such things as spring weight bans, for instance, and rules do apply as well to Weyerhaeuser.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — In other words, Weyerhaeuser is some of the ones that make up these 55,966 in 1987. Is that correct? Overweight?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Weyerhaeuser corporation, I should firstly add that my understanding is that Weyerhaeuser corporation themselves do not have trucks *per se* that are on the road seeking permits; however, much of it is on a contractual basis, so I'll refer to any contractors who contract to Weyerhaeuser directly as being Weyerhaeuser, if that's satisfactory.

And for those units, my information is that they are not included in the figure of 55,000 that I gave you, not included in these statistics. But very clearly, number one, they do have to comply with spring road bans, as other haulers do; and two, they do receive permits, although they're not included in that figure that I gave you. They do receive permits under an agreement very similar to many other industrial types of users. So they do get permits, but they do have to comply with the rules and regulations respecting spring road bans.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, I can understand everyone having to comply with the spring road bans. Do

the people that haul for Weyerhaeuser or contracted to Weyerhaeuser get their permits from the central permit office?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — No, technically they get them from what we call the maintenance branch.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Of the Department of Highways?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Then can you also identify, along with the several significant companies or persons who have a large number of permits each year for overweight, could you also identify Weyerhaeuser's permits as well, and the general location?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, we can.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I wanted to, before I let one of my colleagues, my colleague from Athabasca ask a question or two, I wanted to deal very briefly with highway generated taxes that go to Ottawa. Minister, you may claim that you're not in the position to answer this, but I want to refer to a report which was at the Yellowhead meeting on April, '89, and it was a report from Hon. Albert Driedger, Minister of Highways and Transportation in Manitoba, wherein he addressed . . . his address highlights are capsulized here, and he's talking about Manitoba totally supports ARTAC (Association of Roads and Transportation Across Canada) initiative of a national highway system funded by the federal government. And here's the comment I want you to comment on: in Manitoba, \$3 billion are transferred to Ottawa through highway generated taxes with little return to the province.

Can you agree with the Minister of Highways from Manitoba that Manitoba transfers about \$3 billion to Ottawa through highway generated taxes, and if so, what is the figure for Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Okay, Mr. Chairman, I do not have the estimated figure for Saskatchewan. I would advise the member opposite that the figure referred to by Mr. Driedger . . . Perhaps you have only a portion of his remarks or perhaps it was reported incorrectly. However, that figure is a figure that has been used at other ministerial meetings that I myself have been at. Other interest groups from across the country have used that figure, and the \$3 billion is indeed a figure that the provinces collectively estimate that they send to Ottawa for highway related taxes, that is, fuel taxes.

Once again, that \$3 billion is across the country. The particular amount that would represent Saskatchewan's share I do not have, but I will have my officials attempt to gather that information, perhaps in conjunction with the Department of Finance, and we will provide that to you. I believe that your point is that with a significant number of dollars going from a province like Saskatchewan to Ottawa, that in turn consideration and serious consideration should be given by the federal government in pumping at least some of those dollars back into the province of Saskatchewan — as an example, into our highway system — and with that I very much agree.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — When I read the figure of \$3 billion, Mr. Minister, I was startled by the size of it, and I assumed that exactly what you've reported to me now, that that appears to be a figure for all the provinces' taxes generated which go to Ottawa, and I would agree with you wholeheartedly that if we're putting that kind of money into Ottawa in highway taxes, there should be some kind of return.

I would look forward to receiving from you the figure that you estimate, or the estimated or actual figure for Saskatchewan for, say, the last two or three years, so I've got a picture of what kind of revenue Saskatchewan is turning into the federal government.

I want to let my colleague go ahead with a question if he wishes, then I'll get back up.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Minister, I want to touch on a number of roads up in northern Saskatchewan. And I was interested to hear you talking about carry-overs, and particularly on the Cowan Lake road. Mr. Minister, could you indicate how much money was spent on the Cowan Lake road in this year's budget?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I thank the hon. member for his question, and I do know that the hon. member traditionally has many very good questions when it comes to Highways and Transportation issues, and indeed has certainly asked a number of questions over the years of highways in northern Saskatchewan, and I appreciate the genuineness with which he asks those questions.

Respecting the Cowan Lake road, the estimate — and I once again repeat that it is only an estimate — that our estimate for expenditures in this fiscal year exceed three-quarters of a million dollars, so \$750,000-plus.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Minister, how is that money allotted? Who pays out the contractor that builds that Cowan Lake road?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Technically, Mr. Chairman, the Weyerhaeuser corporation lets the tender for that stretch of road and it is tendered, and in turn the Government of Saskatchewan reimburses Weyerhaeuser for the actual amount of that tender.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. In other words, under the Weyerhaeuser agreement, they tender out the allotted number of miles that have to be built or committed to be built by the Department of Highways every year. They do the tendering, and they award the tenders, and the Department of Highways are the funding agency. Is this right?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, the hon. member is correct in that assessment of the agreement.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Okay. Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could indicate how much money has been spent this year, or on engineering work or preparation for the road at the end of 155 to Fort McMurray. How much money has the Department of Highways spent this year on

engineering work and preparation for that road?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I apologize to the member, but we do not have that information with us, but we definitely will provide that to him.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you can provide me with those figures, but could you indicate to the House that there has been engineering work that has taken place and there has been a fairly large expenditure by the Department of Highways on that piece of road from 155 at La Loche to Fort McMurray, Alberta?

(2215)

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would say to the hon. member that he would certainly be aware of the 11 kilometres of road that was constructed from La Loche to Black Point, and I believe that that was done in conjunction and co-operation and primarily by the New Careers Corporation; that is, local people from the area working in the New Careers Corporation, and I think a very satisfactory arrangement was made there.

Further to that, location work has been done by the department from Black Point to Alberta, or to the Alberta border. We have in the Department of Highways and Transportation done some engineering work. We have also done some centre line clearing work and as well some gravel site investigation work has been done. We are presently working on a proposed course of action for that piece of road, but up until now primarily engineering work and centre line clearing and gravel site investigations.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. You will provide me in writing the amount of money that the Department of Highways has spent on the engineering of that piece of road?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes we certainly would, and I take it what you're questioning is the part from Black Point to the Alberta border.

**Mr. Thompson:** — No, I'm talking about the road from 155, from the beginning of the road to the Alberta border.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, we'll provide that.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Minister, in 1977 you had petitions that came in from the citizens of Canoe Narrows, Jans Bay and Cole Bay for that piece of road from Cole Bay to 155. Could you indicate how much money you have spent on that road for engineering work, and when do you plan to start moving dirt and constructing that piece of road?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I thank the hon. member for that question. I can tell you that we do not have with us the figure of engineering dollars on the stretch of road to which you refer, and yet we can provide that to you.

The hon. member has also asked specifically about this

road, Cole Bay to 155, and especially roads Beauval to Canoe Lake, for example. I do know that that is a personal priority of the member opposite. I would be remiss if I were to make any commitments to you at this time for the fact that our budgetary plans for next year have not been decided. And as you may know, they are decided on a yearly basis, and the priorities are determined within the context of the level of budget and all other roads that we would like to get to.

I can agree with the member that the road does require upgrading, and I would like to see, as quickly as possible, work done on that road. But I am sorry that I cannot provide you with a firm time frame in which that road would be built.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. The hour is getting quite late, and I would like to ask a number of questions, but I just want to make a point, Mr. Minister, and that is that here we have a Department of Highways whose priorities are to build highways and roads for Weyerhaeuser, a big, large corporation from Tacoma, Washington, who has come into this province. You've given them 8 million acres of our prime forest land. You're building highways and roads for them every year, plus you're maintaining those roads.

The citizens of Canoe Narrows and Jans Bay and Cole Bay have signed petitions to get you and your department to move on that piece of road, which is a dangerous road, where school children are travelling every day back and forth on that highway in school buses. And there's been some very serious and fatal accidents on that road.

You haven't even done any engineering work, the same as the road from La Loche to Fort McMurray. I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, you haven't even made an agreement with the Department of Highways in Alberta yet, and the only road that has been built in there to Black Point, has been done by Social Services.

Now that's not the way the Department of Highways should be operating in the province of Saskatchewan. The priorities should be with our citizens. And we . . . if the Department of Highways is building roads, then they should get out their and move that dirt, not under the Department of Social Services.

And you can just take a look at the road that you're putting out there. There's absolutely nothing built yet. There's no highway; you have no plans for it, and I suggest that you should start moving on roads from Canoe Narrows and Jans Bay and Cole Bay. You should get moving on that road from La Loche to Fort McMurray, and you should start moving on that road from the north end of 155 and Cluff Lake into Stony Rapids, Fond-du-Lac, and Black Lake.

Those folks up there are waiting for a road system also. They're paying 60 cents a pound for their food up there right now, and that could be reduced if we were to build roads into there. And I would ask you as the minister to take a look at your priorities. We don't need to build roads for Weyerhaeuser. Weyerhaeuser is a multinational corporation and their profits are in the billions of dollars. They can build their own highways and roads. And I think



it's time that we started putting our priorities for the citizens of northern Saskatchewan and let Weyerhaeuser build their own roads. And I would ask you, Mr. Minister, in all sincerity, to put some money into that Canoe Lake road and into the road to Fort McMurray, from La Loche to Fort McMurray, and to start some engineering work for that road up into the far north, into Stony Rapids and Fond-du-Lac and Black Lake.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a couple of areas I want to ask questions, Mr. Minister. Have you paid Weyerhaeuser \$1.875 million in the year under review?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, later in the year we will be advancing that amount of funds to Weyerhaeuser.

**Mr. Trew:** — So not only are you building 32 kilometres of roads for Weyerhaeuser every year, but you're also paying them, issuing a cheque to Weyerhaeuser from the people of Saskatchewan for \$1.875 million in this year alone. That, Minister, is for the final payment on 855 kilometres of logging road that PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) built when the pulp mill was a Crown corporation. The people of Saskatchewan paid for those highways when we owned PAPCO as a Crown corporation. Your government gave it to Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington, and now you're buying those same roads that we already paid for to build; you're buying them back for the people of Saskatchewan. That is an incredible waste and a shame on your House.

The second issue . . . because time is short, I'm going to just jump into the second matter, and that is one of the busiest overpasses in the province of Saskatchewan. I'm referring to the overpass on Highway No. 11 where it goes over Ring Road, and my question is, do you have any idea when that will be properly resurfaced?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I would like to ask the member to perhaps clarify the overpass to which he is referring. And I know sometimes it gets confusing just knowing which highway numbers are which. I don't believe that technically there is Highway 11 as an overpass running over the Ring Road. If you're speaking of a road north of town, I think it's more likely Highway No. 6 that runs over the Ring Road. Is that . . .

**Mr. Trew:** — Yes, Minister, 11 joins the Highway 6, and yes, you may know it as Highway 6 there, but you have the right overpass in mind.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I can tell the hon. member that there are no immediate plans to resurface that overpass. I have investigated with my officials and have drawn this to their attention. And you well know that on a yearly basis we determine our priorities. I have asked the officials to check it out and see where it does fit on those priority lists and just what the useful life expectancy yet of that particular stretch of road might be until resurfacing is required.

**Mr. Goulet:** — The member from Weyburn wants to know whether everybody should have a turn. Well I'd like to tell him that the highway system I'm going to ask questions about include one-quarter of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(2230)

**Mr. Goulet:** — I would like to know . . . First of all, Mr. Minister, I'd like to make a statement in regards to the highways as I travel from Cumberland House to Sandy Bay to La Ronge and also up to Wollaston. Most of the people are trying hard to look for jobs with our unemployment rate, as you well know, and your meetings yourself with the communities have shown that to be a very clear message, that people want those jobs in the highway section and would like to see more highway development in the North, and a lot of the highway maintenance, and so on.

The other thing that is a strong concern for community leaders is that the roads are extremely important, not only for communications but for transportation for the mining industry, for the forestry industry, and also for the wild rice and traditional resource-use industries. And I think you've heard those statements before.

The other statements were, the accident rates are always a little bit higher than most regular southern roads, and that the heavy transport that is travelling on those roads with the mining companies and the forestry requires better roads, and so on. And I think you've heard those statements time and time again as you met with northern leaders, and so I'd like just to repeat those again.

And it's also very important economically that people, if they have roads built into their communities, can really decrease their transportation costs because the costs into the flying communities are so high. Places like Wollaston, and so on, still require access roads into their communities. So overall, the highways issue is really one of the major issues in northern Saskatchewan.

I'd like to ask, because of the time factor, for the minister to provide me with, first of all, an overview on what is happening on those particular highways in my constituency, but more importantly, are there any further plans on those highways — for example, greater improvement on 102 north and 905. I mean, that has been stated time and time again. And also the one to Sandy Bay and Pelican Narrows — and could the minister answer those questions and also in regards to Hanson Lake road right now, please.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I thank the member for his questions, and I'd certainly open by saying that your interest in roads in northern Saskatchewan is certainly representative of many people, both for the residents of northern Saskatchewan and also for the tourist traffic in northern Saskatchewan.

And with that I'd like to talk a little bit about the work that we are doing this year on 106 as a good example. Unfortunately, and you will understand that I cannot go in with definitively to further plans for next year or the year after because our project array is subject to an annual review . . . And in the spring of the year we normally, as a course of events, would outline to the legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan what the program would be

for that current year. So I cannot go into a long dialogue of commitments.

I can talk a little bit about Highway No. 106. The member will know that there has in past years been some significant grading or earth moving work done in the area of the Sandy Lake cut-off. The member will know that we have let that portion of the road settle. It's a muskeg type of an area, and it was thought best that that road settle.

We have gone in this year and are doing a stretch in the middle that was left. We are oil treating that section. I would fully expect that next year we would go in and complete that middle section that has been left to settle. And I'm sure you will see by the end of next construction season that that oiling will be completed.

Also with respect to 106, I've had many representations made; in fact, attended a meeting in the community of Choiceland whereby a number of your constituents, in fact, were down to that meeting. Strong representation was made to me to complete, I think it's 17 miles of 106 that has remained unpaved. Frankly, it is in as good a condition this year as it has been for a long time, yet it's still a gravel road, and I would like to see that road surfaced.

In addition to that, certainly quite a ways farther north, people from your constituency have also made direct representation to me. I would view those as being certainly important pieces of work that we would like to get to.

Respecting Highway No. 102, north of La Ronge, I do not deny that that stretch of road is in poor condition, and as well, it would be a priority that I would like to get to, along with Highway No. 135. I'm sorry I cannot be more specific, but those are the plans.

**Mr. Goulet:** — In regards to further questions on highways, I'd like to make a strong point also in regards to the access route to Wollaston. A lot of the Wollaston people have approached me in regards to that particular stretch, and I would like to put it on record that they would like to see that road into their community. They know that the roads going to the mines, and so on. They would like to see that road come around their lake so that they can indeed have all-year access, rather than having to go through the parks, and so on.

And the other road that I would like to mention and put on record is the Cumberland House road from Cumberland House to the mine at Namew Lake. Namew Lake is only 15 miles from Cumberland House, and it would provide access also to Flin Flon, Snow Lake, The Pas area. And it would be one of the main highways that the people have been asking for.

I know that Simpson Timber got a highway going north and south, you know, in that area last year, and they got environmental permission and everything in about a two-week period, and they were able to get an okay to build a road through that area. But Cumberland House have been asking for this road for some time, because I was at a meeting with you, you know, about a year and a half ago at Cumberland House when they were

requesting that. And I would still like to make a strong pitch for Cumberland House in getting that because they would like that to access those jobs in that mine that'll be developing in the future.

The other one is into, of course, Grandmother Bay, and of course the improvement has always required in Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay. I mean, it's one of the roller-coaster highways of Saskatchewan. And I would challenge any of the ministers from across to go travelling on that road because I think they would quickly see the need for great improvement on that highway.

I would like to ask the minister on a general question, in regards to the contracts, whether all the work is being done by the Department of Highways or whether or not there are private contractors building in the northern roads, and if so, what were the contract size and what areas of road did they build, and so on. Or if not, if Department of Highways then built it, what was the amount, and what stretch, and so on?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, I would say that the vast majority of work to which you refer is done by private contractors, let at public tender in a free competitive environment, and these are private contractors tendering on this work. I do not have the exact figures and list before me, but I will provide to you a list of the contracts, list of the work performed, and a list of the contractors who have done the work. Or in the alternative, if it has been departmental forces, I will also supply you with the work that has been done by departmental forces.

**Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you a question with respect to a serious problem that a number of residents in my constituency are experiencing, and in the neighbouring constituency of Saskatoon Eastview who live adjacent to Circle Drive. I'm referring here, Mr. Minister, to the area along Circle Drive, south of College Drive in Saskatoon, and running from College Drive along Circle to the southern edge of the city.

Mr. Minister, the problem is particularly serious for people who are living directly adjacent to Circle Drive, and whose homes and backyards abut onto Circle Drive.

And basically those people face two problems. First of all, they face the risk of a serious accident. There are a lot of heavy trucks on that stretch of highway, Mr. Minister. Just under a thousand semi-trailers a day travel Circle Drive. And a few years ago one of those semi-trailers left the road and crashed through a backyard and into a house of one of the people who lives in my riding, Mr. Minister.

Happily no one was hurt in that accident, but there is a need, first of all, Mr. Minister, to ensure that that kind of accident can't happen again. And secondly, those people face a very serious problem with respect to noise levels in their homes and in their backyards. There is in the vicinity of about 18,000 vehicles a day on that stretch of highway, Mr. Minister, and it literally is in the summer-time impossible to hold any kind of an extended conversation when you're sitting in the backyard adjacent to the highway.

So my question to you, Mr. Minister, is that it is very clear that there is a need for some kind of a noise attenuation wall that would be built, first of all, to reduce noise levels for those residents, and secondly, to prevent large vehicles from crashing through and leaving the highway and possibly injuring someone in one of the backyards or homes.

So I am wondering, Mr. Minister, whether your government would be prepared to cost share with the city of Saskatoon the construction of such a noise attenuation wall along Circle Drive; whether you'd be prepared to place that in next year's budget, and whether you would be prepared to urge the federal government to designate that project as a Yellowhead highway project because as you well know it's part of the Yellowhead highway system?

(2245)

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I thank the hon. member for his question. I do want to say that the issue which you bring up tonight in the legislature is an issue that I certainly would not take lightly. I am quite strongly of the view that the issue, or the request rather, has merit. I do not deny the benefits to the construction of a sound attenuation barrier or a sound noise barrier or a barrier reduction, noise reduction level barrier, or whatever the correct term is. I do not deny the need for it and the benefits of constructing one.

I do have to say that indeed, indeed I would give serious consideration to approving that item as an eligible item under the urban assistance program which would entitle it to be cost-sharable between the provincial government and the city of Saskatoon. I would have to qualify that by saying that that eligibility would have to be within the confines of an urban assistance agreement.

I do have to stress the fact, and I think rightly so, that the city of Saskatoon would have to determine its priorities in Saskatoon, and I know they as well as us have difficult decisions to make. But given, given that the city of Saskatoon would treat that item as a matter of priority and within an urban assistance agreed to amount, certainly I would give serious consideration to construing that as an eligible project.

**Mr. Prebble:** — Just very briefly, Mr. Minister, I want to thank you for those comments, and I want to ask you if you would be willing to meet with the residents. There's two residents' associations, mostly made up of people who live directly adjacent to Circle Drive, who are concerned about this issue, and I think they would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and with myself and the other local member, the member for Saskatoon Eastview. And I'm wondering if you would be prepared in the next two to three months to meet with them to discuss the problem and perhaps see it firsthand, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I want the hon. member to know that this issue is once again a matter for the city of Saskatoon to prioritize, and yet if the, excuse me, Mr. Chairman, and yet, hon. member, if your residents association request a meeting with me to discuss this

issue, I certainly would be more than prepared to meet with them.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Chairman, I may be the last questioner this evening.

I wanted to ask you a couple of questions, Mr. Minister, about the minimum haul rate enforcement agreement. I am sure you are familiar with that. Who initiated that process, and why was it initiated?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I would have to assume that the member opposite is referring to the new minimum haul rate agreement that was reached, as I recall, about December of 1988. There have been, in the history of this province for many years, minimum haul agreements. A new type of a minimum haul agreement was reached in December of last year.

The member opposite asks who initiated that agreement. I would have to say that the impetus for the change of that agreement came from a number of fronts. I think it is well-known within the construction industry, both by way of the road contractors and within their organization, and from the independent gravel haulers, that there were problems with the old minimum haul agreement. Certainly the new minimum haul agreement is not without problems as well. But in short, in answer to your question, the impetus came from a number of people in both these areas of business who had discussed with me and with departmental officials the fact that there were problems and a better solution was to be sought. And that is precisely what was sought in the new agreement.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — So what you're saying is that in effect the contractors, the people that do the hauling, are the ones that initiated it?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I am saying that it came from both the road contractors who tender on the jobs, as well as the independent gravel haulers who subcontract to the contractors. And these are two groups of business people who both recognized and both made representations to me that there were problems with the minimum haul agreement and the enforcement of it.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Essentially, Mr. Minister, what, in a nutshell, what was the difference between the old agreement and the one that takes effect January 1, '89?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — In the essence of it, under the old agreement there is simply a minimum haul rate that was to be adhered to between the road contractor and the independent gravel hauler.

In the new agreement that was reached, there is also a rate that is to be in effect between the road contractor and the gravel hauler, but there is an added provision, fundamental provision, that allocates a certain percentage of the haul to be allocated to the independent gravel hauler.

That is, under the old agreement, the independent . . . or the road contractor could haul all of his gravel, if he liked, himself, in-house, at a certain rate. Under the new agreement, a certain percentage — I believe 40 per cent

- of the haul on any given contract has to be allocated to an independent gravel hauler at a certain flat rate.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Can subcontractors or haulers participate if they aren't members of the STA (Saskatchewan Trucking Association)?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, they can.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — It strikes me — correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Minister — but it strikes me that the purpose of this is to share the misery of not enough work. Correct me if I'm wrong, and also indicate to me if there have been indications that this would be tested in the courts.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — The impetus for the changes was the fact that there were problems that were recognized by, I suppose, three parties: the road contractors, the independent gravel haulers, and by the officials in the department. That is the fundamental problem was that of enforcement of a minimum rate.

And it's been a problem for, I suppose, something like 30 or 40 years. And I recall doing some research on this, and the minister of Highways from back in the 1930s or 1940s, as I recall, went through similar problems that we're having today.

Other problems in other provinces exist, and in other jurisdictions throughout North America — same type of a problem. So it's a common problem — that is, the enforcement of a minimum haul rate. We have sought a solution to the problem, and I frankly admit here this evening that it, as well, is not working as good as it should.

The member did ask a secondary question, and I . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Can't remember what it was.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I can't remember, but I've all of a sudden remembered. And the question was, has there been indications whether it will be tested in the courts? I do not recall receiving any correspondence directly stating that. I do know of rumours within industry that says indeed there may be challenges in court.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, I wanted to get some information about the branch line rehabilitation program. I would gather that you have some jurisdiction over that. I understand that the branch line rehabilitation program concludes in '89-90, and I want to find out, what was the total financial commitment to Saskatchewan for that rehabilitation program?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that the dollar figure that you asked is not available this evening, but I can tell the member that since inception of the program in 1977, 2,714 miles of branch line have been rehabilitated.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — All right, Mr. Minister, in order to save the time of the committee, I would like to get the total financial commitment that was made under this program. How much of that commitment remains to be used, and if it's incumbent upon the government, or your department,

to assist in any way in making sure that that commitment is expended in rail line rehabilitation, what steps do you have in mind to do that, to make sure that our commitment is used up before the term runs out of the agreement? Could you provide that to me, Mr. Minister?

(2300)

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, the member opposite has asked for the dollar commitment under the program, and like my former answer, I do not have those figures available in dollar terms. I can tell the member opposite that since 1984, since 1984 there have been, there is, if you like, 528 miles of rehabilitation that has not been done since that 1984 commitment.

I want the member to know, and the member should know, that the program has been cancelled as of a few months ago. I do not recall the exact date. And there was a shortfall of lines to the amount of 528 miles that we would have liked to have seen completed; however, the program has been cancelled by the federal government.

I can tell the member opposite that I have made representations over time to the federal minister on individual lines on the overall issue. I've had meetings over time with many groups and areas in the province of Saskatchewan on behalf of whom I have made firm representations to Ottawa. I can tell the member opposite that I share his concerns about this program being dropped, and yet quite clearly the federal government has indicated a very strong position that the program has been cancelled, and we are left with a shortfall of 528 miles remaining.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Well my understanding of the program, the branch line rehabilitation program, was that it would conclude in '89-90, which means March, 1990. And the Minister tells me that the federal government has dropped it. This is probably a consequence of the most recent federal budget. And I want to know what representations are received — copies of the representations that the Minister has made to the federal government with regard to them dropping this program before its actual date that it should have been run out.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I advise the hon. member that there is some work. I'm sorry if I had misled the hon. member. There is some limited work done in Saskatchewan this year. It is only one project and that is the Fosston to Kelvington connection is being carried out this year. Other than that, there is no work to be done in Saskatchewan.

Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. I might also add that in the province of Alberta and in the province of Manitoba, similar situations exist where I am advised that no work is being done in those provinces — in Saskatchewan just this one line.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I asked you, Mr. Minister, whether you would provide me with the written representations you made to Ottawa with regard to the cancellation of the program before it was due to be cancelled.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, I will provide that to the hon.

member.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Okay, Mr. Minister, I want to ask you a couple of specific questions about highways. This is work on Highway No. 3, Spiritwood to Glaslyn, and I understand that this work was to have been completed on July 15 or thereabouts. Would you give me the status of that work now, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, that particular construction job that you speak of is not on this year's construction schedule.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Was it on last year's construction schedule? Who was the contractor and when was it scheduled to be completed?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm advised that indeed that contract for resurfacing was on last year's construction program. Going from memory, the contractor was a contractor under the business operating name of G W Construction. I am advised that the contract was finished on time, or certainly not within an unreasonable length of time after the projected date of completion. And once again that was on last year's construction program.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — When the contract was let, what was the size of the contract in dollars, and were there any cost overruns associated with that contract?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I apologize to the hon. member, but those are last year's figures. We do not have them with us. We will happily provide that information in a written response to you.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — I appreciate that, Mr. Minister. If there had been cost overruns, they would have been in the current budget. Are you aware of any cost overruns on that particular job?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — I'm certainly not aware of any cost overruns, no.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Could you check that out, Mr. Minister, and report on that as well when you report on the contract details for me.

Another highway that I want to get some information on is Highway 24 at Spiritwood. Is there construction under way there, and if so, who is supervising that? Is it consultants? Is it the department? Who is handling that?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That particular job is a grading job or earth moving job. It has been let and successfully awarded to an outfit called Warner Construction. It is my understanding that the job is being supervised by in-house forces as opposed to consulting engineers.

It is departmental engineers that are looking after the job, although that information just comes from memory from the officials, but we do believe that it's in-house forces.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — What is the size of the contract that was awarded there, Mr. Minister, and when the in-house

forces are doing the supervising, could you tell me, are they constantly on site, or when are they on site, and are the reports within the limitations set by the department for supervision?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — The price of the contract was \$830,000. It is a contract for 11.4 kilometres.

When departmental forces are supervising a job, indeed they are on site, as required, to supervise in an orderly fashion the terms and conditions of the contract. That doesn't mean that they are on the job 24 hours a day, but whatever is normal and required and has been past practices of the Department of Highways and Transportation over history has not changed significantly, and indeed the job is supervised and well supervised by in-house forces.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. This year, Mr. Minister, and in past years, I've had the opportunity to drive on a number of Saskatchewan highways. And I just want to relate to you some of the areas where I find the highways are in a very serious condition of deterioration.

No. 12 Highway north of Blaine Lake is a mess; no. 3 Highway in the Prairie River area and in the area that I was just discussing with you; Highway 24, Highway 19, Highway 11. I agree, you're doing work on Highway 11. Highway No. 1. I was driving on Highway No. 1 recently and it was raining. You could see the rain lying in the ruts on the highway, Mr. Minister.

You're getting seriously behind on your highway maintenance program in Saskatchewan, and this is going to cost Saskatchewan people big dollars, big dollars in the future, much more than in the past, if you had maintained the highways in a proper condition.

This concerns me; it concerns other organizations as well, Mr. Minister. TRIP, the road information program of Canada, said in 1988-89 you should have spent on your capital program, \$154.8 million. You had \$111 million spent. They said you should spend \$154 million, Mr. Minister.

In the Minister of Finance's budget speech he had two sentences about highways — two sentences. That was the complete reference to highways in the budget speech by the Minister of Finance. He said:

This year, in addition to its three-year, \$30 million highway rehabilitation program, the Government (and in heavy black print, the government) is allocating a further \$10 million to improve our transportation network. This brings the total in the 1989-90 highway and road construction program to over \$121 million.

That's exactly what it shows, Mr. Chairman.

But, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, if you take into consideration the consumer price index, which has increased 159 per cent from 1981 to the end of 1988, and if the amount spent in 1981 had increased at the same level as inflation, the highways budget today would be \$305 million, in excess of \$305 million if you just kept up

with inflation.

The 1989-90 budget is \$60 million less than the amount needed to keep in step with inflation. In 1981 constant dollars, your 1989-90 budget total of \$245 million is really only \$153 million, Mr. Minister. When we account for inflation, we see that the present government is spending \$37 million less than the NDP spent in 1981. This is a condemnation of your government's attention to the highway system of Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister, and it's going to cost the people of Saskatchewan many millions of dollars to recover from this kind of false economy that you've brought about in the highway system of Saskatchewan.

You may stand up and you may say, and I've heard you say it in this Chamber, that this government has poured another \$10 million in on top of the \$30 million spent over the three years.

(2315)

Mr. Minister, your \$10 million is just a joke. It doesn't keep up with the cost of living; it doesn't keep up with the TRIP organization. Now you may think their plans are grandiose, but, Mr. Minister, it doesn't come anywhere near them, and the amount of money you're putting into highways in Saskatchewan today is less than the New Democratic government put in in 1981, and that's a condemnation of your government.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

#### Item 7

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, I want to get confirmation from you because I've asked you before about advertising costs, which are of concern to me. You said that some of the advertising costs were in the communication branch and some were in capital. I don't necessarily want the figures now, but I just want to reconfirm that you will supply me with the major category of advertising costs in communication branch last year and proposed in this budget; and you will also do the same for the advertising costs in capital, broken down by major categories; will you do that, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes.

Item 7 agreed to.

Items 8 to 18 inclusive agreed to.

#### Item 19

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, we talked about payments to the property management corporation earlier in the discussion. Now I want to reconfirm at this time that you will provide the major categories, a breakdown according to major categories for payments to the property management corporation in 1988-89 year and proposed for '89-90, and if necessary, if there's an increase, the reasons for the increase. Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes, indeed those will be provided.

Item 19 agreed to.

Item 20 agreed to.

#### Item 21

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Minister, you have grants to local authorities and other third parties, grants to traffic safety transportation associations. I wonder if, Mr. Minister, if you could give me a listing of those grants proposed in this budget and in the previous year?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Yes indeed, I will send that over to you right now.

Item 21 agreed to.

Item 22 — Statutory.

Vote 16 agreed to.

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Highways and Transportation Capital Expenditure — Vote 17

Items 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 17 agreed to.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'd like to thank the minister's officials.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Chairman, I too would like to thank very much my officials for providing me with the information and assistance and advice here tonight, and as well for their assistance and co-operation over the past year. And I'd also like to thank the member opposite and other members for the questions that they advanced.

**Mr. Brockelbank:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I'd like to thank your staff for providing support to this committee. I want to also thank them for performing under difficult circumstances that you've put them under in your budgetary constraints. I know it's difficult for them to operate in the manner which we would expect them to, but we lay none of the blame on their shoulders. We have our eye on you, Mr. Minister.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 11:24 p.m.